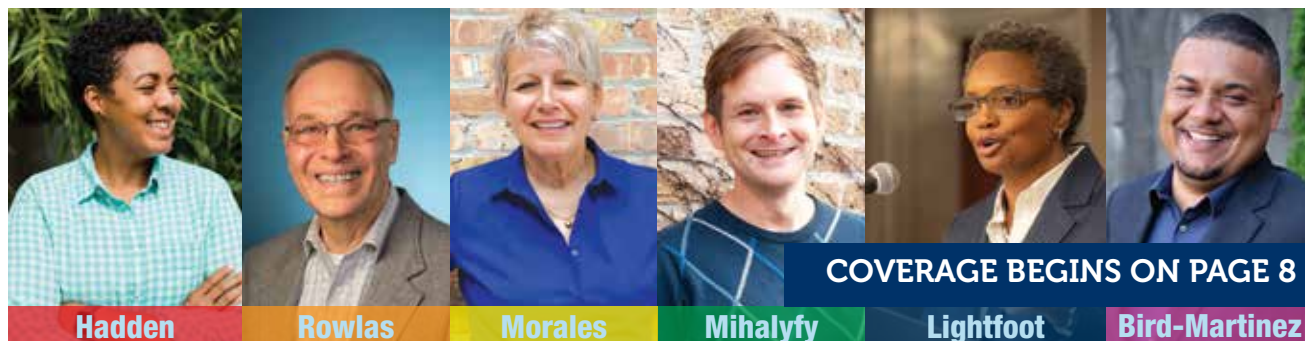


# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

VOL 34, NO. 19 FEB. 13-26, 2019

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Photo of Nagel (right) with Jackie Weinberg by Kirk Williamson

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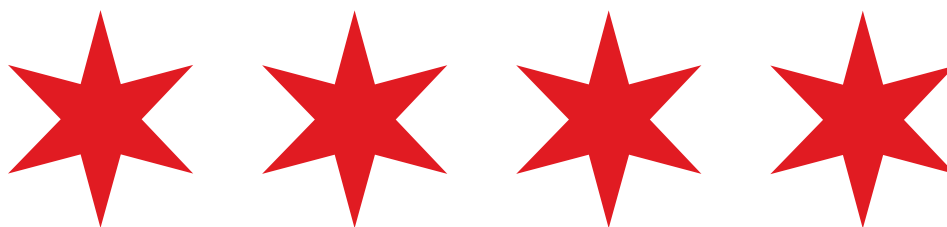
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Read WCT's survey responses and



interviews before the city elections

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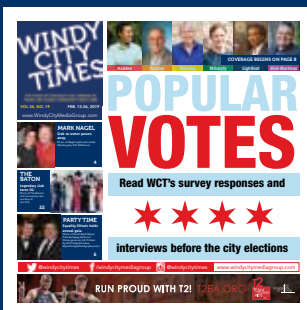
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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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**MAIN COVER PHOTOS (L-R):** LGBT candidates Maria Hadden, Andrew Rowlas, Marilyn Morales, David Mihalyfy, Lori Lightfoot and Colin Bird-Martinez.

Hadden photo by Ryan Edmund; Lightfoot photo by campaign team; other photos courtesy of subjects

online exclusives at  
[www.WindyCityTimes.com](http://www.WindyCityTimes.com)



## ROCKIN' THE VOTE

Be sure to check out WCT's election guide, with interviews with candidates such as Toni Preckwinkle (left).

Photo courtesy of the campaign team

## MISSAL LAUNCH



Musician Donna Missal discusses tattoos and Valentine's Day.

Photo courtesy of High Rise PR

## YOU AUTO KNOW

WCT covered the Chicago Auto Show, which runs through Feb. 18 at McCormick Place.

## THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Danai Gurira, Troye Sivan and Hamilton.

plus  
**DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

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# Grab co-owner Mark Nagel passes away

BY MATT SIMONETTE

According to activist Lori Cannon, Grab Magazine Co-Publisher and Co-Founder Mark Nagel was an “old-school, go-to guy” who saw the devastation of the AIDS epidemic in the community in the ‘80s and “was forever changed by the plague.”

“He dedicated his time, his talents, his energy [and] his resources to support those of us who were on the front line,” she added.

Nagel passed away unexpectedly Feb. 4; the cause was an an epileptic seizure, according to Grab Magazine Co-Publisher/Co-Founder Stacy Bridges.

The publisher leaves behind a long legacy of work and philanthropy in the the community. Besides his work at the magazine, Nagel also helped produce the annual Grabbys adult entertainment awards and gave both his time and money to several area-charities, especially ones assisting persons with HIV/AIDS.

A longtime veteran of Chicago’s LGBT press, Nagel co-founded Grab with Bridges in 2009, after the two had spent several years working together at the weekly Gay Chicago Magazine.

“We met in 1998, and I first started working at Gay Chicago in 2000,” Bridges recalled. “That’s when we first became friends. He was bull-headed, but he always got the job done. When I started, he took me under his wing and taught me the industry.”

Nagel handled all of Grab’s editorial content, Bridges said, recalling that he and Nagel initially launched the publication “because we wanted to start our own magazine, one that would reflect what we thought a gay entertainment magazine should be like. Both of us had that dream.”

They started Grab with “much help from bar owners. Ten years later, here we are. In June, it will be our 10th anniversary.”

Cannon met Nagel in 1985.

“We were rallying the troops to come in a deliver food [for persons with HIV/AIDS] out of Ann Sather [Restaurant],” Cannon added. “Many were friends and associates of Mark’s. Mark was tireless in his commitment in finding ways to support Open Hand Chicago [which Cannon founded in 1988]. Some of the best food drives we had in our 30-year history were because of Mark Nagel and his unique talent of reaching out to celebrities, or promoting locations where barrels would be put up for collection.”

Nagel would arrange for adult-film stars in town for the Grabbys to help with food deliveries, she recalled. He would also “eyeball the shelves” and quietly note when stock at the pantry was becoming depleted.

“Next thing I know, without my knowing it, he was at what was then Dominick’s or Jewel, asking for donations,” said Cannon.

Nagel was involved with, among other organizations and projects, Center on Halsted, Ride for AIDS Chicago, Chicago House, Heartland Alliance



Mark Nagel with designer Jackie Weinberg.  
Photo by Kirk Williamson

and Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN); indeed the philanthropic component of the Grabbys ceremony benefits that latter organization. Nagel was inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame in 2017.

“What I’ll miss most is his dedication and willingness to help whoever he could,” Bridges said.

Adult film director Chi Chi LaRue, who each year co-hosts the Grabbys, wrote on Facebook of Nagel’s passing: “With all the sadness in my heart, I say goodbye to someone that was not only a friend to me, a great friend, he was also a friend to the entire gay adult industry. He loved each and every one of us involved in this crazy world of porn and he enjoyed nothing more than our numerous get-togethers to celebrate our industry. Mark will be greatly missed by his family and friends and so many of us in the gay adult industry.”

LaRue’s Grabbys co-host, Honey West, also wrote: “I have tried to find the words. I am still shocked over losing someone that was always there for me. ... He was always so good to me and kind. He was good and kind to everyone, always looking for ways to help or be of service. I think about him everyday. When you choose family, it runs deep, and he was my family.”

Writer Brian Kirst—who, for several years wrote adult film reviews for Gay Chicago—recalled how Nagel appreciated his quirky style: “I developed this cast of goofy characters and would weave in stories about them that related to the movie I was covering, while also mixing in weird music references and silly innuendoes. In fact, my first review somehow compared each sex scene to the stages of Johnny Cash’s career. ... [Nagel] embraced my excesses and encouraged me to be as zany as I wanted to be. He was the first publisher of a major magazine to really support me

and my vision, and I know that initial confidence has informed me as I’ve journeyed throughout my career in the years since.”

This year’s Grabbys will be a tribute to Nagel, Bridges said, adding, “The show will go on. I’m looking forward to that. He would have made sure that the show went on.”

Nagel was also occasionally a character actor and film and television extra, Bridges noted. He is credited as “parking guard” in the 1993 thriller Blink, which starred Madeleine Stowe and Aidan Quinn, and appeared in the background of the

current television drama Empire, which films in Chicago.

“I was watching Empire one night, and he hadn’t warned me that he was going to be on there. I screamed, ‘There’s Mark Nagel!’ He loved to do that,” Bridges said.

“I can’t think of Mark as being a dead person,” Cannon said. “I think of him out delivering the magazine or hanging with Honey [West]. I’m going to miss him, and he’s going to leave an incredible legacy behind in Chicago.”

## PASSAGES

### John Hisel

John Myron Hisel—a painter and fine artist in Chicago’s Uptown neighborhood who was a native of Kankakee—passed away unexpectedly but peacefully at home Jan. 26. He was 61.

John earned his B.A. in painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and



John Hisel.

Photo from Cremation Society of Illinois

worked at The Brown Elephant on Halsted for many years. As a member of ACT UP, John was a tireless activist for HIV/AIDS education and prevention, and volunteered countless hours to help improve the lives of those affected by the disease. He will be deeply missed for his wry sense of humor and sharp wit. He was a loyal friend and partner.

He was the beloved partner of 10 1/2 years to Robert Michael Kerr.

Also, he was the cherished son of the late Robert J. Hisel and Patricia Dear Hisel; dear brother of Christine (Ted) Meade of Kankakee; devoted godfather of Adrienne McQueen; and faithful companion of cats Alfie and Galileo.

A celebration of his life and art is being held Saturday, June 1 (time TBD), at Garden Apartment Gallery, 3528 W. Fulton Blvd.

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

## PASSAGES

### Brian Patrick Donegan

Brian Patrick Donegan—a U.S. Air Force veteran and much-loved dog-walker and house sitter who was a native of Algonquin—passed away Feb. 2. He was 59.

Brian served in the Air Force from 1977 to 1997 in a number of duty stations around the world. He had a number of employment positions after his military service, but his dog-walking/house-sitting business was his favorite.

Besides serving as an active board member for AVER (American Veterans for Equal Rights) for several years, he was involved with Chicago Frontrunners and AGLOChicago at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

He was preceded in death by partner Stephen R. Mornar and parents William John Donegan and Eleanore Patricia Donegan (nee Giblin).

Brian was also the beloved brother of Maureen (John) Morrissey, Joan (Chuck) Lewandowski, Michael Donegan, Margaret Mary Harste and the late Bill Donegan; a fond uncle of eight; and a faithful companion of his three dogs: Stevie (“Big Steve”), Finn and Drew.

Memorial visitation is planned for Saturday, March 16, 10 a.m., (11 a.m. mass), Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church, 708 W. Belmont Ave, Chicago, IL 60657.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVERChicago.org), Frontrunners Chicago (FrontrunnersChicago.com) or PAWS Chicago (PAWS.org).

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



Brian Patrick Donegan.

Photo from Donegan’s Facebook page



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# Buttigieg and Pritzker headline Equality gala

BY MATT SIMONETTE

South Bend, Indiana, Mayor—and potential presidential candidate—Pete Buttigieg was among the speakers headlining Equality Illinois' 2019 gala celebration Feb. 2 at Chicago Hilton and Towers.

About 1,500 guests attended the sold-out event, which also featured remarks from newly-elected Gov. J.B. Pritzker as well as the presumably final remarks for Equality Illinois from outgoing Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, who pronounced himself “verklempt,” or, overcome with emotion, at the occasion.

Emanuel discussed advances that the LGBT community had made in the last several years and expressed his confidence in Pritzker's stewardship of the state in the years ahead: “In the blink of an eye you can now serve in the military. If you want to get married, you can. ... We're never going back.”

Emanuel added, “We have a great future.”

Joined onstage by his wife M.K., Pritzker mentioned his longtime support of LGBT-rights as well as the Equality Illinois organization: “From [founder] Art Johnston to [current CEO] Brian Johnson, I've always been with Equality Illinois.”

He additionally pledged that he would put the full weight of the state government behind support for LGBT Illinoisans if threats to their rights were delivered from the federal level, promising that, “Our state government is firmly on your side.”

In his remarks, Brian Johnson spoke both about becoming a father this past year and the legacy of activism and hard work that have resulted in greater equality for the LGBT community.

“We have all inherited a world that is more fair and equitable,” Johnson said. “... We cannot squander our inheritance.”

He later added, “If we don't continue to build our power, we will lose our power.”

In his keynote remarks, Buttigieg discussed the long road he took to finally reach the difficult decision he made to come out publicly in 2015, a decision compounded by Indiana's historical conservativeness and anti-LGBT agenda that had largely been set in recent years by now-Vice-President Mike Pence.

“Since there had never been an out executive [political official] in our state, no one knew what would be the effect on my future,” he noted, adding that, “What happened was I won 80 percent of the vote [in re-election].”

Buttigieg spoke about his military service in Afghanistan as well as his unease with being gay when he was younger. But he said that he had few regrets, since that path led him to meet his husband, whom he married this past June.

“Being married to [husband Chasten Glezman] has made me a better man morally ... and yes, Mr. Vice-President, it has moved me

closer to God,” he said.

Honorees at the event included Breakthru Beverage Group Vice Chairman Danny Wirtz; Channyn Lynn Parker, a longtime activist who is Howard Brown Health's newly-appointed manager of external relations; and Illinois AFL-CIO.

Additional political officials and candidates at the event included mayoral candidates Lori Lightfoot, Jerry Joyce, Robert Fioretti; Amara Enyia, Gery Chico, William Daley, Willie Wilson, Paul Vallas. Cook County officials included Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx; Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, another mayoral candidate; Board Commissioners Donna Miller and Kevin Morrison; and County Clerk Karen Yarbrough.

State government officials included Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton; Secretary of State Jesse White; Treasurer Mike Frerichs; Comptroller Susana Mendoza, who is also mounting a mayoral campaign; and Attorney General Kwame Raoul.

Alds. Deb Mell (33rd Ward), Tom Tunney (44th), James Cappleman (46th) and Ameya Pawar (47th), who is also running to be city treasurer, also were in attendance, as were Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioners Debra Shore, Mariyana Spyropoulos, Kimberly Du Buclet, Josina Morita and Marcelino Garcia.

State House members included Illinois House Majority Leader Greg Harris (D-Chicago); State Reps. Anna Moeller (D-Elgin), Kelly Cassidy (D-Chicago), Sam Yingling (D-Round Lake); Kathleen Willis (D-Northlake), Deb Conroy (D-Villa Park), Terra Costa Howard (D-Glen Ellyn), Diane Pappas (D-Bloomington), Theresa Mah (D-Chicago), Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz (D-Glenview), Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago), Joyce Mason (D-Gurnee), Daniel Didech (D-Buffalo Grove), Ann Williams (D-Chicago), Bob Morgan (D-Deerfield), Jonathan Carroll (D-Northbrook), Karina Villa (D-West Chicago) and Lamont Robinson (D-Chicago) along with former state Reps. Lauren Beth Gash, Ellis Levin and Steve Anderson.

From the State Senate, attendees included Senate President John Cullerton; State Sens. Dave Koehler (D-Peoria), Laura Ellman (D-Naperville), Suzy Glowiak (D-Western Springs), Ram Villivalam (D-Chicago), Omar Aquino (D-Chicago) and Don Harmon (D-Oak Park).

State Rep. Melissa Conyears-Ervin (D-Chicago), who is a candidate for Chicago city treasurer, also attended, as did her fellow candidate for that post, Peter Gariepy. U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly (IL-02) was accompanied by her House colleague, U.S. Rep. David Cicilline (RI-01). Other attendees included Illinois Supreme Court Justice P. Scott Neville, former Gov. Pat Quinn, East Aurora School Board President Alex Arroyo and Cook County Circuit Court Judge Cecilia Horan.



Left: South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg. Above: Art Johnston and Nabeela Rasheed. Right: Illinois Governor J. B. Pritzker. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)



Left: Brian Johnson, Patrick DePoy, awardee Danny Wirtz and Nabeela Rasheed. Right: Brian Johnson, awardee Channyn Lynne Parker, Reyna Ortiz and Nabeela Rasheed.



Chicago mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot (right); Lori's wife Amy Eshleman is at left.



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## ELECTIONS 2018

# Guide to the LGBTs

This year's mayoral/aldermanic elections featured a record number of openly LGBT candidates throughout Illinois. From those races, several of those individuals are vying for various political offices later this month:

**—Colin Bird-Martinez**

Race: Alderman (31st Ward)  
Website: [ColinForChicago.com](http://ColinForChicago.com)

The skinny: Bird-Martinez lives in Hermosa with husband Joshua; their two cats, Roy and Max; and a dachshund, Frankie. He also co-founded Hermosa Neighborhood Association to bring about positive change in the community.

**—James Cappleman**

Race: Alderman (46th Ward)  
Website: <https://www.citizensforcappleman.com/>

The skinny: A former teacher, social worker, and health care non-profit leader, Cappleman has represented the ward since 2011. This year, he faces five candidates.

**—Maria Hadden**

Race: Alderman (49th Ward)  
Website: <https://www.mariafor49.org/>

The skinny: Running against longtime incumbent Ald. Joe Moore, Hadden is the executive director of Our City Our Voice—a national nonprofit organization she founded to enable communities and government across the country to re-design democracy for more empowered and equitable participation.

**—Lori Lightfoot**

Race: Mayor  
Website: <https://lightfootforchicago.com/>

The skinny: Lightfoot has served as senior equity partner in the Litigation and Conflict Resolution Group at Mayer Brown LLP as well as chair of the Police Accountability Task Force. She has secured several endorsements, including support from the Chicago Sun-Times and the Equality Illinois PAC.

**—Raymond Lopez**

Race: Alderman (15th Ward)  
Website: <http://www.the15thward.org/>

The skinny: Lopez is also facing multiple candidates (four). He was elected as Chicago's 15th Ward alderman on April 7, 2015.

**—Angela "Angie" Maloney**

Race: Alderman (47th Ward)  
Website: <http://iam47.org/>

The skinny: Maloney is one of the most competitive races in the city, with nine people running to succeed incumbent Ald. Ameya Pawar, who is running for city treasurer.

**—Deb Mell**

Race: Alderman (33rd Ward)  
Website: <https://www.debfor33.com/>

The skinny: Mell, a member of the City Council's LGBT Caucus along with four others, is a former Illinois state representative. She was a member of Equal Marriage Now in the mid-2000s and participated in protest actions that led to her arrest in front of the Cook County headquarters. Mell's arrest made the news due to her father's and brother-in-law's (former Ald. Dick Mell and ex-Gov. Rod Blagojevich, respectively) political positions at the time.

**—David Mihalyfy**

Race: Alderman (11th Ward)  
Website: <http://www.letourlightshine11thward.com/>

The skinny: Mihalyfy is a labor and education activist who's competing against incumbent Patrick Daley Thompson, the grandson of former Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley and a nephew of ex-Mayor Richard M. Daley.

**—Marilyn Morales**

Race: Alderman (45th Ward)  
Website: <http://www.maggie2019.com/>

The skinny: Morales brings more than 25 years of dedicated local government experience working for the Chicago Park District and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

**—Maggie O'Keefe**

Race: Alderman (40th Ward)  
Website: [Maggie2019.com](http://Maggie2019.com)

The skinny: O'Keefe worked on multiple campaigns in the previous election cycle, including Ameya Pawar for governor, Fritz Kaegi for Cook County assessor, and three winning races for judge.

**—Carlos Ramirez-Rosa**

Race: Alderman (35th Ward)  
Website: [CarlosRosa.org](http://CarlosRosa.org)

The skinny: Ramirez-Rosa, like Lopez, was elected in 2015. The ward encompasses the neighborhoods of Albany Park, Avondale, Hermosa, Irving Park and Logan Square.

**—Andrew Rowlas**

Race: Alderman (50th Ward)  
Website: <https://www.rowlasforward50.com/>

The skinny: Backed by mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot, Rowlas has said that, if he wins, he would focus on creating a zoning advisory council and holding monthly ward meetings.

**—Tom Tunney**

Race: Alderman (44th Ward)  
Website: [TomTunney.com](http://TomTunney.com)

The skinny: Tunney, the Ann Sather restaurant owner who has been alderman of the ward for more than 15 years, is locked in a battle this year with another gay Democrat (Austin Baidas) and one-time Cook County Republican Party Executive Director Elizabeth Shydrowski.



From left: Maria Hadden and David Mihalyfy.

Photo of Hadden by Ryan Edmund; Mihalyfy photo courtesy of subject

## Transgender activist 'Babs' Siperstein passes away

Barbra "Babs" Siperstein—the first openly transgender member of the Democratic National Committee (DNC)—has died at 76, according to PIX11.com.

Siperstein served on the DNC's Executive Committee from 2011 to 2017.

Also importantly, Siperstein was the namesake of a recently enacted law that allows New Jersey transgender residents to change their genders on their birth certificates.

The statute allows the registrar to amend birth certificates based on how people identify themselves, as male, female or undesignated. Previous law allowed birth certificate changes only if a doctor certified that a person's gender was surgically changed.

LGBTQ Victory Fund Senior Political Director Sean Meloy—who served as the DNC's director of LGBTQ engagement while Siperstein was on the executive committee—said in a statement, "For so many in the Democratic Party, Babs was the first openly trans person they ever met and she undoubtedly changed the hearts and minds of many party leaders who were not yet committed to trans equality.

"She was a constant advocate for the entire LGBTQ community and helped make the Democratic Party more accepting not just of trans people, but trans candidates as well. Her presence in the DNC helped prepare the party and pave the way for trailblazing trans Democratic candidates like Danica Roem and Christine Halquist—and her impact will be felt for years to come."

In a separate press release, DNC Chair Tom Perez said, "Babs devoted her life to fighting for equality, and the DNC will carry on her legacy by continuing that fight every day. Just last year, the DNC passed historic new rules expanding the definition of gender in delegate selection and caucus participation rules to

better include gender non-binary and non-conforming Democrats. Our party and our country are stronger because of Babs's leadership. And our hearts go out to her family, her friends, and all those who had the fortune of fighting alongside her."

A 2012 LGBT History Month profile of Siperstein is at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Barbra-Casbar-Siperstein-Breaking-ground-in-NJ-nationally/39856.html>.

## Trans military item to be heard Feb. 19

A public hearing involving a resolution about President Trump's anti-transgender military ban is slated to go before the Cook County Commissioners on Tuesday, Feb. 19, at 1:30 p.m. at 118 N. Clark St.

Recently elected—and openly gay—Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison is sponsoring the resolution.

Speakers are being sought who might be able to personally speak to the issues raised by the ban on transgender individuals serving in the military. To sign up to comment publicly, visit [https://www.cookcountyil.gov/sites/default/files/speakers\\_form\\_inside\\_fillable\\_0.pdf](https://www.cookcountyil.gov/sites/default/files/speakers_form_inside_fillable_0.pdf).

## CFW announces 'Talk It Out' series

Chicago Foundation for Women (CFW) announced the fourth annual Talk It Out—a week-long conversation series designed to spark understanding among women and men, girls and boys, about gender bias.

The series will kick off March 8—International Women's Day—and run through March 15.

Since 2015, CFW has started more than 270 conversations about gender equity across the Chicago region. To learn more and to sign up to host a Talk It Out conversation, visit [CFW.org/talkitout](http://CFW.org/talkitout) or call 312-577-2825.



## House committee passes LGBT-inclusive education measure

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Illinois State House of Representative School Curriculum Committee passed a bill Feb. 7 that would mandate instruction of LGBT history in Illinois classrooms.

The final committee vote on the bill, sponsored in the House by state Rep. Anna Moeller (D-Elgin) was 13 to seven, and next goes to the House floor.

The legislation specifies that school textbooks accurately "portray the diversity of our society, including the role and contributions of people protected under the Illinois Human Rights Act, and must be non-discriminatory as to certain characteristics under the Act."

The legislation further "provides that the teaching of history of the United States in public schools shall include a study of the role and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in the history of this country and this State. [It also] requires every public elementary school and high school to include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the significant role of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals in society."

Legislation mandating LGBT-inclusive education passed the Illinois State Senate in May 2018. That bill was sponsored by state Sen. Heather Steans (D-Chicago).

## Writer Patricia Nell Warren dies at 82

Best-selling novelist Patricia Nell Warren has died at 82, several outlets reported.

Warren's 1974 novel, *The Front Runner*, told the story of an affair between a closeted coach and his out star athlete. LGBTQ running groups all over the nation are named *Front Runners* after the book.

An out lesbian, Warren was the author of more than 10 books, including *Harlan's Race*, *Billy's Boy*, and *The Fancy Dancer*. *The Front Runner* was the first work of gay fiction to make the *New York Times* best-seller list.

In a statement sent to *Windy City Times*, current Chicago Frontrunner President Dr. Travis Woulfe said, "We are grateful and salute her particularly for her seminal work, *The Front Runner*. In the book she did two amazing things. She found commercial success with an LGBT theme and she created her own living memorial. Our chapter, Chicago Frontrunners, is one of an international group that keeps running due to her inspirational book. We are saddened at her passing but will keep celebrating her through our running."

"Patricia had a great presence, elegant and stately with sparkle in her eye," said Corbin Woodling—a former Chicago Frontrunner president and member for 30 years who also knew Warren personally—added in the release.

## This Week's Featured Properties



**5645 N. Ravenswood Ave.**  
**\$4,995,000**

Amazing opportunity for production studio, event space, or over-the-top single family house. 21,500 square foot building with production facilities, custom half-court gym, custom fully-equipped theater, full-service commercial kitchen, vacuum elevator to green roof, loading dock. Too much to list. Perhaps one of the coolest spaces in the city.



**2432 N. Surrey Ct.**  
**\$2,550,000**

Ideally located on an oversized 30x140 lot on a one-way street in Lincoln Park, this custom Metzler-Hull solid-masonry house, designed by noted architect Dan Wheeler, reflects a rare & impressive attention to detail in its design, construction & finishes. Dreamy yard, three car garage.



**1829 W. Evergreen Ave.**  
**\$1,950,000**

Behind a classic facade and set on an oversized 25' x 150' lot, this dynamic modern sensation is the essence of Wicker Park: unconventional, wildly exciting, and filled with cool surprises at every turn. Best location across from park.



**1213 W. Roscoe St.**  
**\$1,099,000**

Fantastic Southport Corridor value! This architectural statement house designed by Marcel Freides centers on a spectacular 3-story atrium with light streaming in from skylights above.



**900 N. Lake Shore Dr., #1805**  
**\$259,000**

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## ELECTIONS 2019: 33RD WARD

# Lesbian alderperson Deb Mell talks feats, LGBT issues

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Deb Mell has been the 33rd Ward alderman since 2013 and previously served in the Illinois General Assembly as a representative for the 40th District.

Prior to being an elected official, Mell worked for Christy Webber Landscapes. She was a member of Equal Marriage Now in the mid-2000s and participated in protest actions that led to her arrest in front of the Cook County headquarters. Mell's arrest made the news due to her father's and brother-in-law's (former Ald. Dick Mell and Gov. Rod Blagojevich, respectively) political positions at the time and led to her running for office following a training session with the Victory Fund.

She is running against challengers Katie Sieracki and Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez.

**Windy City Times: Why should people vote for you again and not your two challengers?**

Deb Mell: I have proven myself as an independent progressive voice that gets things done. I have led on issues from affordable housing and reform to taking on abuses in the TIF system. I have also secured incredible improvements to our public parks. My staff is great and knows how to work with the community on solving problems big and small. The ward has big challenges ahead and we have the infrastructure, relationships, passion and knowledge to move our ward forward. I have a reputation for having a transparent and accessible ward office that listens to constituents.

**WCT: What are the most pressing issues for**

**the 33th Ward and how would you address them?**

DM: The rising cost of living and the need for additional resources to combat displacement is critical. The impact on our local neighborhood schools has been devastating. We must expand and preserve affordable housing and pass new tenant protections.

Public safety is another big concern. It is an important part of the job and I embrace an all-of-the-above approach that includes expanding social services, revamped community policing, empowering young people and taking a proactive approach to dealing with troubled buildings that contribute to gang violence.

**WCT: In what ways have you advanced LGBT equality during your time as alderman?**

DM: I helped pass a bill that ensures CPS students can use restrooms that matches their gender identity. I have signed many resolutions reaffirming Chicago as an LGBT-friendly city. I have worked to strengthen the LGBT caucus and let our voice be heard on important issues of the day.

**WCT: What is your vision for the LGBT community?**

DM: I want our community to experience more equality in every aspect of life. I am so encouraged by this previous election and the rainbow wave we witnessed. We need to recruit more openly LGBT people to run for public office. There needs to be more acceptance of our trans brothers and sisters. We should be free to live our lives, start a family, support our community and



Ald. Deb Mell.

Photo courtesy of campaign team

contribute to society without facing discrimination.

**WCT: Do you have any openly LGBT people working on your staff? Campaign?**

DM: Not on my staff, but they are a part of my campaign.

**WCT: HIV prevention and awareness are still important issues for the community. What have you done since becoming alderman regarding this issue? How will you use your role going forward to address it?**

DM: We try and generate a lot of awareness in the community on public health matters. We hold regular health fairs with a range of services like HIV testing. Our office also participates in events hosted by Howard Brown Health and Center on Halsted. We were big proponents of the city's first LGBT Databook, which was a great first step

in the city toward collecting important data on health disparities. It was an enormous achievement for Chicago.

**WCT: Do you back an elected school board? Should the CEO have education experience?**

DM: Yes to both.

**WCT: What are your recommendations for better relationships between the police and citizens they serve, including people of color and the transgender community?**

DM: We need a well-trained, accountable and more diverse police force that can earn the trust of our most vulnerable residents. With better training, I am hopeful we can restore trust with those residents who have suffered abuse and reduce the staggering amount we pay in settlements.

The FOP [Fraternal Order of Polic] also needs to negotiate in good faith and accept that there will be changes to police contracts. Having officers that truly understand the needs of every community is vital. We have to address the issue of trans people being murdered. The trans community experiences violence at alarming levels. We need a public awareness campaign and more training and attention from our police department regarding the trans community.

**WCT: What is the ideal minimum wage for the city of Chicago?**

DM: Fifteen dollars an hour.

**WCT: How should Chicago increase its revenue stream?**

DM: A state-wide progressive income tax, legalizing cannabis, gambling at airports and a real estate transfer tax are some ideas. We must scale back regressive fines, fees and taxes. We must also hold Springfield more accountable and I am optimistic they will do more with the new administration.

**WCT: Are you currently backing anyone for mayor?**

DM: No.

See <https://www.debfor33.com/>.

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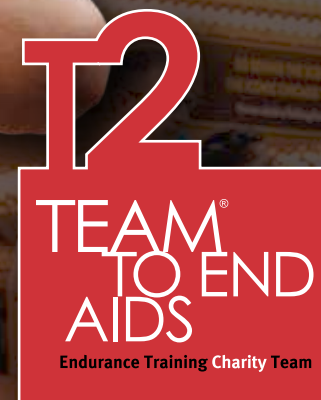
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# Elections 2019

**WCT** - Windy City Times emailed questionnaires to every registered citywide and aldermanic candidate with whom we were able to make contact by email or phone; for others, we mailed paper copies to their address on file with the board of elections.

The questions were about a wide range of issues, LGBT, HIV/AIDS, minimum wage, crime, youth experiencing homelessness, and more. Some questions did not have a yes/or no or "correct" answer, but involved more nuance and detailed narrative answers. Therefore, we rate candidates on an A-F scale, not by numbers. Readers will note not very many are below a "C" because those candidates likely did not even bother to respond to a survey from an LGBT newspaper.

We will be posting all surveys, as turned in by candidates, on our website. Look for a link under the Politics button at the top of our website, or search for the headline "2019 Election Survey Responses."

Windy City Times does not endorse in any elections, but we hope our survey educates readers who are making tough choices for citywide and aldermanic races Tuesday, Feb. 26. Please regularly check windycitytimes.com for updates, coverage and interviews in the days leading up to the election.

**IVI** - Independent Voters of Illinois Independent Precinct Organization

**GIA** - Grassroots Illinois Action

**IC** - Indivisible Chicago

**SEIU** - Service Employees International Union Healthcare Illinois

**CTU** - Chicago Teachers' Union

**EIP** - Equality IL PAC

**LPAC** - Lesbian PAC

**VF** - Victory Fund

WCT IVI IC SEIU CTU EIP LPAC VF

## CHICAGO MAYOR

Jerry Joyce							
Paul Vallas	A						
Willie L. Wilson							
Toni Preckwinkle	A		Y	Y			
William M. Daley	B+						
Garry McCarthy							
Gery Chico	A-						
Susana A. Mendoza	A						
Amara Enyia							
La Shawn K. Ford	A-						
Neal Sáles-Griffin							
Lori Lightfoot	A	Y			Y	Y	Y
Robert "Bob" Fioretti							
John Kenneth Kozlar							

## CHICAGO CITY CLERK

Anna M. Valencia			Y				
Patricia Horton							
Elizabeth "Betty" Arias-Ibarra							

## CHICAGO CITY TREASURER

Melissa Conyears-Ervin				Y			
Ameya Pawar	A-						
Peter Garipey		Y					

WCT IVI GIA SEIU CTU EIP VF

## CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL

### ALDERMAN - 1st WARD

Proco "Joe" Moreno (incumbent)  
Daniel La Spata

### ALDERMAN - 2nd WARD

Brian Hopkins (incumbent)

### ALDERMAN - 3rd WARD

Pat Dowell (incumbent)  
Alexandria Willis

### ALDERMAN - 4th WARD

Sophia King  
Ebony D. Lucas

### ALDERMAN - 5th WARD

Leslie A. Hairston (incumbent)  
William Calloway  
Gabriel Piemonte

### ALDERMAN - 6th WARD

Roderick T. Sawyer (incumbent)  
Richard A. Wooten  
Deborah A. Foster-Bonner

### ALDERMAN - 7th WARD

Gregory L. Mitchell (incumbent)  
Charles Kyle  
Jedediah L. Brown

### ALDERMAN - 8th WARD

Michelle A. Harris (incumbent)  
Jewel R. Easterling-Smith  
Linda Hudson  
Faheem Shabazz

### ALDERMAN - 9th WARD

Anthony A. Beale (incumbent)  
Cleopatra Watson  
Paul Collins  
Essie Hall

### ALDERMAN - 10th WARD

Susan Sadlowski-Garza (incumbent)  
Robert "Bobby" Loncar

### ALDERMAN - 11th WARD

Patrick Daley Thompson (incumbent)  
David Mihalyfy

### ALDERMAN - 12th WARD

George Cardenas (incumbent)  
Pete Demay  
Martha Yerania Rangel  
Jose Rico

### ALDERMAN - 13th WARD

Marty Quinn (incumbent)  
David J. Krupa

### ALDERMAN - 14th WARD

Edward M. Burke (incumbent)  
Jamie Guzman  
Tanya G. Patino

### ALDERMAN - 15th WARD

Joseph G. Williams  
Rafael "Rafa" Yanez  
Raymond A. Lopez (incumbent)  
Berto Aguayo  
Otis Davis, Jr.

### ALDERMAN - 16th WARD

Stephanie Coleman (incumbent)  
Latasha M. Sanders  
Kenny C. Doss II  
Toni L. Foulkes (incumbent)  
Jeffrey L. Lewis  
Eddie Johnson III

### ALDERMAN - 17th WARD

David H. Moore (incumbent)  
Raynetta Greenleaf

WCT IVI GIA SEIU CTU EIP VF

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### ALDERMAN - 18th WARD

Chuks Onyezia  
Derrick G. Curtis (incumbent)

### ALDERMAN - 19th WARD

Matthew J. O'Shea (incumbent)  
David A. Dewar

### ALDERMAN - 20th WARD

Jeanette B. Taylor  
Nicole J. Johnson  
Maya Hodari  
Jennifer O. Maddox  
Andre Smith  
Dernard D. Newell  
Quandra V. Speights  
Kevin M. Bailey  
Anthony Driver, Jr.

### ALDERMAN - 21st WARD

Howard B. Brookins, Jr. (incumbent)  
Marvin McNeil  
Patricia A. Foster  
Joseph C. Ziegler, Jr.

### ALDERMAN - 22nd WARD

Michael D. Rodriguez  
Lisette "Liz" Lopez  
Richard Juarez  
Neftalie Gonzalez

### ALDERMAN - 23rd WARD

Silvana Tabares (incumbent)  
Paulino R. Villarreal, Jr.

### ALDERMAN - 24th WARD

Creative Scott  
Michael Scott, Jr. (incumbent)  
Toriano A. Sanzone  
Traci "Treasure" Johnson

### ALDERMAN - 25th WARD

Hilario Dominguez  
Alexander "Alex" Acevedo  
Troy Antonio Hernandez  
Byron Sigcho-Lopez  
Aida Flores

### ALDERMAN - 26th WARD

Theresa Shaw  
Roberto Maldonado (incumbent)  
David Herrera

### ALDERMAN - 27th WARD

Walter Burnett, Jr. (incumbent)  
Cynthia D. Bednarz

### ALDERMAN - 28th WARD

Miguel Bautista  
Jason C. Ervin (incumbent)  
Jasmine Jackson  
Beverly Miles

### ALDERMAN - 29th WARD

Dwayne Truss  
Chris Taliaferro (incumbent)  
Zerlina A. Smith

### ALDERMAN - 30th WARD

Jessica W. Gutierrez  
Ariel E. Reboyras (incumbent)  
Edgar "Edek" Esparza

### ALDERMAN - 31st WARD

Colin Bird-Martinez  
Milagros "Milly" Santiago (incumbent)  
Felix Cardona Jr.

WCT IVI GIA SEIU CTU EIP VF

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B+ Y Y

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C+ Y

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Y Y

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Y

A B+

Y Y Y

Y Y

	WCT	IVI	GIA	SEI	UCTU	EIP	VF
<b>ALDERMAN - 32nd WARD</b> Scott Waguespack (incumbent)	A-			Y	Y		
<b>ALDERMAN - 33rd WARD</b> Katie Sieracki Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez Deborah L. Mell (incumbent)	A-	Y	Y	Y	Y		
<b>ALDERMAN - 34th WARD</b> Carrie M. Austin (incumbent) Preston Brown Jr.	A-					Y	Y
<b>ALDERMAN - 35th WARD</b> Amanda Yu Dieterich Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (incumbent)	A-			Y	Y	Y	
<b>ALDERMAN - 36th WARD</b> Gilbert Villegas (incumbent)				Y			
<b>ALDERMAN - 37th WARD</b> Emma M. Mitts (incumbent) Tara Stamps Deondre Rutues					Y		
<b>ALDERMAN - 38th WARD</b> Nicholas Sposato (incumbent)							
<b>ALDERMAN - 39th WARD</b> Robert Murphy Samantha "Sam" Nugent Casey Smagala Joe Duplechin	B+	A-					

	WCT	IVI	GIA	SEI	UCTU	EIP	VF
<b>ALDERMAN - 40th WARD</b> Ugo Okere Dianne Daleiden André Vasquez Patrick J. O'Connor (incumbent) Maggie O'Keefe	B	B+	Y		Y		
<b>ALDERMAN - 41st WARD</b> Tim Heneghan Anthony V. Napolitano (incumbent)	B+	Y					
<b>ALDERMAN - 42nd WARD</b> Brendan Reilly (incumbent)					Y		
<b>ALDERMAN - 43rd WARD</b> Derek Lindblom Michelle Smith (incumbent) Leslie Fox Jacob Ringer Steven McClellan Rebecca Janowitz	B+	B+					
<b>ALDERMAN - 44th WARD</b> Tom Tunney (incumbent) Austin Baidas Elizabeth Shydrowski	A	A-				Y	Y
<b>ALDERMAN - 45th WARD</b> Marilyn Morales John S. Arena (incumbent) James "Jim" Gardiner Robert A. Bank	A-			Y	Y		

	WCT	IVI	GIA	SEI	UCTU	EIP	VF
<b>ALDERMAN - 46th WARD</b> Marianne Lalonde Erika Wozniak Francis Justin Kreindler James Cappleman (incumbent) Angela Clay Jon-Robert McDowell	A-	Y			Y	Y	
<b>ALDERMAN - 47th WARD</b> Eileen Dordek Angela "Angie" Maloney Heather Way Kitzes Michael A. Negron Matt Martin Gus Katsafaros Thomas M. Schwartzers Kimball Ladien Jeff Jenkins	A-	A-					
<b>ALDERMAN - 48th WARD</b> Harry Osterman (incumbent) David Earl Williams III	B+		Y		Y		
<b>ALDERMAN - 49th WARD</b> Joe Moore (incumbent) Maria Hadden	B+	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>ALDERMAN - 50th WARD</b> Debra L. Silverstein (incumbent) Andrew D. Rowlas Zehra Quadri	B						

## State Equality Index released; Illinois in highest category

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation and the Equality Federation Institute released their fifth annual State Equality Index (SEI)—a comprehensive report detailing statewide laws and policies that affect LGBTQ people and their families, and assessing how well states are protecting LGBTQ people from discrimination.

This year, the number of states that obtained the SEI's highest rating, "Working Toward Innovative Equality," increased from 13 to 17. These states—including Illinois—currently have what are considered robust LGBTQ non-discrimination laws covering employment, housing and public accommodations, as well as protections in the areas of credit and insurance.

Twenty-eight states are in the lowest-rated category, "High Priority to Achieve Basic Equality." Among them are Alaska, Indiana, Alabama, Ohio, Michigan, Virginia and the Carolinas.

The other categories are "Solidifying Equality" and "Building Equality."

This SEI report comes as more than 46 state legislatures have opened their sessions—and with New York kicking off the year on a tremendous note by passing both the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) and legislation protecting LGBTQ youth in the state from the dangerous and debunked practice of so-called "conversion therapy."

The full report is at <https://www.hrc.org/campaigns/state-equality-index>.

## Gay 'Empire' actor breaks silence after Chicago attack

Just days after saying he was attacked in an apparent hate crime in Chicago, openly gay Empire actor Jussie Smollett released a statement Feb. 1.

The statement was first published in Essence magazine.

"Let me start by saying that I'm OK," Smollett began. "My body is strong but my soul is stronger. More importantly I want to say thank you. The outpouring of love and support from my village has meant more than I will ever be able to truly put into words."

He added, "I am working with authorities and have been 100% factual and consistent on every level. Despite my frustrations and deep concern with certain inaccuracies and misrepresentations that have been spread, I still believe that justice will be served.

"As my family stated, these types of cowardly attacks are happening to my sisters, brothers and non-gender conforming siblings daily. I am not and should not be looked upon as an isolated incident. We will talk soon and I will address all details of this horrific incident, but I need a moment to process," he concluded. "Most importantly, during times of trauma, grief and pain, there is still a responsibility to lead with love. It's all I know. And that can't be kicked out of me."

Smollett's family released a statement saying it's standing behind the actor/musician.

UPDATE: Frank Gatson—the man who was with

[www.WindyCityTimes.com](http://www.WindyCityTimes.com)  
for extended election coverage

Jussie Smollett the night he was reportedly attacked in Chicago, and who is Smollett's choreographer—recently spoke about the incident.

Talking with Extra TV, Gatson said at the Feb. 6 amfAR New York Gala 2019, "I'm the one who called 911, I am the one who took him to the hospital, and it was so scary, man, that was a scary night—my stomach was numb," adding, "I'm just glad I was the old man at his apartment when he got there; I was responsible."



**Jussie Smollett.**  
PR photo courtesy of City Winery

As for those who doubt what happened, Gatson said, "It is amazing to me how the white community really supports the LGBTQ community, but it's amazing how some Black families would rather their son be a murderer than be gay."

On Feb. 2, Smollett performed at West Hollywood's Troubadour club—his first public appearance since the alleged attack.

"The most important thing that I can say is to keep it simple and say thank you and I'm OK," the Empire actor said to a packed crowd, according to Deadline. "I'm not fully healed yet, but I'm going to and I'm going to stand strong with you all." Empire co-creator Lee Daniels, Congresswoman Maxine Waters and members of Smollett's family were among those at the club.

Smollett added, "I had to be here tonight. ... I couldn't let those motherfuckers win!"

Affinity Chicago and the Chicago City Council's LGBT Caucus have been among local groups expressing their support of Smollett.

The original statement can be seen at <https://www.essence.com/entertainment/only-essence/jussie-smollett-breaks-silence-vicious-attack/>. The Deadline item is at <https://deadline.com/2019/02/jussie-smollett-assault-first-appearance-troubadour-lee-daniels-maxine-waters-weho-1202548463/>.

The Extra item is at <http://extratv.com/2019/02/06/the-man-with-jussie-smollett-the-night-of-attack-speaks-out/>.

## ELECTIONS 2019: MAYOR

# Lori Lightfoot talks LGBTQ policy, police accountability

BY TIM PEACOCK

Standing out in a crowd of qualified competitors can be difficult, but openly lesbian mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot is up to the challenge. As a Victory Fund- and Equality Illinois PAC-endorsed candidate with a comprehensive LGBTQ policy framework, she stands a chance not only of becoming Chicago's first openly gay mayor, but also becoming the first African-American woman elected to the role.

**Windy City Times (WCT): What made you decide to throw your hat into the ring in what was already a crowded race for mayor?**

Lori Lightfoot (LL): I got into the race because I saw that there's a lot of great things that were going on in the city, but the prosperity certainly wasn't spread evenly around the city's neighborhoods. And I saw too many families that looked like the family that I grew up in and individuals who look like me, and under similar circumstances, really struggling.

And that there was no real plan for those folks. There wasn't a plan to uplift the quality of life in neighborhoods, really comprehensively bring down the violence in ways that could stabilize communities. That we have too many neighborhoods that lacked good quality schools either at the elementary or high school level, and that the unemployment rate in many neighborhoods was in the high twenties, if not higher. And there are a number of other factors that made me see that there was a great need for a leader who is going to be independent, who is going to put forth a progressive vision for the city, and who is really

truly going to put people first.

**WCT: Two of the top issues listed on your campaign website—stopping violence and reforming the police department—strongly connect to your previous role on the police accountability board. How would becoming mayor help you work toward those goals versus your time on the board?**

LL: When you work on a board, you have to live within that board's jurisdiction and area of responsibility—which in the police board was limited. We were essentially an administrative court and could only weigh in on topics that came before us. We had some ability to use the bully pulpit of that office to advocate for certain policy changes, but the jurisdiction was limited. Obviously, as mayor, I can break through a lot of the bureaucratic barriers and really compel change both in terms of reform and accountability in really improving the relationship between community and police. And also, in an important area of accountability, it's just unacceptable to me that we are spending so much money on lawsuits, settlements, judgments and attorney fees. And there doesn't seem to be a sense of urgency around why that's a problem. Those are all things that can be addressed expeditiously if you're the mayor.

**WCT: What is your vision for the LGBTQ community?**

LL: I think that we've got a number of battles that we still need to fight. Getting marriage was really important from a practical standpoint and also from a symbolic standpoint, but we know that discrimination still runs rampant against



Lori Lightfoot.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

members of our community. And of particular notoriety in the last year or so is what's going on with the trans community. We had two murders of trans women last year where those murders were not solved and frankly it doesn't sound like there's been significant progress.

We know that a significant portion of the homeless population are made up of LGBTQ+ young people. So we've got to make sure that we are doing everything that we can. We also know that there's unequal access to healthcare within our community—particularly for drugs that could mitigate against the spread of AIDS and HIV. So there's a lot more that needs to be done both to highlight these issues and frankly let people know that the struggle continues. I will also make sure, as a part of my administration, that we do a much better job of having liaisons that reach out to this community. That's an area where I think we still have a long way to go—particularly when it comes to reaching out and having relationships between our community and the police department.

Right now there's only one LGBTQ+ liaison for the entire city. I recommend increasing that to three, and having them have specific geographic

boundaries within which they work. We also need to make sure the administration, from top to bottom, in every department and not just in the human relations area, is populated with out proud LGBTQ members.

**WCT: You referenced liaisons, which is part of your LGBTQ policy framework. Another proposition in that policy framework is creating 24-hour drop-off centers. How would those work?**

LL: What we see—and this is a significant issue among our young people—is that they don't have a stable place to go to get resources, to have respite, to get food, to get shelter, and training, to connect with social services. And those needs are really 24 hours a day; they're not just during the daytime or early evening hours. So having 24 hour centers that can really help address the needs of our community is, I think, critically important.

**WCT: Do you see any other issues as being big problems facing the city's LGBTQ community within the next few years?**

LL: I think our issues are universal in some ways. There are things, of course, that are unique to our community given who are and given the level of discrimination that we continue to face, but people in our community also care about violence, they also care about good and safe schools, they also care about making sure that taxes are not regressive and that they have affordable housing options—particularly among our young people and our seniors. Those issues really overlap with issues that I've heard about from residents of the city all over and are not necessarily unique to the LGBTQ+ community.

**WCT: While Chicago does have anti-discrimination protections that are pretty robust, enforcement of those laws can be difficult. What would you do as mayor—aside from your LGBTQ policy framework—to more adequately enforce those laws not only to help the LGBTQ community, but other marginalized communities in the city?**

LL: Well I think number one, the mayor has to set the tone for the kind of city we want to have. The mayor has to speak the values of the collective, and talking about these issues in lots of different forums is critically important because it's going to be very clear that this is something that we value, this is something that is important to the health and well being of the city. And I think frankly that goes a long way in and of itself.

But of course we need to also educate people about what their rights are. No one's going to be a better protector of your rights than you. And a lot of times what I hear from people is, "Well I didn't know where to turn, I wasn't sure if I could get help, I didn't actually know that I had a right to this, this and this." Educating people—particularly, young people—about what their rights are and what resources they have when they feel like their rights have been violated is critically important. And making sure people know about various advocacy groups that are out there and designed to protect the rights of marginalized communities or communities that have been subject to historic discrimination on the basis of a lot of different factors.

**For more information on Lightfoot's campaign, visit <https://lightfootforchicago.com/>.**



## Alderman Tom Tunney

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## ELECTIONS 2019: 48TH WARD

# Ald. Harry Osterman shares priorities for ward

BY ANGELIQUE SMITH

Harry Osterman has been alderman for the 48th Ward since 2011, serving parts of Andersonville, Uptown and Edgewater. For 11 years before being elected alderman, Osterman was the state representative for the 14th District.

Growing up in Edgewater, Osterman is the son of community activist and alderwoman Kathy Osterman, who was inducted posthumously into The Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame as a "friend of the community" in the '90s. Osterman himself is a self-described "strong supporter of the LGBTQ community" and, over the course of his political career, has introduced a resolution calling for the end of the ban on blood donations from gay men and supported marriage equality.

**Windy City Times: What words would you use to describe the 48th Ward?**

Ald. Harry Osterman: I think, "inclusive" and "diverse." Our community's always been a place that welcomes people from every background, every religion, every sexual orientation. It's very much in the DNA of who we are as a community. I try to use my leadership role to help foster that within our community: a place where everyone

feels welcome and safe.

**WCT: What are some of your favorite activities that you like to do with your family in the ward?**

Osterman: We live in an amazing community. Last weekend, my wife and I went up to Andersonville; just walking on a warm, winter day, going to businesses and having lunch. Our three wonderful kids are a little older and can be by themselves, but we use the Broadway Armory Park, a building [in which] I worked to provide more programs for young people and for seniors. So, I try to not get in my car as much as possible in the community, whether it's riding on the lakefront in summertime or going to the beach that's named after my mom. I try to make sure to remind folks to spend money locally to help the businesses that make our neighborhood what it is.

**WCT: Speaking of your mother, how has her activism influenced your own, and what do you do to honor her in that regard?**

Osterman: As a young teenager growing up in the '80s, I saw her advocacy for the Human Rights Ordinance for city council to gain protection for the gay and lesbian community that weren't there



Ald. Harry Osterman.

Photo by Andrew Davis

before. And I saw her work with people from a broad spectrum to get that passed.

So that's been an inspiration to me. In addition to calling people when I was an Alderman to pass marriage equality, we passed the Human Rights Act with protections to LGBT community early in my tenure in Springfield. I've always remembered that, always remembered the community and their support of her.

**WCT: What would you say is your vision for the LGBTQ community in 2019?**

Osterman: I want to make sure that our community continues to be diverse and that's also with housing. Looking down the road, trying to create some LGBTQ senior housing in our community, so that people who live here don't get forced out because of high property taxes. [Another] significant thing is the new report that came out on health within the LGBTQ community, which was a really good blueprint for future health for the community moving forward...trying to analyze that. We're going to have a new mayor and new leadership in the city council. Part of my goal is to make sure that with that transition, those findings and goals on health don't fall by the wayside as we look for funding priorities for people living with HIV and AIDS, anti-bullying programs and programs for youth.

**WCT: And your thoughts on mandatory LGBT-inclusive education in Chicago public schools? While I think it kind of speaks to what you were saying in terms of making sure everybody feels safe in the environment that they're in, I think historical representation and inclusion is a part of that, which actually influences the ability to feel safe.**

Osterman: I totally agree. It's making sure everyone understands who everyone else is and respecting who they are as people. The state of Illinois, if I'm not mistaken, passed a law this last year that would require more education be provided about LGBTQ historic events within the curriculum.

See <https://harryosterman.org>. Read the full Osterman interview at [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

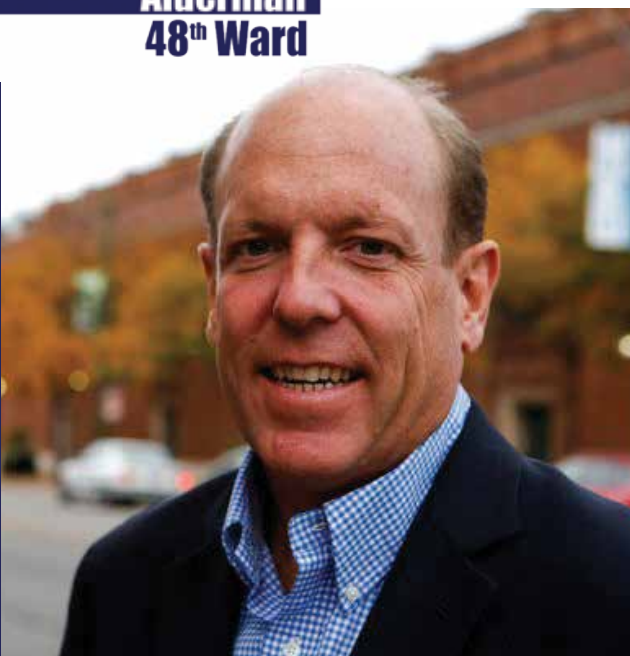
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## viewpoints

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## THE AMAZON TRAIL

### How to celebrate Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is one of those do-it-yourself celebrations.

There are no parades or feasts or family gatherings. When I was single, I could always count on a card from my mother and, needless to say, would send one to her. Commerce has no respect for the single, however, and for a month every year, the U.S. turns red and pink.

I'm not sure if I should thank Cupid or St. Valentine or, perhaps, my late Catholic mother, but at last I can say that, goddess willing and the river don't rise, I won't be single again for the rest of my life. Which leaves me with the challenge of coming up with unique ways to celebrate the day for about thirty more years.

Not that my sweetheart expects this—she'd be content with a card and a kiss and lots of laughter thrown in. No, I have a need to prove my love year after year with some small extraordinary offering.

She does that year-round. Just today, on our monthly anniversary, she presented me with the gift of all gifts. My sweetheart gave me—you're not going to believe how incredible she is—a Golden Snitch fidget spinner.

"I saw [author] Nell Stark with one," explained my sweetheart, "and I had to get it for you." All my other spinners pale before its silent and graceful

niftiness.

In turn, I gave my sweetheart a gift I held back from the winter holidays: a boat and lighthouse tea light candle holder. Which I gleaned from the free table at our community clubhouse.

Yes, we do celebrate our anniversary every month and have for going on twelve years. Doesn't every couple? We don't always mark the date with gifts. Sometimes it's a handmade card, a note, a walk on the beach.

That leaves me with the question: What can I come up with to make Valentine's Day 2019 special?

It goes without saying that some years I have decorated effusively. The Dollar Store is helpful with that when we're flush. This year I'll be recycling whatever has survived the years: the lights, balloons, ceiling decorations, banners, window clings, cardboard cutouts, yard signs, door decorations and garlands. I've been known to get kind of obnoxious.

Before the diets, I was able to reach directly back to my childhood. My father always gave my mother a regulation red cloth-covered, heart-shaped box of assorted candies, invariably from Fanny Farmer's, which was big at that time. I remember the shop near my subway stop—was it 42nd Street and 6th Avenue? The glorious smells, the enticing boxes... In any case, though I refrain out of kindness, the giving of the red heart of candies will always mean Valentine's Day to me.

For my part, it was all about the cards when I was a kid. You sat at the kitchen table and cut out children's cards by the dozens. They were miniatures and I was disappointed that they didn't fold. This was before Disney and other franchises took over the industry. The scissors I used were heavy and large, probably from my mother's sewing basket. It was awkward, cutting on the dotted lines with little girl hands. Then you took an actual wooden pencil, hop-

ing for soft lead, sharpened it and wrote the name of every kid in the apartment building, signed your own, and left the cards at their doors.

So of course, I did that to my sweetheart one year. Bought a package of kid cards and stuck them all over the house. She's such a sport.

Or the year of the Valentine's Day stickers. Stuck on mirrors, inside the refrigerator, on the front door, the back door, the garage, her pillow, her clothes, her car. If we hadn't moved, she'd still be finding them.

We've toasted by candlelight, just the two of us, at restaurants. She likes me to buy her a drink at the bar. We've revisited special places, like the National Park where we exchanged rings after signing domestic partnership papers.

Oh, and the stuffed animals, ever in their small basket demonstrating my overenthusiasm. Had she told me she wasn't a stuffed animal sort of gal? Yes, she had, but I couldn't help myself, the things were so sweet.

We have a gift card to a favorite restaurant this year. We're planning to get a bite to eat. I'll order her a pretty glass of Prosecco. She'll wear her red sweater, black slacks and a shiny pair of earrings. I'll dress up with my good jeans, a button-down shirt and, this being the Pacific Northwest, a rain jacket.

But I have to give the day my own grateful, adoring, loving touch. Something original that I've never done before. Probably something a little bit annoying, but meant well. It can't cost money or calories, so there go the chocolates and diamond ring and flowers. Time is getting short.

How about a love letter? I could title it "How to Celebrate Valentine's Day."

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## letters

### Miscarriages of justice

Dear Editor:

The lenient sentencing of Jason Van Dyke for his murder of LaQuan McDonald calls to mind the White Nights from May 1979, when Dan White was convicted of voluntary manslaughter instead of first-degree murder of Harvey Milk and George Moscone.

White was sentenced to seven years and eight months, of which he served five years; Van Dyke was sentenced to six years and nine months and can be released after a little more than three years. White used the "Twinkie defense" in which his attorneys

argued that the copious amounts of junk-food diminished his mental capacity. One of Van Dyke's defense arguments was to blame the victim—and both arguments are preposterous.

The pattern is also continued from when Michael Brown was murdered in 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri, and the shooter was not indicted. After the April 2015 murder of Freddie Gray by the Baltimore police, the officers were either found not guilty or were not indicted.

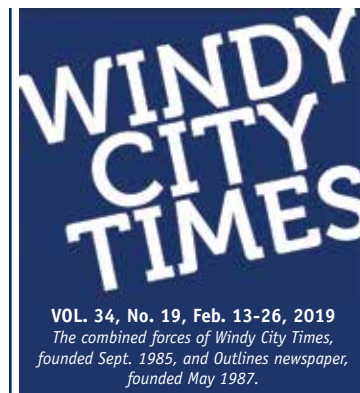
Voters and citizens have become numb to this nonsense—in Chicago, Ferguson, Baltimore and more, it is once again white cops killing another Black youth; in San Francisco, it was homophobia

in which a straight man murdered an openly gay supervisor. Because the murdered victims were minorities and/or members of marginalized groups, lenient sentences were given or there were no indictments or not-guilty verdicts.

These patterns of travesties and miscarriages of justice continue to riddle our society and must cease. They destroy any credibility in the criminal-justice system.

Sincerely,  
Scott G. Burgh  
Chicago

Send columns or letters to [Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com](mailto:Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com).  
Letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.



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## ARTS + THEATER

WEEKLY

Baton cast, 1970s. Back row, from left: Leslie Rejeanné, Jodie Lee, Lynette Langston and Chilli Pepper.  
Front: Jan Howard, Orlando del Sol, Felicia, Audrey Bryant.  
Photo courtesy of Jim Flint



# THE BATON AT 50

HISTORIC VENUE  
CELEBRATES  
FIVE DECADES

PAGE 22

## THEATER REVIEW

## Fulfillment Center

Playwright: Abe Koogler

At: A Red Orchid Theatre, 1531 N. Wells St.

Tickets: \$30-40; ARedOrchidTheatre.org

Runs through: March 24

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

These days, everyone's trying to make a statement.

Theater companies have their reasons. These are trying political times (to put it mildly) and plays offer a unique opportunity for showcasing the state of the world and provoking audience thought. However, attempts to make a statement can get incredibly clumsy and even well thought-out politically-themed productions can get exhausting to watch. Fulfillment Center is hardly bubbly escapism, but doesn't try to be more than it is. Instead, Abe Koogler's play is a quiet character study on four lonely people in the New Mexico desert just before the holidays. Thoughtfully



Natalie West, Steve Schine in Fulfillment Center.

Photo by Mike Hari

directed by Jess McLeod, A Red Orchid's Chicago premiere prioritizes human lives over sweeping declarations and simply put, that's refreshing.

Fulfillment Center kicks off with a lot of talking; namely from Suzan (Natalie West, best known for her role as Crystal on TV's Roseanne and The Conners). She's a folk singer and Joni Mitchell fan of a certain age, trying to convince Alex (Jose Nateras) why she deserves a job in a big box fulfillment facility. Alex is trying to make a positive impression on the higher-ups so he and his girlfriend Madeleine (Toya Turner) can move to Seattle. And on the outskirts of town, John (Steve Schine) watches but doesn't say much, his presence imposing and motives unclear.

Koogler's script brings to mind independent films of the 1990s, with spare settings, dialogue with subtext behind every syllable and characters who seem like people you know. Though Suzan chatters merrily to anyone who will listen, offering cookies from a package and liquor from a flask, her hunger for human connection is barely bubbling under the surface. Alex tries to hold it together at work and home, but constantly wor-

ries he isn't leadership material and will never please the girlfriend who left New York to be with him in the middle of nowhere. Though Madeleine initially comes off demanding and high-maintenance, drawing people in only to snap at them, her layers are slowly peeled away to reveal a vulnerable woman well out of her element and dealing with serious issues. John is Fulfillment Center's most mysterious—and possibly dangerous—character, rounding out a fascinating yet (mostly) relatable quartet.

Some may argue nothing really happens in Fulfillment Center; I would counter everything happens. Life works that way: secrets gradually revealed, feelings confessed one word or gesture at a time. Director McLeod, currently at the helm of Chicago's resident production of Hamilton, acers a completely different kind of story here. At the heart of every story is its characters, who want something, anything, everything. From its first monologue to its final, heartbreaking words, Fulfillment Center illustrates an environment of isolation and the regular people trying to push through it.

## THEATER REVIEW

## Pipeline

Playwright: Dominique Morisseau

At: Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: \$27-60; VictoryGardens.org

Runs through: March 3

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

Thinking about Pipeline, here's what comes to mind: two incredible supporting characters and a Gwendolyn Brooks poem.

Considering the play is about a Black mother and her teenage son, that's problematic.

Playwright Dominique Morisseau is a MacArthur Fellow, whose musical based on The Temptations, Ain't Too Proud to Beg, is Broadway-bound. Clearly, she has chops. But in the case of Pipe-

line, Morisseau may have gotten bogged down in the responsibility of telling a very important and very universal story—and as a result, the two characters the audience is supposed to care about the most are relegated to character types without much nuance.

Nya (Tyla Abercrombie) is a single mom who teaches in a large urban public school. However, she and her ex-husband Xavier (Mark Spates Smith) have chosen to send their own son to an exclusive private academy upstate so Omari (Matthew Elam) can have more opportunities. But when Omari faces expulsion for an altercation and swears he was provoked, primary parent Nya is forced to confront her teen's actions and her own expectations versus the harsh reality of being Black in America.

The short Brooks poem "We Real Cool" is the play's through-line. That's a good idea in theory as the poem looks at young Black men engaging in adolescent shenanigans and paying the price

with their lives. In practice, however, Morisseau's writing of Nya and Omari pales in comparison to Brooks' spare, intense verse. The narrators of Brooks' poem speak few words but feel completely real, in sharp contrast to the worried Black mother and her son who is justifiably angry at a world who has set him up to fail—timely to be sure, but more stand-ins than living, breathing individuals. Though Nya and Omari share several scenes, their relationship and history feel undefined at best: we mostly see them arguing followed by a resolution that doesn't feel earned.

Director Cheryl Lynn Bruce was most recently seen onstage in Steppenwolf's Familiar. She does her best with the shadowy characterizations, and stages balletic scene transitions that are lovely to behold. Abercrombie and Elam, both fine actors, make a palpable effort to flesh out mother and son.

As a playwright, Morisseau fares much better with her supporting characters: namely, Nya's col-

league Laurie (Janet Ulrich Brooks) and Omari's girlfriend Jasmine (Aurora Real de Asua). The former is a bombastic, worn-out teacher who's just returned from medical leave after enduring violence from a student's family. Her tough talk and gallows humor make for a funny, fascinating character and Brooks nails every syllable. Real de Asua's Jasmine, along with Omari is one of the private school's few nonwhite students. Jasmine actually has a believable character arc as well as the blind love and strange precociousness of teen girls everywhere, and the actress has repeatedly proven her knack for portraying high schoolers (Goodman's The Wolves, Rivendell's Firebirds Take the Field).

The play's title refers to the school-to-prison pipeline common to young adults of color, who historically face harsher consequences from teachers, administrators and the law. Nya and Omari's struggles are tragically frequent, but Morisseau doesn't quite know how to make them personal. As it stands, Pipeline is well-directed and even better-acted, but the source material is a host of unrealized potential. What could be powerful is, instead, meh.

## THEATER REVIEW

## A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder

Playwright: Book by Robert L. Freedman,

music by Steven Lutvak, lyrics by

Robert L. Freedman and Steven Lutvak

At: Porchlight Music Theater at the Ruth Page Auditorium

Tickets: PorchlightMusicTheatre.org;

773-777-9884; \$39-\$66

Runs through: March 16

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Those lamenting the reduction of the North American musical to pop-playlists augmented by the skimpiest of narratives can take heart from Robert L. Freedman and Steven Lutvak. From a cluster of threadbare, overworked and potentially offensive genres, this talented duo

has cobbled a frothy, witty, irreverent romp reaching across a century to address social customs yesterday and today.

Based on a 1909 novel, the Penny Dreadful premise proposes Montague "Monty" Navarro, a commoner robbed of his birthright—not to mention marriage to a likewise materialistic sweetheart—by his snobbish relations in the lofty House of D'Ysquith following his mother's elopement with an (gasp!) Italian artist. Upon learning that he is ninth in line to inherit the family fortune, Monty proceeds to orchestrate his predecessors' early demises and in doing so, avenge their mistreatment of his late mum. Fortunately, his D'ysquith kin are richly deserving of their fate, being as shallow and mercantile as their would-be executioner—with two exceptions, whose wholesome values suggest a less sanguine means of advancement for our homicidal hero.

A few playgoers may detect traces of source material shared by the 1949 film Kind Hearts and Coronets in this scenario, introducing an-

other much-copied motif—that of the quick-change tour de force wherein a single actor portrays a dizzying succession of characters. Porchlight Music Theater director Stephen Schellhardt continues the tradition inaugurated by Alec Guinness in casting Matt Crowle as all but one of the inconvenient D'Ysquiths.

Unlike its cheaper incarnations, however, this is no one-note stunt show. Freedman and Lutvak's vigorous score hearkens to the vaudeville, music-hall and operetta—think Gilbert and Sullivan—of the play's period (footnoted by music director Andra Velis Simon's selection of authentic Gilded Age-tunes for pre-show and intermission).

Andres Enriquez, Emily Goldberg, Ann Delaney and a high-stepping ensemble ensure that our ambitious protagonist, the women who love him and cohorts thereof, are never eclipsed by Angela Weber Miller's Victorian fold-out scenery, Anthony Churchill's Monty Python-esque projections and Jeff Hendry's foamy wardrobe recalling the iconic images of Charles Dana Gibson.

## CRITICS' PICKS

**A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder**, Porchlight Music Theatre at the Ruth Page Auditorium, through March 16. A score that hearkens to Gilded-Age whimsy, scenery like a Victorian greeting card designed by Monty Python and costumes scrumptious enough to eat for dessert enhance the delight of this frothy winter treat. MSB

**Nina Simone: Four Women**, Northlight Theatre at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie, through March 2. The activist anthems of Nina Simone, as sung by the outstanding vocalists assembled for Christiana Ham's biomusical, have lost none of their righteous anger or rousing elation. MSB

—by Mary Shen Barnidge

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John Cameron Mitchell.  
Photo by Matthew Placek



NUNN ON ONE

## John Cameron Mitchell bringing 'Hedwig'-inspired songs

BY JERRY NUNN

Two-time Tony winner John Cameron Mitchell is bringing moments of Hedwig and the Angry Inch back to life for Chicago audiences. The musical has enjoyed a cult following all over the world telling the story of a philosophical performer from East Germany with an angry inch after a botched gender-reassignment operation.

The openly gay co-creator of Hedwig plans on telling stories and performing songs inspired by 20 years of the rock musical the Athenaeum Theatre. Mitchell is bringing a three band and a backing vocalist to help him out with a production that will assist his mother who is struggling with Alzheimer's.

He will also preview Anthem—an upcoming musical podcast, starring himself, Glenn Close, Patti LuPone, Cynthia Erivo, Denis O'Hare and Laurie Anderson.

His credits over the years are impressive. From acting in the movie version of Hedwig and the Angry Inch to playing Andy Warhol on the television show Vinyl, the talented performer never ceases to surprise. In 2006, he brought the sex positive movie Shortbus to life as a director and last year co-directed an episode of Netflix's GLOW with Mark A. Burkley to high praise.

**Windy City Times: Hi, John. When is the last time you have been in Chicago?**

John Cameron Mitchell: I can't even remember! [Laughs] It may have been a good 10 years.

I did run into Mary Zimmerman at Burklee doing Metamorphoses. We went to school together at Northwestern.

**WCT: I read your first professional role was at the Goodman Theatre.**

JCM: I guess it was! There's a tape of it somewhere lying around. I played Huckleberry Finn at the Organic Theater Company directed by Stuart Gordon. He's a legendary Chicago director and started that company with David Mamet. He made Re-Animator later.

**WCT: That's a wild movie! Tell me about this touring show.**

JCM: It's the history of Hedwig, telling how it gestated and the people behind it, my boyfriend who was in the band and his story. He passed away, so our story was very much a part of making it. I talk about the composer Stephen Trask and the philosophical underpinnings from Plato that are part of it. It's also about how it changed me and my relationship to the people who love it.

There is also some talking about the strange time that we live in now. It's a celebration of the legacy and just a good time with our buddies.

**WCT: Do you have any crazy Hed Heads stories?**

JCM: They are a bit like Rocky Horror fans, but perhaps a bit more emotionally attached. Fans from all over will tattoo themselves, come to the shows to support it and make fan art. There's a lot of fans in Europe, Mexico and Brazil.

I just walked outside yesterday and two Korean fans were waiting outside of my apartment. We have Hed Heads in Asia, too!

This tour in a way is reuniting all of us. It is like a bunch of friends getting together and also they are helping to pay for my mom's healthcare.

**WCT: Did one performance from someone in Hedwig particularly hit the nail on the head?**

JCM: They all have their strengths and are all very different. There are some people who are better than me at certain things such as singing, dancing or the subtlety of Hedwig.

I think Matt McGrath, who did it off-Broadway, as a model of economy.

Neil Patrick Harris was a magician and a circus performer. He could do anything. He could tell the jokes and dance a hell of a lot better than I could! In fact, when I had to do his choreography on Broadway I ripped my knee out.

Michael C. Hall had his own brushes with mortality because of health issues in the past. He brought another kind of gravity to it.

Darren Criss brought a youthful, brash bravado to it.

I welcome every interpretation. In Chicago they did a show with 10 Hedwigs! Whatever people want to do with it is fine. I think it is great flattery for someone to want to do it. In my case, imitation is not the greatest form of flattery. It's interpretation. I prefer someone to make something new with it instead of copying our version.

**WCT: Ad-libbing is suggested?**

JCM: I write in the scrip that they have to ad lib. Hedwig is always performing in the venue that the show is happening, so they have to adapt it. Tommy is in whatever venue that is nearby.

The Origin of Love show is really me. I am not playing Hedwig even though I am in an amazing costume. It's a Transformer-like costume because it becomes six costumes in one. Everyone did it for free for my mom. Mick Rock who photographed David Bowie, Lou Reed and Iggy Pop did our shots for us for free. It's a real group effort here to help my mom's medical bills that's easy to enjoy.

**WCT: I interviewed Lena Hall for a small role in Kinky Boots and then she went on to massive success in Hedwig earning a Tony Award.**

JCM: She was a jewel waiting to be plucked from the diamond mine. She gave an amazing audi-

tion, probably the best I had ever seen. She made a video as her character Yitzhak. She brought a guitar play and had written monologues and songs about Yitzhak growing up in Croatia and her making the costumes for Cats out of yak hair. It went on and on.

She should have an audition show. I think she is thinking about making an audition podcast.

**WCT: Well, it's time you finally make it back to Chicago.**

JCM: My favorite aunt, who is a nun, will be coming to the Chicago show. She is my biggest supporter, even when my family was looking askance at the drag and what my mother termed "the vulgarity." She will be bringing all of her friends. She is model of what catholicism should be about, good works not judgement. In some ways she is my mentor for life.

**WCT: You will be talking about your new project at the show?**

JCM: Yes; I am working on the graphics of it now. It's part of a series of podcast-based musicals called Anthem: Homunculus. I play a guy who is out of insurance and has a brain tumor in a small town. He's doing a live crowdfunding telethon on his iPhone app to save himself and raise money for his operation. There's a lot of autobiographical stuff in it.

Glenn Close plays my mom, Patti LuPone is my mom, and Denis O'Hare is my dad. It's a new form of musical where we use incredible A List people because we only need them for a few days to record. It's a six episode 10 hour series with 31 songs written by myself and Bryan Weller. The people that wanted to be a part of it is just stunning.

**WCT: Did you ever think you would be doing this as a little gay kid in Texas?**

JCM: I think I always was doing this. I was always very theatrical and self starting. At the beginning it was more about books and comics. I loved music, but when I discovered theater my drama teacher put me in my first play The Birthday Party. It's not the typical play and was extremely difficult. I just thought, "This is what I want to do with my life and I like the challenge!"

**The Origin of Love: The Songs & Stories of Hedwig sings out at the Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave., on Friday, Feb. 22, at 8 p.m. Visit AthenaeumTheatre.org or call 773-935-6875.**

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Photo of cast of Lucky, A Musical by Evan Hanover

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Baton cast, 1970s. Back row, from left: Leslie Rejeanné, Jodie Lee, Lynette Langston and Chilli Pepper.  
Front: Jan Howard, Orlando del Sol, Felicia, Audrey Bryant.  
Photo courtesy of Jim Flint



## The Baton Show Lounge at 50

BY OWEN KEEHNEN

Over the past fifty years, the Baton Show Lounge helped to set a new standard for female impersonation; heightening the polish, the professionalism, and the caliber of performance demanded of its cast members. The Baton took something once denigrated and demanded that it be given dignity. In the process, the Baton helped turn female impersonation into an art form and made it a viable career option for many.

"We are going out here with a bang! We are having the 50th anniversary show at the River North location on February 21st, a terrific show. Mimi Marks will even be coming back to the Baton for a performance. Then on March 1 we start at the new Uptown location at 4705 N. Broadway."

Flint's excitement about the move to Uptown is infectious. "I can't wait to be back in the center of my community. The new space is fantastic. The stage is wonderful. The sound and the lighting is top of the line. We are even revamping the shows a bit, with a return to big production numbers."

Although the future is exciting, for Flint the move is bittersweet. Closing the location at 436 N. Clark means saying goodbye to an important part of history. The world, and especially the River North area, was a very different place when the doors to the Baton opened in March of 1969. Gas was thirty-four cents a gallon, a postage stamp was six cents, and Nixon was still settling into the White House.

To understand the story of the Baton, it's helpful to understand Jim Flint. Born and raised in Peoria, Flint arrived in Chicago in 1965, fresh from a stint in the Navy. For the next few years, he worked as a bartender at several establish-



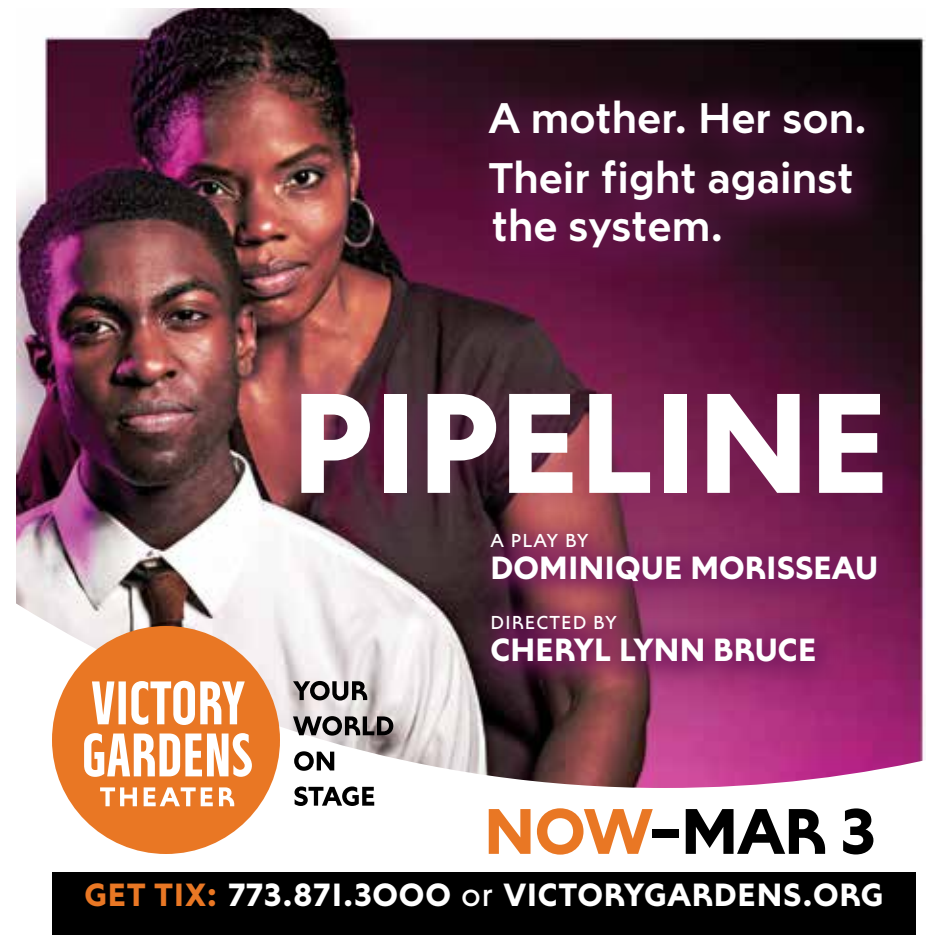
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ments including the Annex [2865 N. Clark] and the Chesterfield [2831 N. Clark].

When Flint was working at the Chesterfield, Roby Landers orchestrated one of her famous Turnabouts. On those evenings the entertainers would serve the drinks and check coats while the bartenders and the doorman did the drag show. On one of those occasions, Flint had his first taste of drag. He went on stage as Felicia with a flaming baton. Although his performance was somewhat of a fire hazard, he was a huge hit.

1965 was also the year Flint first heard the words, "This house is under arrest." During the '60s, being arrested was part and parcel for being employed at a gay bar. "Raids were terrible all through the 1960s," recalled Flint. "Sometimes the police would hit two or three bars a night. Overall I was arrested fifteen times, usually for being the keeper of a disorderly house or for soliciting for prostitution. All the charges were false, of course. If the police saw a man touching another man they would arrest both of them for public indecency. But in all those arrests, never once was I found guilty."

After the Chesterfield, Flint moved to Sam's [1205 N. Clark St.] where he became one of the most popular bartenders in the city. Shortly after the 1968 Democratic Convention, Sam's closed for good. The building was demolished to make way for the Sandburg Village development.

At the Normandy Inn [744 N. Rush St.] Flint started twirling his baton full time at the bar. "It was so much fun. Being behind the bar was my stage." Flint left the Normandy when he was denied a raise he felt he deserved. Instead, he



Early ad for The Baton Show Lounge.

Courtesy of Jim Flint

decided to open his own bar. When the Baton officially opened in March of 1969, it was at 430 N. Clark St., just south of its current location at 436 N. Clark. Today, a Starbucks stands in the original location.

At the beginning the Baton was called Smitty's Show Lounge after partner Dwight Smith. Flint was unable to get the liquor license in his name following his string of arrests from bar raids. Flint recalled, "Nobody was coming down to Smitty's. Nobody knew who Smitty was. Dwight moved to

California after a month or two." When that happened Smitty's Show Lounge became the Baton Show Lounge. "Once that happened, I started performing in the street, roller-skating down Clark Street with my baton to get people to notice. I had to let people know we were here. It was cheap advertising."

Flint also credits Roby Landers for helping get word out about the Baton. Landers had opened her nightclub, the House of Landers, beside the 'L' tracks at 936 W. Diversey Pkwy. "Every time

the train would go by, Roby would say, 'There goes that bitch again on her roller-skates.' People started wondering what Roby was talking about. And people started coming south to see Felicia and her gang."

Opening a bar that featured female impersonation wasn't part of Flint's original plan. "I wasn't thinking about opening a drag bar. I figured I was just going to open a regular old tavern. It was so shady down here at the time that nobody would come down here. So I figured to get people to come down, we'd have a drag show." Flint got entertainers Lady Baronessa, Jodie Lee, and Samantha George together. Next he put down sixteen empty cases of beer, covered them with plywood, got a spotlight, hung a curtain, and he was ready for the show.

"Along with those three, I performed as Felicia. I was more comic drag. Mostly I was emcee. The first Saturday night we did it I was overwhelmed. It was our best night for business. We did it again the next Saturday and it went well again. From there it just took off." Eventually Sundays were added and soon the Baton featured shows five nights a week.

Over the years, the neighborhood has gone through enormous changes. "The first year down here almost every night there was a fistfight with the winos and the rough street people. Eventually the Gold Coast and the Bistro moved in, then the New Flight, and many others." In less than five years, and throughout the '70s, the River North area was the popular area for gay nightlife.

Turn to page 26

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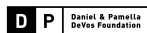
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## BATON from page 23

With the payoffs, bar upkeep, supplies, and staff wages Flint didn't always know if he was going to make payroll. But Jim Flint is tenacious and despite the hardships, he wasn't about to give up. At times the money was so tight he had to jump in a cab and go to the liquor store and get one bottle of bourbon and one bottle of gin because that's all he'd have the money for, but Flint made sure his people were taken care of.

In the early years the clientele was anyone and everyone. "We stayed open until 4:00AM and had pool tables. When we didn't have shows people could play pool. The music was good. We had a movie night. The bar still wasn't really profitable. I still lived in my room upstairs and showered in the basement because I couldn't afford to pay people, pay the rent, and rent an apartment."

By 1975, the Baton shows reflected the polish and appeal that has given the pioneering club its reputation for professionalism. Performers at the time included Dina Jacobs, Peaches, Jan Howard, China Nguyen, Jodie Lee, Leslie Rejeanne, and Audrey Bryant. The sparkling roster of talent is also indicative of another Baton trademark, Flint's knack for choosing performers that were each distinct and whose differences would combine to make a wonderful and varied show.

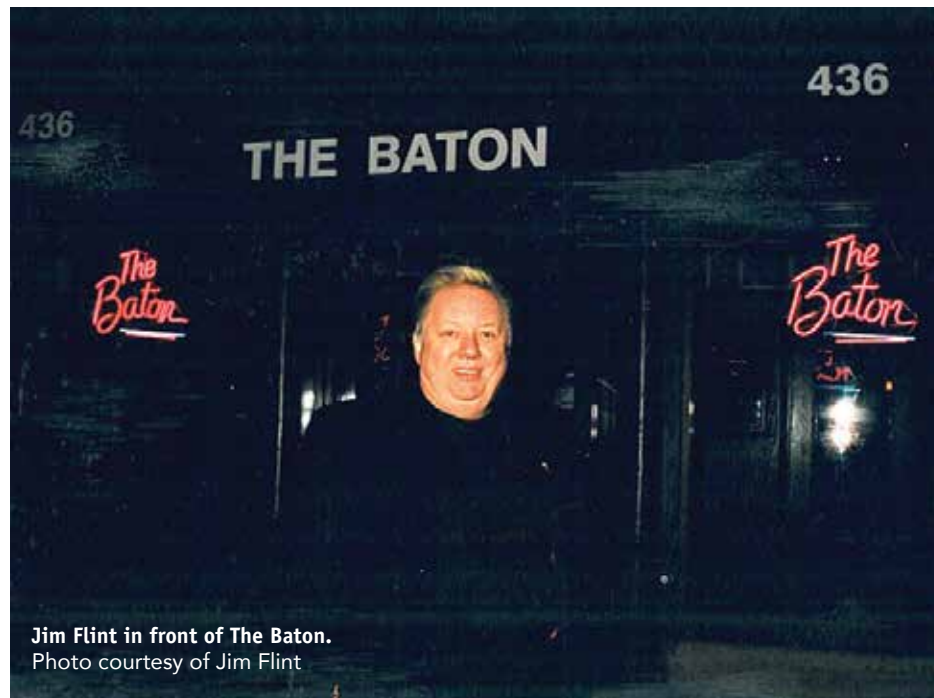
By the late '70s, the Baton had a solid reputation for top-notch productions that many claimed were the finest in the nation. Then, because of daytime talk shows, straight people started to find out about the Baton. "We'd been on Irv Kupcinet's show a few times when Irv said he was

bringing a guest to the show. It was Phil Donahue and Marlo Thomas. After the show Phil said he wanted us to go on his show. Not only did we go on his show, we went on five or six times. That got people talking and that's when I first met Oprah in 1982 in Baltimore, and then Sally Jessy Raphael, and then for a while we were just going from one talk show to another."

The publicity brought all sorts of people to the show. The Baton even became a destination for local luminaries as well as celebrities visiting Chicago. Notable audience members who sat in the footlights and enjoyed the show include Oprah, Madonna, Grace Jones, Kirk Douglas, Carol Channing, Janet Jackson, Mariah Carey, Sammy Davis, Jr., Joan Crawford, Ted Kennedy, Lauren Bacall, Paul Lynde, Liza Minnelli, Phyllis Diller, Goldie Hawn, Harold Washington, and countless others.

Regardless of who is in the audience, at the Baton the real stars are on the stage. The Baton has given dozens of female impersonators a platform to become legends. Cast members over the years have included Shante (Alexandra Billings), Mimi Marks, Chilli Pepper, Leslie Rejeanne, Wanda Lust, Sheri Payne, Peaches, Dina Jacobs, Kelly Lauren, Maya Douglas, Monica Munro, Tajma Hall, Cezanne, Sasha Colby, Victoria LePaige, Dana Douglas, Tasha Long, Audrey Bryant, the incomparable Ginger Grant, and many others.

Flint grew emotional discussing the closing of the current location. "So much has happened here. Fifty years is a long time. I think about all the people who performed on this stage and came through that door. I think about people who are no longer here. It's been difficult to think about



Jim Flint in front of The Baton.  
Photo courtesy of Jim Flint

leaving."

The talent, the costumes, the atmosphere, and the consistent dedication to quality have kept patrons coming for 50 years. Though the lights may be dimming on this magical place with its scarlet and mirrored decor, the impact and importance that the Baton has had locally, nationally, and internationally remains strong.

The Baton Show Lounge has been entertaining crowds for fifty years and in that time has become an essential part of Chicago LGBTQ history. Despite the change of address, audiences can rest assured that Jim Flint will remain firm in his commitment to presenting an entertaining show with top performers and impeccable production values. Some things are timeless.

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## BILLY Masters

"I don't know why. I just ... I always feel like I know him. I mean, maybe I have a little crush on him."—**Carrie Ann Inaba** on **David Muir**. OK, which of us is gonna tell her?

If I could have one gift for my birthday, it would be the Churro Donut from AMPM gas station. Doesn't that sound like a bit of heaven? A churro and a donut? They make them overnight (yes, I recognize I am salivating over a food product cooked in a gas station) and, in the morning, they go like hotcakes. Here's the problem—I am rarely awake before noon. And by noon, they are sold out. I thought I came up with a perfect plan—to buy one before I fell asleep at 4 a.m. But they weren't ready yet! If someone could figure out how I could have a fresh Churro Donut, that would be the best 50th birthday gift ever.

With all the talk last week about **David Pecker** running photos of **Jeff Bezos'** penis, few have mentioned the connection with **Ronan Farrow**. To recap, the Amazon founder claims that AMI, the parent company of The National Enquirer (published by Pecker), was trying to get him to refute his assertions that its expose of his romantic affair was politically motivated. He says that's why Pecker threatened to publicly publish pics of Bezos' pubics. Allegedly, Trump has Pecker in his pocket and has been using AMI to take down Bezos and his publication, The Washington Post. Did you follow that?

Into this mess walks our very own Ronan Satchel Farrow Sinatra Allen O'Sullivan. He tweeted that The National Enquirer made a similar threat against him: "I and at least one other prominent journalist involved in breaking stories about the National Enquirer's arrangement with Trump fielded similar 'stop digging or we'll ruin you' blackmail efforts from AMI. (I did not engage as I don't cut deals with subjects of ongoing reporting.)" So, the question remains—does The Enquirer have pics of Ronan's rod?

Meanwhile across the pond, a gay porn star was fined 1,000 pounds for filming a gay threesome on a London subway car. George Mason, known to his fans as **Hung Young Brit**, shot the video with his boyfriend and an unidentified third man. The encounter took place on the Northern Line between Leicester Square and Waterloo stations. On that particular day, the entire journey took three minutes, including two stops. Perhaps they simply wanted to document the efficiency of the London Underground. The clip was shot in July 2017, but he didn't post it until February 2018—and that's when the problems started. A gay man saw the video online and reported it to the police. What's interesting to me is that the clip clearly shows other people on the subway train. And yet none of them reported it. Just another day on the Tube.

It is entirely possible that more people saw the video of this London subway threeway than Fox's non-live Rent. Rent was the least watched live-ish musical in recent history. To put it in perspec-



**Jake Gyllenhaal is baring all (or most, rather) in a new movie, Billy says.**

Photo of Gyllenhaal in Prisoners by Wilson Webb

tive, The Sound of Music, with Carrie Underwood, brought in SIX TIMES the viewership! People are using these statistics to explain why NBC has cancelled plans for Hair: Live! But, I would argue that NBC never had any intention of airing "Hair," live or otherwise. It was a no-win situation—if they did the musical as written, they would be bombarded by complaints and protests about the nudity and the content. If they censored it, they would be blasted by everyone else. Officially, the peacock network says, "We need titles that have a wide appeal and we're in the process of acquiring the rights to a couple of new shows that we're really excited about." That makes one of us.

Speaking of musicals, we still may get a remake of Gypsy. As you'll recall, **Barbra Streisand's** long-planned turn as Mama Rose stalled at the station. But Gypsy is once again in development. **Amy Sherman-Palladino**, creator of The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, is now in talks to direct the remake. Although Babs is no longer in the running, a new name has been floated—**Melissa McCarthy**. What's interesting about that is the first time we heard of her singing was when she recorded a duet of "Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better"... with Streisand! Prophetic words, indeed.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Wade in Fort Lauderdale: "When is this new movie with **Jake Gyllenhaal** coming out? I keep seeing previews for it and Jake's naked. But I don't see it playing anywhere."

It's already out—on Netflix. Since the film is about the art world, one review was titled, "Jake Gyllenhaal's Naked Body is the Greatest Work of Art in 'Velvet Buzzsaw'." And I concur—except for Jake's unfortunate bangs. Yes, there is a good amount of nudity. Although he isn't actually full frontal, he is certainly full backal. And he's in

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good company. One of his love interests is played by retired basketball player Sedale Threatt Jr. Yes, he's a he—and a mighty hot he who gives at least a hint of everything ... as you'll see on BillyMasters.com.

When Pecker has a peck of prick pics to publish in public, it's time to end yet another column. Well, it's finally here: 50. And as I celebrate being half a century old, I am reminded of something my pal Belinda Carlisle said when she turned 50. She talked about wanting to retire from The Go-Go's: "I know I don't want to be doing it when I'm in my mid-fifties. I'd like to end it on a high note, with a little dignity." So who knows how much longer I'll be writing—although I hasten to add that Babe performed with The Go-Go's this past summer on the eve of her 60th birthday. So, perhaps I ain't going anywhere. But, for the time being, you can grab some sizzling hot dish on BillyMasters.com—the site that doesn't look its age. If you have a question, email Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I eat my weight in Churro Donuts! Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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# the DISH

Dining Guide in  
WINDY CITY TIMES

## SAVOR

### Taureaux Tavern; Black Restaurant Week

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Those fluent in French probably know what **Taureaux Tavern** (155 W. Van Buren St.; TaureauxTavern.com) is all about—especially when its location is considered.

Nestled in the Loop's financial district, the spot's name (which is French for "bull") becomes a bit clearer, with the bull and bear markets that are part of everyday life at the nearby stock exchange and Board of Trade. (In fact, two of the dishes at Taureaux are the seafood-focused Le Bear and Le Bull towers.)

Although there are certainly French dishes at Taureaux, American and event Italian plates are present as well. Appetizers are impressive, with offerings such as escargot Taureaux (served in the shell, with garlic butter, bread crumbs and parmesan), steak tartare and—my favorite—the foie gras pate, with apple mustard that provided a memorable contrast. (All are accompanied by slices of bread that provided the perfect platforms for spreading and/or dipping.) The only item that fell somewhat short was the oeuf mayonnaise caviar—a dish consisting of an eight-minute egg, maple syrup, osetra caviar and garlic-egg aioli that only provided a faint burst of flavor for



**Roast chicken at Taureaux Tavern.**

Photo by Andrew Davis

both of us.

However, after all the upscale food, I settled for the Gold Label burger—and the concoction (prime chuck, thick-cut American cheese and caramelized truffle onions on a sesame brioche bun) was one of the best burgers I've had in a city that specializes in them. The juicy roast chicken was similarly wonderful, confirming that sometimes simple is best.

And if you have room for dessert, please try either the flourless chocolate cake or the financier. Taureaux scores with both items.

As for the cocktail, Sympathy for the Devil (Glenmorangie 10 year, brovo ginger, pear puree, lemon and cardamom bitters) is a refreshing must-try. My friend tried mine and immediately

ordered one for himself.

I hope to return to Taureaux for breakfast, which has everything from croque Madame to S'mores waffle—and that's no bull.

#### Black Restaurant Week through Feb. 17

Chicago Black Restaurant Week is running through Feb. 17.

Last year, 26 restaurants participated, with more than \$11,000 being spent, according to the website. This year, 38 spots are taking part.

Just a few of the restaurants that are involved include Nadia's Gourmet Grapes, 841 W. 103rd St.; AJ's Southern Dining, 117 N. 19th Ave. (Melrose Park); Luella's Southern Kitchen, 4609 N. Lincoln Ave.; Irie Jerk Bar & Grill, 3404 N. Clark St.; Haire's Gulf Shrimp, 7448 S. Vincennes Ave.; LiFE Food 3858, 3858 W. Madison St.; Signature Sweets Factor, 514 E. 162nd St. (South Holland); Kiss My Dish Soul Kitchen, 4542 Rt. 71 (Oswego); and The Bureau Bar & Restaurant, 724 S. Maxwell St.

See <http://chiBlackrestaurantweek.com/>.

#### Valentine's Day special: The Kitchen

Don't have an idea where to take your sweetheart for Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)? Then, try The Kitchen Bistro (316 N. Clark St.; <https://www.thekitchenbistros.com/location/the-kitchen-chicago/>).

In addition to its regular menu, there are special items for that day, including Belgian endive salad, pan-roasted filet, seared scallops and Manila clams, and molten chocolate soufflé. Each of these dishes has something intriguing to offer that will add dimension to your meal—and your evening.

**Note: Restaurant profiles/events are based on invitations arranged from restaurants and/or firms.**



#### NAME

"A long time ago, I had taken a hiatus from performing drag and when I decided to come out of retirement, I felt a need to recreate myself and dust off my packer. As soon as that thought hit me, I knew my new name: Dusty Bahls."

#### FIRST DRAG PERFORMANCE

"I first did drag back in 2001-2002 for a friend's variety show. It was a circus-themed show, so a drag queen and I chose to go as conjoined Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers twins. We performed 'Islands in the Stream' together where I drank a bottle of whiskey and she was the one who got drunker and drunker."

#### DRAG INSPIRATION

"When I came back into doing drag in 2012, I felt there was a need to see a man worth celebrating. I felt that many times when I saw kings perform, they saw it as a chance to behave in very lewd or crass ways and that really wasn't what I wanted to see on a stage, nor did I find it entertaining. I wanted to see someone likeable, dapper, funny, and ultimately, kind."

#### GO-TO NUMBER TO SLAY THE CROWD

"Dusty's Love Boat. It's so stupid. I'm a huge fan of making a fool of myself and I'm not afraid of being self-deprecating. I come out dressed as a pirate wearing a small dinghy I made out of corkboard and balsa wood with little puppet legs I throw over the side and play around with. This act in particular is such a hit, I think, because it's so stupid, it's (almost) smart."

#### FUN FACT

"Between my eras of drag, I was executive lesbian femme. I wore make up (not looking like a dude) and had my hair blown out, making me look like Demi Moore."

#### FUTURE PROJECTS

"I'm focusing a lot on my new company, T-Time Toys, where I design and make silicone sex toys geared towards the trans community (although all demographics are able to enjoy them)."

#### WHERE CAN WE CATCH YOU

House of Blues; Clipper Cabaret at The California Clipper; TRIX at Scarlet Bar

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: dustysbahls  
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Photo by  
Greg Inda

## CONCERT REVIEW

# Cher entertains in United Center show

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY JERRY NUNN

The United Center was packed Feb. 8 for Cher's show, filled to the rafters with the LGBT community, drunk middle-aged women and older couples who were possibly celebrating an early Valentine's Day. There were plenty of drag queens in the audience that night as well as some fans that just tend to look like her.

The Here We Go Again Tour kicked things off with Nile Rodgers performing his funky Chic tunes. Opening for Cher would be a daunting task for many, but not for the man who penned "I'm Coming Out" and "We Are Family." He just fit right in.

Empowering songs such as "Woman's World" and "Strong Enough" began the Cher section of the concert as she descended on a trapeze to screams from the crowd. Cherilyn Sarkisian certainly knows how to make an entrance.

A disgruntled bartender at the venue mentioned that he didn't want to hear Cher talk about politics as Barbra Streisand recently did there for her concert. Cher didn't need to as her Twitter page speaks volumes. She did tell a few stories about her struggles at the beginning, but that was quickly left behind as she traveled through the decades of her career in song.

Late ex-husband Sonny Bono was projected on a large video screen for "I Got You Babe" and was there in spirit. The nostalgia of the '70s has always



been a highlight of a Cher show, from past television vignettes to her duet of "The Beat Goes On." After the success of Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again, Cher made the age-appropriate album Dancing Queen, which is full of ABBA covers. "Waterloo," "SOS" and "Fernando" have now replaced her standards "Dark Lady" and "Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves."

The song choices for a Cher concert are really a Sophie's choice these days. Does she get rid of "After All" and "The Shoop Shoop Song (It's in His Kiss)" instead? "Welcome to Burlesque" must be kept just for the costumes and spectacle, but it's certainly not better than some of her classic tracks.

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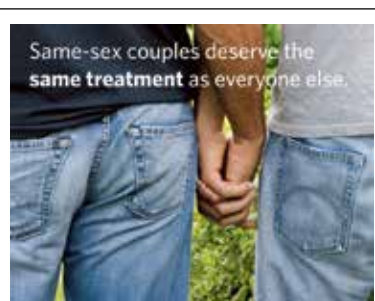
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### Marquee of the newly named James M. Nederlander Theatre.

Photo by Amy Boyle Photography

## Nederlander Theatre lights marquee

Broadway In Chicago's newly named James M. Nederlander Theatre recently lit its marquee for the first time.

The venue, at 24 W. Randolph, honors the late James M. Nederlander, the legendary Broadway theater owner and producer, founder of Broadway In Chicago and champion of Chicago's Downtown Theatre District. His family lit the marquee in remembrance of him and his work.

Upcoming productions for the new venue include Dear Evan Hansen (Feb. 12 -March 10), A Bronx Tale (March 12-24), Anastasia (March 26-April 7), Dein Perry's Tap Dogs (April 16-21), Rent 20th Anniversary Tour (May 10-19), Falsettos (May 28-June 9) and Cats (July 16-Aug. 4).

## CHER from page 28

A video segment with Cher reminiscing about Elvis Presley and dressing as him in drag led into Her Marc Cohn cover of "Walking in Memphis." Another successful montage involved her acting roles; it was artfully pieced together as it played on large video screens. The quote that brought down the house was from Stuck on You: "Do you know why I don't beg? Because I am a fucking Oscar winner!" Clips from Silkwood, Mask, The Witches of Eastwick and Moonstruck were also played of the Golden Globe and Academy Award winner.

She literally turned back the clock by wearing her signature Bob Mackie look from the video "If I Could Turn Back Time." She strutted confident back and forth making good use of the space and perfect lighting.

The 72-year-old puts out a well-planned show that everyone should see live at least once. As good as her dancers are, the focus and spotlight always remain on her. The costume changes she is known for never stopped coming—right down until "Believe" at the end, in which she wore a revealing silver sparkly number and new red wig.

You can take Cher out of Las Vegas, but can't take the Vegas out of Cher. Her Nevada residency has paid off by showing a well-curated set list, eye-popping costumes and the hits that kept the crowd on its feet. I have attended many farewell concerts of Cher over the years that she now jokes about. Are the fans ready to "Go Again?" We will see.

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# WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Thursday, Feb. 14

**Galentine's Day Paint and Sip Party**  
Wine, nibbles, art supplies. Partnered with Bottle and Bottega for Valentine's. 6:30pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/Galentines?erid=9495925&trid=734cae63-0fa9-4cd5-9ea5-626cdb5033f4>

**THE GOLDEN GIRLS: The Lost Episodes - The Valentine Edition** Poor Dorothy can't find a date for the Sadie Hawkins dance at the Miami Senior Center. When Rose sets her up with a man with a colorful past, the evening takes a turn for the bizarre.. Through Sunday, March 10, 2019 8:00pm Stage 773 1225 W Belmont Chicago (773) 327-5252 <http://www.handbagproductions.org/>

## Friday, Feb. 15

**Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde** Promethean's critically-acclaimed production of Moises Kaufman's historical drama. Through March 23, 2019 7:30pm Strawdog Theatre Company 3829 N Broadway Chicago <http://tinyurl.com/pte-wilde>

**The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing** Chicago Opera Theater presents the first concert performance of a brand new opera, the story of Alan Turing, the groundbreaking coder who was persecuted for his sexual orientation. 7:30pm DePaul School of Music's Gannon Concert Hall, 2330 N Halsted St. Tickets: <http://cot.org/Turing>



## POWER OF 'LOVE'

Tuesday, Feb. 19

Eisha Love (above) is the subject of the film *Chicago Love*, which will be screened. WCT archival photo

**Bryce Vine** Genre-bending rapper. \$20 8:00pm Lincoln Hall Chicago 2424 N Lincoln Ave Chicago <http://www.lh-st.com/Shows/02-15-2019+Bryce+Vine>

## Saturday, Feb. 16

**AHF Out of The Closet Grand Opening** Celebrate the grand opening of The AIDS Healthcare Foundation's Out of the

Closet Thrift Store and Free HIV testing site. Music, food, drink, chance to win plane tickets and a week-long trip to Fort Lauderdale. (Donation pick up, drop off started Feb. 11) 10:00am - 1:00pm Out of the Closet Thrift Store 311 North Halsted Street Chicago <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/ahf-out-of-the-closet-grand-opening-tickets-55940170556>

**AIDS Survivor Syndrome Support Group** A new support group for survivors of the AIDS crisis. Questions to Joe K - a.s.s.s.g.chicago@gmail.com 12:30pm - 2:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=15999>

**Chicago Magic Lounge Family Show** Geared towards LGBTQ+ families, ages 5 to 105. \$10 tickets, Children ages 12 and under, free. RSVP online. 2:30pm - 4:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago Tickets: <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/magic?erid=9437527&trid=ea201a15-a40b-46c4-9d87-962719a0e14b>

**Sketchy Saturday at the Lucky Horseshoe** Order a drink and draw one of the beautiful models/dancers. 5:45pm Lucky Horseshoe 3169 N Halsted St Chicago

## Sunday, Feb. 17

**The G Force** When parents are unable to parent, an increasing number of grandparents step in to raise their children's children, becoming today's "G Force." Produced and Edited by Sharon Zurek; Produced and Directed by Pamela Sherrod Anderson, both in person at this showing. 3:00pm Chicago Filmmakers 5243 N Clark Chicago <http://Chicago-Filmmakers.org>

**Girls Like Us** Laura Freeman, Beckie Menzie & Marianne Murphy Orland combine

to celebrate the ground breaking music of Carole King, Carly Simon and Joni Mitchell. \$40 3:00pm Dominican University, MARTIN RECITAL HALL 7900 W. Division St., River Forest, IL <http://www.eventbrite.com>

## Monday, Feb. 18

**LGBT Veteran Business Mixer** Hosted by Saving Another Female Veteran, (SAFE). Find LGBT Veteran Business Mixer on Facebook 3:00pm Jeffery Pub 7041 S Jeffery Blvd Chicago <http://safeenlistee.com/>

**Gary Sinise book tour** In conversation with fellow Steppenwolf co-founder Jeff Perry about new book by Sinise, Grateful American: A Journey from Self to Service. \$45 7:00pm Steppenwolf 1650 N Halsted Chicago <http://steppenwolf.org>

## Tuesday, Feb. 19

**Chicago Love screening** Film follows Eisha Love as she rebuilds her life after being incarcerated and tried to find work as an out trans woman with a criminal record. Reception 5:30 p.m., followed by screening and discussion 6-7:30 p.m. 5:30pm - 7:30pm Dr. Martin Luther King Center, 4314 S. Cottage Grove Ave. 312-201-9740, ext. 353 <http://action.aclu.org/webform/chicago-love-screening-and-discussion>

**Homolatte, Queer Words and Music** LGBTI community event created to give opportunities for writers and musicians to showcase their talents. Tonight, Michael Burke (spoken word), George Abey (music) 7:30pm Big Chicks 5024 N Sheridan Rd Chicago <http://www.homolatte.com>

## Wed., Feb. 20

**Mega Connect Kickoff: Multi-Chamber Networking Breakfast** Informal net-

working over a hot buffet breakfast and each participant will present about their company's products and services. Including LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois. RSVP online 7:30am - 9:30am DoubleTree by Hilton Chicago North Shore Conference Center, 9599 N. Skokie Blvd. Skokie <http://business.lgbtcc.com>

## Thursday, Feb. 21

**The WOMB** Open Mic Nite Time to read that poem you have been so afraid to read, break that silence you've been wanting to break, reveal that part of yourself... 7:00pm Affinity Community Services 2850 S Wabash Ave Ste 108 Chicago <http://affinity95.org>

## Tuesday, Feb. 19

**Lipstick & Lyrics: Band Together** Chicago's largest live-singing drag show returns with songs of protest to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Stonewall with selections that furthered civil rights toward equality for all. First show 8 p.m. 10:00pm The Annoyance Theatre 851 W Belmont Ave, Chicago Tickets: <http://www.cgmc.org/>

## Sunday, Feb. 24

**A Night with Oscar** Viewing party to benefit Center on Halsted in a fun and festive atmosphere. 6 p.m.: Live Red Carpet Arrival & Auction. 7 p.m.: Academy Awards Telecast. 9 p.m.: Silent Auction Ends & Event Drawing. RSVP online 6:00pm Park West Chicago 322 W. Armitage Ave Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/ano/>

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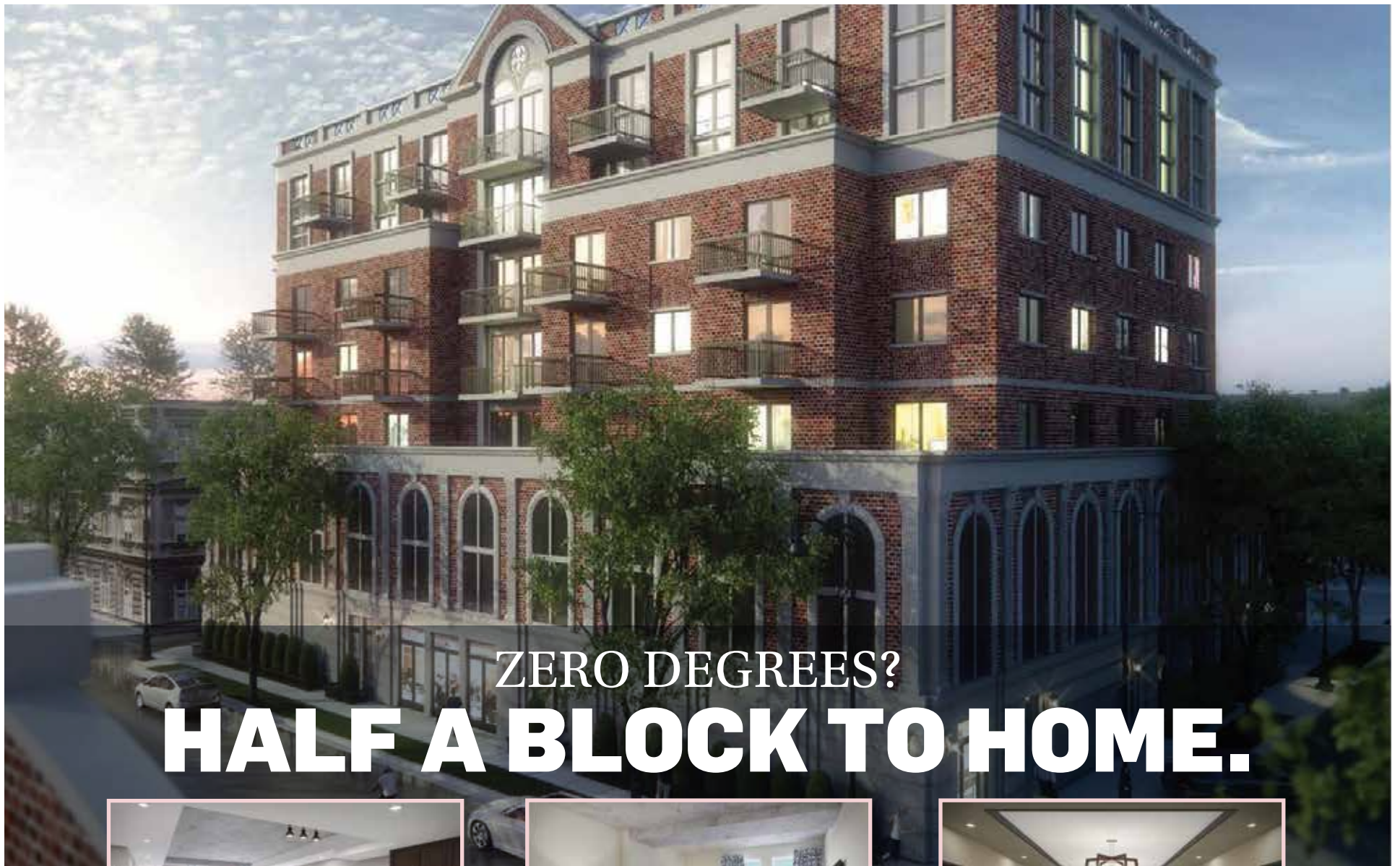
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