

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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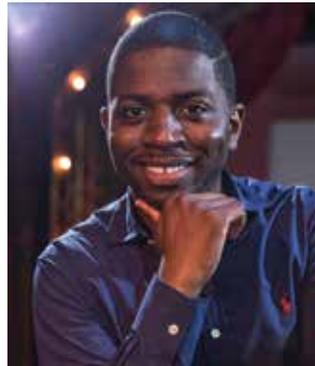
EDDIE HUNSPERGER

Activist and partner of Rick Garcia dies.

Photo of Hunsperger (right) and Garcia courtesy of Garcia



4



SEEING THE LIGHT

Lighthouse Foundation prepares programming.

Photo of Rev. Jamie Frazier by Marcel Brunious

8

FUN AND GUNN

Tim Gunn on his new show, 'Making the Cut'.

Photo by Scott McDermott



13

Chicago Pride Parade 2019.
Photo by Kat Fitzgerald
(www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)

PAGE 6



TWO SIDES OF PRIDE

Chicago Pride postponed;
Buffalo Grove Pride drives on



PAGE 17

Buffalo Grove Pride 2019.
Tim Carroll Photography



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INDEX

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NEWS	
Ernie Hunsperger, partner of Rick Garcia, dies	4
PASSAGES David Charles Parker	4
Pride Parade organizer on postponing event	6
COVID-19 Howard Brown, Partner Vida partner	6
Stay-at-home order specifics	7
Lighthouse Foundation; city officials	8
Howard Brown Health's safer-sex kit delivery	9
Gateway Foundation focuses on LGBTQs	10
Autobiography looks at Chicago LGBTQ media	10
VIEWPOINTS Mombian; letter	12
ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS	
Tim Gunn and his new show	13
Television: Interview with 'Politician' co-stars	15
Television: Trans actress on being in 'Supergirl'	16
Buffalo Grove's novel Pride Parade approach	17
GLAAD fundraiser brings in \$225K	17
Music: Trent Crews on new single, coming out	18
NIGHTSPOTS	19
Classifieds	21
Calendar	22

UPCOMING 2020

WINDY CITY TIMES PRINT DATES:

May 13, 2020	July 8, 2020	Sept. 2, 2020
May 27, 2020	July 22, 2020	Sept. 16, 2020
June 10, 2020	Aug. 5, 2020	Sept. 30, 2020
June 24, 2020	Aug. 19, 2020	Oct. 14, 2020

online exclusives at
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SENSE OF RUMOR

Rev. Irene Monroe contends that the media should stop speculating about Queen Latifah's sexuality.

Photo of Queen Latifah by Jerry Nunn

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE



Jimmy Ausbrooks is a gay U.S. Senate candidate in Kentucky who ultimately hopes to topple Mitch McConnell.

Photo courtesy of Ausbrooks

GOING HOLLYWOOD

The series 10 Questions with Vic continues with Hollywood Holland.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Jeff Goldblum, 'The Baker and the Beauty,' and Bowen Yang.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

Dear Friends,

As difficult as these times are, please know my team and I are here - as always - to help in any way we can. Looking back at a 25+ year career in real estate, I helped my clients navigate their lives through some truly frightening and unprecedented times, including the HIV/AIDS crisis, 9/11, and the Great Recession of 2008.

Although I don't pretend to have all the answers, I do know that in me you have a proven and trusted counselor who will help you evaluate your options with candor, insight into the marketplace, and an unwavering commitment to your well-being. It goes without saying that your focus should be to stay safe and healthy. **And, when it comes to real estate, I will remain your trusted advisor ready to help in any way I can.**

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Ernie Hunsperger, partner of activist Rick Garcia, dies

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Activist Ernie Hunsperger died April 9 at Elevate Rehabilitation Center in Chicago due to complications from his throat cancer treatments. He was 78.

Hunsperger was born March 31, 1942, in Glens Falls, New York, where he spent his childhood. He graduated with both a BA and master's degree in music from Pottsdam University.

Hunsperger then taught music for a number of years at a high school on Long Island, but became disillusioned with teaching because the students did not appreciate classical music, which was one of his passions.

Switching to the public relations field, Hunsperger worked for a firm in Manhattan for a time where one of his clients was Leonard Bernstein. He then became a furniture salesperson for B. Altman & Co. in New York, and continued to sell furniture at Marshall Field's after he moved to Chicago in 1990.

While working at Marshall Field's, Hunsperger sold expensive furniture to clients such as the Blagojevich family, opera star Catherine Malfitano and Chicago Mayor Jane Byrne. Byrne was notorious for returning purchases, but Hunsperger proudly told friends that "Mayor Byrne never returned anything I sold her."

His longtime partner, Rick Garcia, told Windy City Times that Hunsperger would say to him, "I am not enough of a salesman to wheel-and-deal," which is why he stuck to selling the expensive furniture to willing buyers.

Hunsperger retired in 2007 and spent the next 15 years supporting Garcia as they advocated for LGBTQ equality in Illinois.

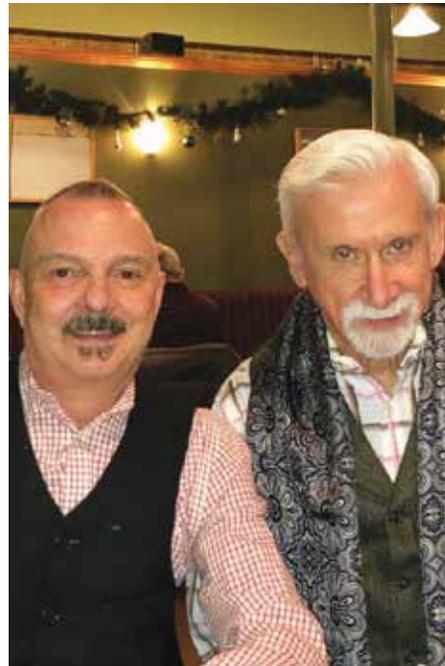
The couple met at a bar in Manhattan 40 years ago. They lived together in New York City before Garcia moved to Chicago in 1986 and Hunsperger followed.

"For four decades Ernie was my best friend, companion, comforter and my rock—the one who challenged me and the only one who could tell me no," said Garcia.

Hunsperger is survived by Garcia; his brother Dan Hunsperger; sister-in-law Evelyn; Garcia's siblings who adored him; many nieces and nephews; and countless chosen family members and friends. He was preceded in death by his father Walter Hunsperger and mother C. Marion Hunsperger.

"Ernie was one of the kindest and sweetest guys I have ever met," said longtime friend John Zmuda. "Every time I saw him, he always had a thoughtful gesture to give or a fun story to tell me. I strive to be the strong and supportive partner to my husband, in the way he was to his partner Rick. I will forever cherish the orchids he gifted me and the memories we made together."

"Ernie was a strong supportive force behind his partner Rick," said longtime friend Jhonmar Cas-



Ernie Hunsperger (right) and Rick Garcia. Photo courtesy of Hunsperger

tillo. "He was always there for the losses along the road to equal rights, and of course the historic victories. Ernie kept Rick going. He encouraged him to never give up and to keep fighting for the greater good of the community. I strive to live my life in such a way [as] to always encourage my partner as well as myself, to always better both one another, and the greater good of society."

"Ernie was wonderful," said longtime friend and former state Sen. Carol Ronen. "He had a sharp mind, a quick wit and great sense of the ironic. Ernie was a quiet man that could say a whole lot with just a smile or a look ... and you knew exactly what he was saying. He was fiercely loyal, a true friend and above all else a loving partner to Rick, who could never do wrong in his eyes."

"I remember telling Ernie one day that he was a true 'fooler,'" said longtime friend Rocco Claps. "Ernie could be quite prickly in political discussions, in restaurant choices, in comments about the style of a jacket and about the people he was mad at. He could boom at you on the phone about a wide array of topics, often within the same conversation."

"But then, in a quieter moment, he would intuitively know what you were thinking, what you were sad about, what you were feeling. If you stuck around long enough, this strongly opinionated man with pointed words and perfect phrasing would turn into one of the sweetest, kindest people you ever met—with a thunderous laugh and a gigantic heart."

"He was deeply committed to his partner, Rick.

And [he] knew that in all of Rick's work, he was there to support him, protect him and tell him the truth. Ernie was a profoundly 'alive' person, and his love, honesty and loyalty were his greatest attributes. I enjoyed every moment I ever spent with Ernie. I loved him. And I will miss him."

"Ernie was a very private person with incredible hidden depths," said longtime friend Ellen Meyers. "He knew everyone in the most elite New York cultural circles in the 1960s, '70s [and] '80s, and he was propositioned by composers and dancers and turned them down, or not. Ernie summered with friends in Venice or Fire Island, and wintered in Miami Beach. He loved that he was able to do this on virtually no money, because his eye was so good. Ernie loved that a lot of people did not

have a clue who he was. He was a very cultured person—a musician, a ballet dancer, an appreciator of art and male beauty. Ernie had an unerring eye for design and fashion.

"My wife and I have never considered relocating a single knick-knack he placed on our tables or shelves, and now for sure we will not. They have to be in a specific triangular layout we cannot ever duplicate. Ernie cherished and collected the best things, and liked them all the more because others might have overlooked them. He was the same way with people. Ernie was reserved, but his wit was basic and bawdy. He loved dogs, especially Schnauzers. I miss him so much."

Services were private due to the COVID-19 pandemic and memorials in Hunsperger's name can be sent to EvanstonAnimalShelter.net.

PASSAGES

David Charles Parker

David Charles Parker—of Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, formerly of Cincinnati, Ohio—passed away due to COVID-19 on April 8. He was 56.

Born in Covington, Kentucky, David earned his bachelor's degree in chemistry from Northern Kentucky University and his master's in health-services administration from Xavier University; he worked most recently in clinical data management at PPD, Inc.

He was the beloved husband and partner of five-and-a-half years to Dale William Roberson; and faithful companion of Zoe and Oscar, their French bulldogs.

David was the adoring godson of Rosemary Stein; and a dear friend of Douglas Smith, Lloyd Battle, Bud Shunnarah, Kelvin Burroughs and so many others

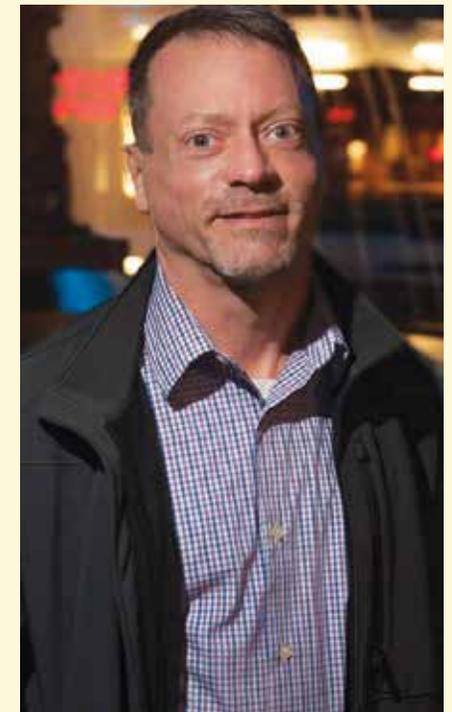
David was an avid fan of the show Dr. Pimple Popper, figure skating, musical theater, baking, traveling (especially on cruises), gardening and anything else that sparked his creativity.

He was the only child of the late Audrey H. Parker and Nancy D. Parker (nee Resing).

An appropriate celebration of life will be held in the future.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to The Trevor Project.

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



Above: David Parker.

Photo courtesy of Cremation Society of Illinois

Below: David Parker and husband Dale Roberson at their wedding.

Photo by Rick Aguilar Studios





Howard Brown Health

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Pride Parade organizer discusses decision to postpone event

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Chicago Pride Parade organizers announced April 22 that their planned June 28 event would be postponed, following similar announcements for parades in New York City and San Francisco, as the community reels from the COVID-19 crisis.

In a statement that day, Parade Coordinator Tim Frye said, "We have always felt that safety is the first priority for our participants in the parade; the hundreds of thousands of spectators; as well as the city agencies and independent contractors that work so hard to make the parade a success every year."

A spate of other local summertime events—among them Pride Fest (moved to Labor Day weekend, Sept. 5-6), which is organized by Northalsted Business Alliance, and Blues Fest—are also being postponed or cancelled. (At this time, Northalsted Market Days remains on the calendar for the weekend of Aug. 8-9.) Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker had already signaled that he would be discouraging large-scale gatherings this summer.

The Chicago Pride Parade is the third largest in the country, behind New York City and San Francisco's.

Organizer Tim Frye told Windy City Times, "It was a decision I hated to make, but I didn't see any other way."

Frye emphasized that he and the parade committee wanted to "leave the door open" for a

2020 event, perhaps for late summer or the fall, but a concrete timeline was an impossibility at this point.

Frye, who took over the role as principal coordinator after the passing of husband Richard Pfeiffer in 2019, said that he had already received about 85 entry forms, and that he'd been trying to determine how the parade could go on even as the community was subject to health mandates such as social-distancing.

"We knew what we needed, and had been keeping in touch with the City," he added.

But while meeting with fellow organizers recently, Frye asked whether they would feel safe were the parade to proceed as planned. Most answered that they would not.

"That said it all," Frye recalled, adding that he had been watching for San Francisco and New York City's decisions as well.

The parade organizers frequently receive messages along with the entry forms wherein participants frequently transmit their excitement over the upcoming event, Frye said. In the past, he admitted, he would not think much about processing those entries until he saw one such message, when an applicant said that the Parade was, for them, "the light at the end of the tunnel."

As such, Frye knows how much the decision means for the LGBT community.

"I was holding out as long as I could," he said.



Pride Parade organizer Tim Frye (left) with late husband (and original organizer) Rich Pfeiffer. WCT photo

COVID-19

Howard Brown Health, Project Vida partner on Little Village services

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Howard Brown Health CEO and President David Munar announced April 16 that his organization, in collaboration with Project Vida, would establish a new COVID-19 "care station" in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood.

The station is located adjacent to Project Vida's headquarters at 2659 S. Kedvale Ave., and utilizes testing supplies provided by the State of Illinois, Munar said. He announced the initiative at Gov. JB Pritzker's April 16 briefing on the state's ongoing COVID-19 response.

The care station would offer risk assessment for COVID-19 infection, medical evaluations and, if indicated, screening for infection, Munar added. Those services are provided without cost, and without regard for immigration status. Staff are bilingual in English and Spanish.

"Both Project Vida and Howard Brown recognize the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the Latino community," Munar said. "Latinx people have the lowest rate of healthcare coverage of any racial ethnic group. Both organizations have a long history of community mobilization around HIV prevention, education and linkage to care.

"Like HIV, coronavirus thrives where there are social inequities. With society and the federal government increasingly hostile towards Latino immigrants and our families, the magnitude of our health and economic disparities among Latinos are expected to grow."

Munar further noted that Howard Brown Health staff has operated a COVID-19 hotline and has triaged more than 1,000 patients by phone. The organization also redirected about half of its regular visits to video- or telephone-visits in response to the pandemic.

Howard Brown Health has already launched care stations at its facilities in Englewood, Hyde Park, Lake View, Uptown and Rogers Park and plans to open West Side locations the week of April 20.

The Little Village care station is open Monday-Friday from 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

COVID-19

San Francisco Pride cancelled for first time

San Francisco's 2020 Pride Parade and Celebration, which had been scheduled for June 27-28, has been officially cancelled amid coronavirus concerns, according to media reports.

This year was to mark the celebration's 50th anniversary—and it is the first time the event has been cancelled.

"We know what Pride symbolizes for San Francisco—and to LGBTQ+ people around the world," said San Francisco Pride board President Carolyn Wysinger in a statement. "We know our decision means disappointment, canceled plans and one less thing for us all to look forward to. We also know that protecting the safety of all our communities is the most important."

Between 900,000 and 1 million people—40 percent from out of town—were expected to gather in the city for the event.

Regarding Chicago, word still has not officially come in regarding its Pride Parade.

COVID-19

New York City Pride events cancelled

Heritage of Pride, in partnership with the City of New York, announced that the NYC Pride 2020 roster of events, originally scheduled for June 14-28, will not take place as planned.

Due to the collective concern for the overall safety of the community, the organization has worked closely with the City to arrive at this decision.

San Francisco and Los Angeles are among the other U.S. cities that have cancelled their Pride activities.

"New York City is the birthplace of the modern LGBTQ rights movement. We've come a long way since the first Christopher Street Liberation Day March 50 years ago, which is a testament to the bravery and resiliency of LGBTIA+ New Yorkers in the struggle for equality," said Mayor Bill de Blasio in a statement. "While this pandemic prevents us from coming together to march, it will in no way stop us from celebrating the indelible contributions that the LGBTIA+ community has made to New York City or from recommitting ourselves to the fight for equal rights."

As a founding member of InterPride, the board and membership of Heritage of Pride have agreed to participate in the virtual Global Pride event Saturday, June 27. Additionally, NYC Pride will continue to focus on initiatives like Pride Gives Back.



WorldPride NYC in 2019. Photo by Sam Estep

COVID-19

Details of Pritzker's extension of stay-at-home order

Based on data from scientists and health experts and after consulting with stakeholders across the state regarding COVID-19, Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker announced that he will sign a modified version of the state's stay-at-home order that will go into effect Friday, May 1.

The order will be extended through May.

The state is projected to see a peak or plateau of deaths per day between late April and early May. However, if the stay at home order were lifted this week, a scientific model anticipates a second wave of the outbreak in Illinois starting in May that would claim tens of thousands of lives and greatly exceed the state's hospital capacity.

There will also be the following modifications beginning May 1:

—**Outdoor recreation:** State parks will begin a phased re-opening under guidance from the Department of Natural Resources. Fishing and boating in groups of no more than two people will

be permitted. A list of parks that will be open on May 1 and additional guidelines can be found on the Illinois Department of Natural Resources website. Golf will be permitted under strict safety guidelines provided by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and when ensuring that social distancing is followed.

—**New essential businesses:** Greenhouses, garden centers and nurseries may re-open as essential businesses. These stores must follow social distancing requirements and must require that employees and customers wear a face covering. Animal grooming services may also reopen.

—**Non-essential retail:** Retail stores not designated as non-essential businesses and operations may reopen to fulfill telephone and online orders through pick-up outside the store and delivery.

—**Face coverings:** Beginning May 1, individuals will be required to wear a face covering or

a mask when in a public place where they can't maintain a six-foot social distance. Face coverings will be required in public indoor spaces, such as stores. This new requirement applies to all individuals over the age of 2 who are able to medically tolerate a face covering or mask.

—**Essential businesses and manufacturing:** Essential businesses and manufacturers will be required to provide face-coverings to all employees who are not able to maintain six feet of social distancing, as well as follow new requirements that maximize social distancing and prioritize the well-being of employees and customers. This will include occupancy limits for essential businesses and precautions such as staggering shifts and operating only essential lines for manufacturers.

—**Schools:** Educational institutions may allow and establish procedures for pick-up of necessary supplies or student belongings. Dormitory move-outs must follow public-health guidelines, including social distancing.

The Illinois Department of Public Health will also be issuing guidance to surgi-centers and hospitals to allow for certain elective surgeries for non-life-threatening conditions, starting May 1. Facilities will need to meet specific criteria, including proper PPE, ensuring enough overall space for COVID-19 patients remains available, and testing of elective surgery patients to ensure COVID-19 negative status.

Ruling blocks Illinois stay-at-home order

A judge ruled against Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker on April 27, issuing a restraining order over the extension of the state's stay-at-home order, putting the statewide plan in jeopardy, NBC Chicago reported.

Clay County Circuit Court Judge Michael McHaney ruled against Pritzker's order, granting a restraining order to temporarily block the stay-at-home restrictions set to take effect Friday, May 1.

Republican state Rep. Darren Bailey filed a lawsuit in Clay County Circuit Court claiming Pritzker has exceeded his authority and is violating the civil rights of the state's residents. "We are certainly going to act in a swift action to have this ruling overturned," Pritzker said in his daily coronavirus press briefing on April 27.

The NBC Chicago item is at NBCChicago.com. Windy City Times will update this situation as more news becomes available.

Medical professionals urge overturning of blood-donation ban

GLAAD released an open letter penned by more than 500 medical professionals responding to the U.S. Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) revised recommendations on gay and bisexual men, and other LGBTQ people, from donating blood by reducing the deferral period from 12 months to three months.

Dr. Deborah Cohan, MD, MPH; and Dr. Monica Hahn, MD, MPH, of the University of California San Francisco and HIVEonline.org, started the letter, which urges a total elimination of the deferral period.

The letter includes signatories from top-tier hospitals and universities including Harvard Medical School, Northwestern University, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Columbia University, Duke University, The University of California-San Francisco, and The University of California-Berkeley, Emory University, Boston University, The University of Minnesota, Vanderbilt University, Mount Sinai

Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital and New York Presbyterian Hospital.

GLAAD President and CEO Sarah Kate Ellis said, "The FDA's decision to lower the deferral period on men who have sex with men from 12 months to 3 months is a step towards being more in line with science, but remains imperfect. We will keep fighting until the deferral period is lifted and gay and bi men, and all LGBTQ people, are treated equal to others."

GLAAD launched a petition in March calling for an end to the current ban following U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams' urgent call for donations

during the COVID-19 crisis. The petition has more than 23,000 signatures and elected officials including U.S. Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Carolyn Maloney as well as U.S. Sens. Tammy Baldwin, Elizabeth Warren, and Kamala Harris have spoken out.

Also, Ocasio-Cortez and Carolyn Maloney previously penned a letter calling on the FDA to revise its ban on men who have sex with men from donating blood.

The full open letter is at <https://www.glaad.org/blog/open-letter-fda-medical-professionals>.



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COVID-19

Lighthouse undertakes community response

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Lighthouse Foundation, which last year organized a drive of social justice activism in Boystown, is preparing extensive programming in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

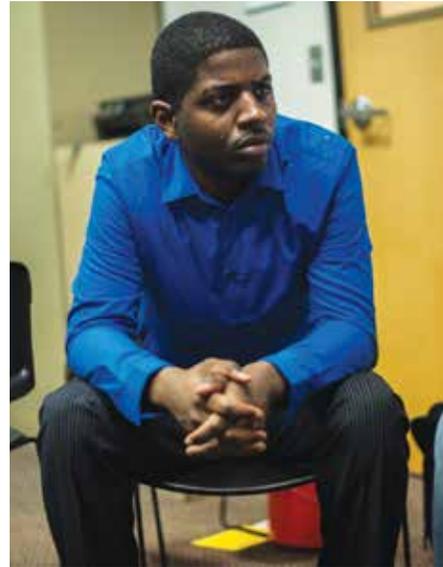
Jamie Frazier, who heads the foundation and is pastor at Lincoln Park's Lighthouse Community Church, said that the two-pronged initiative will focus on creating both a meaningful community response to the pandemic as well as capacity building for the foundation itself.

"We think that this is a very important project to pursue in this moment," he added.

Following allegations of racism on the part of a Boystown bar owner late last Spring, Lighthouse was extensively involved in anti-racism social justice actions in the neighborhood, which ultimately resulted in Center on Halsted dropping its controversial longtime security provider.

At the heart of the current campaign is online messaging and programming intended to encourage Black LGBT Chicagoans to shelter in place as the community struggles with containing COVID-19 and preventing new transmissions.

"I know the question we find ourselves asking is, 'What the hell are we supposed to do now?'" said Frazier. As such, the foundation has boosted its online presence with a fan page enabling



Rev. Jamie Frazier.
Photo by Rafael Letzter

community members to access events such as an upcoming concert and a storytelling event that took place April 18 and attracted about 90 participants.

must remember, "We're all in this together."

He emphasized that inevitable budget cuts mitigating the COVID-19 revenue loss would not be made "on the backs of the working class or the backs of Black or Brown people," adding, "I don't envy my colleagues on the budget and finance teams."

Fotjik was asked during the talk whether Tax Increment Financing (TIF) moneys could be diverted to address these long term costs to the City. He said that TIF rules are determined by state law and said that changing them could lead to "destruction that would not be insignificant."

Moore said that City officials need to keep asking how the shelter-in-place orders affect Chicagoans, and what parts of the city are seeing the most adverse outcomes, questions that have a direct impact on her duties as chief equity officer. About 80,000 Chicagoans have applied for a municipal rental assistance program, she added.

Moore joked that she is "personal trainer" helping the City to flex its equity "muscle."

Fotjik discussed how Lightfoot has become almost a literal face of the shelter-in-place order; the mayor's visage has factored into numerous memes that have circulated online. Reports also circulated that Lightfoot was chiding Chicagoans from her car.

"She really does want people to stay in," Fotjik said. "We're flattening that curve in a way that you're not seeing in other cities. I'm not saying that it is because of Lori Lightfoot driving around yelling at people, but it doesn't hurt."

AFC adopts new logo, brand identity

After a year of research and development, AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC) is proud to launch its new brand and identity.

In early 2019, AFC engaged People Who Care—a Chicago-based consultancy involving Black, LGBTQ+ identified designers, strategists and directors—to lead the rebranding effort.

AFC and People Who Care consulted with a wide array of stakeholders, including nonprofit

partners, community members, Board members, staff and advocates through focus groups, interviews and surveys. This process engaged the community in a meaningful way and ultimately inspired AFC's new brand direction.

AFC initially revealed the new logo to its community at its Annual Meeting on March 5, 2020, but then put a full rollout on hold as the organization transitioned to working remotely and providing new and continued services to help those impacted by the new coronavirus (COVID-19).



"Particularly in times of crisis, narrative is profoundly impactful," Frazier said of that event's appeal. Various Lighthouse members discussed both their lives before and experiences during the pandemic at that April 18 discussion.

Frazier said that an even bigger challenge than navigating the pandemic will be imagining life after it. Advocates and community leaders have emphasized that the pandemic has both highlighted and heightened inequities across society.

They know that keeping dialogue about those inequities open when various community interests will be mounting pressure to "move on" from the episode will be difficult.

"We are encouraging folks to embrace this moment for self-reflection and critical analysis," said Frazier. "I hope that there is some heart-change."

See [Facebook.com/lightfoundchi](https://www.facebook.com/lightfoundchi).

City officials speak on COVID-19 progress

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Two key officials from Mayor Lori Lightfoot's administration took part in Equality Illinois' weekly town hall meeting to discuss the city's progress addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and field questions from community members the afternoon of April 21.

Robert Fotjik, a senior aide to Lightfoot, and Candace Moore, the city's chief equity officer, participated in the online discussion, which Equality Illinois has been organizing as the pandemic progresses.

Community equity has been a central component of the political discussion surrounding COVID-19, as disenfranchised persons are disproportionately affected in any large-scale catastrophe. Lightfoot has emphasized publicly that 70 percent of Chicagoans who have died from COVID-19 transmission have been persons of color.

Moore praised how numerous Chicagoans have banded together to help one another out in the last few months.

"I have really been impressed with fellow Chicagoans in [how they have been] creating neighborhood networks," she said, adding that those networks have been exemplifying "people who care about one another."

Fotjik similarly emphasized that Chicagoans

Lightfoot granted coronavirus spending power

On April 24, Chicago aldermen approved Mayor Lori Lightfoot's coronavirus spending ordinance by a vote of 29-21 despite objections of critics who say she is giving herself too much authority to make big purchases using public money without City Council oversight, The Chicago Tribune reported.

Lightfoot had the council meet April 24 to consider the package after opponents blocked it two days prior. The "no" votes came from progressive and conservative aldermen from all over the city, including members of the Black and Latino caucuses.

Windy City Times received a statement from the organization United Working Families. It said, in part, "The Mayor lacked an overwhelming majority for her ordinance with 21 Aldermen voting against her power overreach. Covid19 has hit the Black, Latinx and working-class communities the hardest, and the mayor's ordinance fails to offer those communities the recovery they deserve."

The statement quotes Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, D-35th Ward, as saying, "When it comes to this mayor, you have to put it in writing. And so we sought to put into writing guarantees that an equity lens would be applied to federal emergency dollars. That reasonable request was maligned,

ignored and dismissed by this mayor."

When asked about Ramirez-Rosa's statements at her April 24 press conference, Lightfoot tersely replied, "I don't put much stock in anything Ald. Ramirez-Rosa says."



Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot.
Photo courtesy of Kelly Baffy

COVID-19

Howard Brown Health launches free safe-sex kit delivery

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Howard Brown Health has launched a program to deliver free safe sex kits to encourage people to stay home.

The kit is the brainchild of Howard Brown Health Sexual and Reproductive Health Director Chad Hendry as well as staffers Antonio Elizondo and Carlos Fragoso, who will ensure that the program runs smoothly and the kits are delivered in a timely manner.

"We know people are still having sex and that has not stopped even during this pandemic," said Hendry. "My team and I have been working to develop the program and make it easy to navigate. During normal times, we deploy a lot of protection supplies, whether it is condoms or lube to the public.

"We wanted to continue to offer this to folks at no cost, in a way that would not require coming to one of our clinic spaces, or one of the other places where we provide these supplies across the city. We created a form for people to fill out where they can request what they need and then the kits get assembled from that information so we can send them out via mail."

Hendry told Windy City Times that the kit choices include water, silicone- and aloe-based lubrication as well as regular size, gold foil, and latex-free and receptive-partner condoms.

Additionally, Howard Brown is offering free safer injection and HIV screening kits to reduce risk. The safer injection kit will have sterile water, cotton balls, band aids and alcohol swabs.

Hendry said these kits are the latest measure that Howard Brown has taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Now everyone who works at their clinics is required to wear masks and depending on that person's job, different levels of PPE. Howard Brown has also shifted to telehealth for primary care, behavioral and sexual health needs.

"The goal is to reduce everyone's risk of harm from COVID-19 transmission that comes from patients visiting our clinics when it is not absolutely necessary for their treatment," said Hendry. "We are also encouraging folks to call the COVID-19 hotline if they have questions about whether they should be screened for the virus or if they should visit one of our community care tents that are designated for assessment and care. They will be able to talk to a medical provider who will determine their best course of action.

"We are additionally doing contact tracing for folks who screen positive for COVID-19 both for our records and to notify people who may have come in contact with that person so they can get screened as well."

When asked what message Hendry wants to

convey to the public, he said stay home if you are able to and that self love is always the best and lowest risk option. Hendry added that if a person is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms they should not engage in sexual contact, and if they are experiencing any symptoms of an STI, they should engage in a tele-sexual health screening before they engage in any sexual activity with another person.

"Open communication with your sexual partner is very important to determine what each person's risks are ahead of time in order to come to conclusions together," said Hendry. "We have developed 'Sex and COVID-19 Get the Facts' pamphlets that we are sending out with each kit so folks have the tools to make sure they are safe while having sex.

"We also recommend using condoms for every sexual encounter and that includes on sex toys to mitigate risk. If you normally meet people through online apps to have in-person sex consider sexting or an intimate video to share with that person. We also recommend avoid-

Local leaders: COVID-19 heightens community inequities

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Elected officials and as well as community advocates gathered the morning of April 24 for an online conversation about how inequities further complicate efforts to contain transmission of COVID-19.

Illinois Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton, Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza, Chicago House CEO Michael Herman and Brave Space Alliance Executive Director LaSaia Wade all took part in the conversation "Intersection of COVID-19, the HIV Epidemic, and LGBTQ+ Marginalization: Reflections, Lessons, and Next Steps," which was sponsored by Chicago House and moderated by Chicago Reader Publisher (and Windy City Times owner) Tracy Baim.

Stratton admitted the state was "navigating uncharted waters" as it addressed the pandemic. Mendoza—who, as comptroller, is responsible for paying the state's bills—attested to that, describing a procurement process that has become the "Wild, Wild West" as officials try to secure personal protection equipment (PPE) and testing supplies for health personnel across the state.

Mendoza said that, at one point, officials from her office had to drive 100 miles with a check for \$3 million in order to beat other states to a prospective supply of PPE.

Stratton acknowledged that COVID-19 is only heightening disparities that marginalized Illi-



Howard Brown Health safe-sex kit components.
Photo by Carlos Fragoso

ing mouth-to-mouth kissing, rimming and cunnilingus, because these acts are more likely to spread COVID-19. Also, wash your body and sex toys thoroughly after sex like you now wash your hands after coming into contact with the outside world."

Hendry told Windy City Times to call the telehealth number at 773-388-1600 for both regular health concerns and COVID-19 questions, and to visit [HowardBrown.org/preventionsupply](https://www.howardbrown.org/preventionsupply) to request a kit.



Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza.

Photo courtesy of Mendoza

noisans were already living with, and that the state was, among other actions, working to increase accessibility to tests for the virus.

"We have to bring an equity lens to the COVID-19 situation," she said. "... We have to have the conversation around this intersectionality."

Wade (whose organization has been especially active in providing food, among other services, for its clients in the midst of the pandemic) expressed frustration in that so many of the public conversations around relief centered on fortifying small businesses or the healthcare system—power structures that she said were marginalizing persons of color, the demographic Brave Space Alliance primarily serves, even before the pan-

dem came to the fore.

"At the core of our work, people are vulnerable already," explained Wade, who added that trans advocates experienced continual "pushback" from political and business leaders. She added, "There is not a drop of money that's even available for us in the first place."

Herman noted that Chicago House had applied for a loan from the funding that became available with the passage of the CARES Act, and was turned down. That funding mechanism was criticized once it became apparent that national chains such as Shake Shack, Ruth's Chris Steak House and Potbelly were granted loans while small businesses and organizations were left in the lurch.

Herman added that federal funding for various initiatives related to COVID-19 "can't come without layers of complications."

Conversation turned to the banks who administered the CARES Act loans, many of whom refused to consider serving clients with whom they had no existing relationships—those same banks nevertheless service state funds from taxpayer money. Mendoza pledged that she and Illinois Treasurer Mike Frerichs would discuss with those bankers how the loan decisions were made following the CARES Act.

Mendoza also said she was confident that her office at least could bounce back from the current and forthcoming difficulties caused by the pandemic, given that it was used to working under crisis conditions when Illinois was in the midst of a two-year-long budget impasse.

"We've been there, we've done that, we'll do it again," she added.

New Gateway program focuses on LGBTQ people with substance-abuse issues

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

This past October, the Gateway Foundation (Gateway) opened its LGBTQ-only Out in Recovery residential program at the organization's Lake Villa campus. Out in Recovery was created to expand upon Gateway's successful Chicago-based Out and Sober program in order to serve more LGBTQ clients.

Gateway Foundation Program Director Jim Belanger told Windy City Times that the organization has always served LGBTQ clients. However, "we have not had a specialized unit or track for this population."

When asked to describe what Out in Recovery is, Belanger said "it is the first free-standing, LG-BTQ+ inpatient substance use treatment program with an all gender dorm in the region. Our counselors, many of whom identify as a member of the community, are specifically trained in working with these individuals. From the first contact with staff and peers our clients have a safe and affirming place to address the unique issues facing LGBTQ+ people in recovery."

Belanger said Out in Recovery was born out of the need to service LGBTQ clients specifically because studies have shown that this population experiences substance-use disorders at four to 12 times higher rates than their cisgender heterosexual counterparts but these statistics are not reflected in surveys at substance use treatment centers.

"The main reason for the lack of these statistics is the fear of re-experiencing stigma from the heteronormative and homophobic culture among clients in treatment centers and counselors who are not affirming toward the LGBTQ+ population," said Belanger. "This often leads to LGBTQ+ individuals going back into the closet while in treat-

ment or avoiding treatment altogether."

Gateway Community Services President Marc Turner was the catalyst for the Out in Recovery program, according to Belanger. Turner was looking for an opportunity to bring this kind of program to fruition and after research and outreach to community partners they found that there was a lack of culturally affirming inpatient substance use services in the region and that is how Out in Recovery was born.

The Lake Villa location was chosen because the campus already has other programs that are individually housed. Belanger said having a specific house for LGBTQ clients gives them a culturally affirming and trauma informed care environment with counselors who are highly trained to service this population. Having this program, according to Belanger, minimizes the possibility of Gateway's LGBTQ clients being re-traumatized by the other clients they serve.

"Additionally, Lake Villa is in the middle of Chicago, Joliet, Rockford, Madison and Milwaukee, being one to two hours away from each location," said Belanger.

In terms of what new clients can expect when they enter the Out in Recovery program, Belanger said the first step is the admission department where their belongings are searched and the medical team completes a physical including a body search. Then clients are given a handbook, welcomed by a staff member who assigns them a bed based on the gender they most identify with and assigned a peer buddy who guides them through the unit.

"The client will be introduced to their primary counselor as soon as possible and will build a treatment plan with them within the first four days of admission," said Belanger. "The client will be expected to fully participate with the inpa-



Gateway Foundation Lake Villa Out in Recovery House.

Photo courtesy of Gateway Foundation

tient treatment protocol upon their arrival, unless medically necessary. The treatment protocol is a rigorous program with an average of six and a half hours of groups per day, seven days a week."

When asked about the specific outcomes Gateway is looking for, Belanger said they work with individuals to meet 80 percent of their identified goals because they believe every person learns recovery in different ways.

"Because of this we use multiple evidenced based practices including Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Rational-Emotive Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Family Therapy and Mindfulness Based Recovery practices to assist clients in building their recovery skills," said Belanger. "We also expose clients to 12-Step Recovery, SMART Recovery and Dharma Recovery as a way to be comfortable with community support groups once they leave our program.

"Finally, we strive to link all individuals working with us, whether successfully completing the program or not, to culturally affirming mental,

behavioral and physical health providers in the area they are discharging to. To this end, our Development Department is working diligently to continue building our network of resources across the Midwest by screening all providers for lifestyle-affirming practices."

Belanger said that "so far" it has had 46 people in the program with 40 of them completing it. He added that the foundation is excited by these numbers because the nationwide average is 65 percent completion rate for all inpatient treatment programs regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

"Gateway is an essential service during this COVID-19 pandemic," said Belanger. "We are accepting clients for all our programs. Please contact us if you are experiencing problems from using alcohol or substances and want help."

See GatewayFoundation.org/programs-and-services/programs/lgbtq-programs or call the intake line at 866-505-OUT2 (6882).



Gateway Foundation contingent at last year's Pride Parade.

Photo courtesy of Gateway Foundation

'All in Illinois' continues to reinforce message to stay home

Gov. JB Pritzker launched a new statewide effort in early April called "All in Illinois" to reinforce the state's core message, backed by scientists and public health experts: Stay at home and stay safe.

All in Illinois is supported by a series of public service announcements featuring famous Illinois natives, including Jane Lynch, Chance the Rapper, Deon Cole, Jason Beghe, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, rapper/actor Common, comedian Brian Babylon, Chicago Cubs player Kyle Schwarber, former Chicago Bears players Charles Tillman and Israel Idonije, National Baseball Hall of Fame/Chicago White Sox baseball player Frank Thomas, ex-Chicago Bulls player Horace

Grant and UFC mixed martial artist/retired pro wrestler CM Punk. The PSA videos reinforce the importance of staying at home during the COVID-19 crisis and encourages everyone to do their part to stop the spread of the virus.

A newer PSA video focuses on African American communities across Chicago and Illinois, as recent data show that, in Chicago, Blacks made up 72 percent of deaths due to COVID-19, despite African Americans composing roughly 30 percent of the city's population. The new video features Chance, Tillman, Joyner-Kersey, Cole and Chicago artist Theaster Gates.

Also, recently, former Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton recorded a video. Clinton—who was born and raised in Park Ridge, Illinois—recorded the video at her home in Chappaqua, New York. Her message urges everyone to do their part by staying home to protect essential workers on the front lines and keep people safe.

Visit EnjoyIllinois.com/AllInIllinois.

Autobiography reflects on heyday of Chicago LGBT media

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Fort Lauderdale-based author Rick Karlin, a native Chicagoan who for many years wrote about food and entertainment, among other topics, for LGBT papers in the Windy City, said that the machinations of the local gay media were often “like a Marx Brothers movie, with the doors opening and slamming shut all the time.”

Karlin still writes, but retired from his other job as a Chicago Public Schools teacher some years back and headed for Fort Lauderdale with husband Gregg Shapiro, a poet/entertainment journalist. Karlin published an autobiography, *Paper Cuts: My Life in Chicago's Volatile LGBTQ Press*, in late 2019.

“At one point, there were eight publications in Chicago,” he recalled. “They ran everything from a bar guide to *Gab Magazine*, which was a gossip club-kids kind of thing. There was something for everybody. There was a lot of in-fighting, and people would go from one paper to another to another.”

Karlin, who was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame (now the Chicago LGBT

Hall of Fame) in 1997, described himself as a “blank slate” before he first came out in Chicago in his twenties. “Much of what I am now was formed by my early interactions in the gay community.”

Karlin said his involvement with the LGBT organization Horizons Community Services, which later evolved into the Center on Halsted, was the first activity that really made an impact on him as a gay man.

He had a son by the time he came out, and for years advocated on behalf of gay parents, when there were no community resources available. He helped found the city's first gay parents' group, which was eventually affiliated with Horizons. Karlin also volunteered in other capacities for that organization.

“That [experience with Horizons] formed my personality and what I was like, and the people made friends with people there who I still am really good friends with, even though we live in different parts of the country,” he said.

He began doing food writing as the gay gourmet for *GayLife* in 1978. In 1982, he began a stint with *Gay Chicago Magazine*, for which he



Rick Karlin.

Photo courtesy of Karlin

wrote two long-running serials. He also wrote and/or edited for the publications *Nightlines*, *Chicago Free Press*, *Chicago Pride* and *Boi Magazine* over the years.

Karlin had to be conscious of not having a conflict of interest when covering various acquaintances within the LGBT community.

“I very seldom came into conflicts at first, since most of my coverage was restaurants,” he said. “...As I got further into my career and I started doing more entertainment-type things, then there got to be more conflict-of-interest type things.”

“I became friends with people as I was supposed to be covering and reviewing. Eventually if I became friends with someone, I would assign a review as part of something for someone else, as part of their coverage.”

Paper Cuts reflects back on what were heady times for numerous LGBT Chicagoans, when they fought diligently for rights that many community members now take for granted. Karlin said that he doesn't miss the Midwest's weather, but does feel a significant difference in attitude between the Windy City and southern Florida.

“I think there's much more of a sense of community in Chicago than there is down here,” he said. “Part of that is that so many of the people down here are transplants from other places. There are a lot of people in the last quarter of their lives, where they don't want to get involved so much—they just want to live their lives.”



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viewpoints



**Dana
RUDOLPH**

MOMBIAN

COVID-19 pauses family-building for many LGBTQ people

Nina Willbach and her wife, a Philadelphia couple, have been trying to get pregnant since last June via assisted insemination.

In March, they were told that their most recent attempt didn't work—and they couldn't try again because COVID-19 had put a stop to "elective procedures" in Pennsylvania. "I know a lot of folks are going through much worse right now, but it feels like a big blow when every month counts and we've had this many no's," Willbach told me in an online message.

They're not the only ones to have family-making plans halted during the pandemic—the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) on March 17 issued new guidance for its members, recommending the suspension of all new, non-urgent treatments including intrauterine inseminations (IUIs) and in vitro fertilization (IVF; which is also required for gestational surrogacy). Patients who are currently "in-cycle" and have already started a series of treatments may continue them, however.

"We are definitely on a family-building pause right now," said Kim Bergman, a licensed psychologist, author, and senior partner at Growing Generations, a surrogacy and egg donation agency with many LGBTQ clients. "This is not a law, it is a guideline through the ASRM," she explained in a phone interview. While fertility doctors don't have to obey it, "most follow the professional organization's guide-

lines." The impact isn't restricted to the LGBTQ community, she noted, but affects us because so many LGBTQ people rely on third-party assisted reproduction to start or grow our families.

There are many reasons for the restrictions. "Where there is enforced social distancing, people should not be going into clinics or to doctors for non-essential medical procedures," she said. Although starting insemination or IVF may feel emotionally essential, she asserted, "It is not medically required that those things happen right now."

Another reason is that people often use a surrogate or egg donor who lives far away. Bergman explained, "If your surrogate is in, say, Oregon, and your IVF clinic is in California, the normal procedure is that she comes to California, has the IVF transfer, goes back home, is monitored locally in her own hometown by a clinic that does the labs as well as ultrasound follow up, and then is working in concert with the California doctor or wherever the IVF doctor is."

Now, however, not only is travel restricted, but "all of those local monitoring facilities are closed." No diagnostic labs are currently doing pregnancy tests because they are all focused on COVID-19. Additionally, "You can't just walk into a hospital," Bergman cautioned. "Normally, a lot of our surrogates, for example, have their scans at a hospital facility, but those facilities are completely off limits right now." One surrogate who is working with Growing Generations was sent a home pregnancy test by her local clinic—but that's not a full solution, because normal monitoring goes beyond simple pregnancy detection. Usually, third-party assisted reproduction cycles "are really precise, well controlled, and managed," Bergman explained. Doctors need to track things like progesterone levels that help them assess the progress of the pregnancy, something they can't do in the current circumstances.

"If you go forward with a cycle that's not optimal, you're still spending the same amount of money," she noted. It's not just about the money, however.

She's had many conversations in the past week with clients whose cycles were cancelled. "It's so disappointing and they've waited so long," she said. "There were definitely people who pushed back, saying 'Please, let's go forward, I'll take the risk.' But it's not their risk to take. They're risking the surrogate, they're risking an embryo, which they may not have many of, they're risking the money, so we've had to say, 'We understand emotionally you do not want to stop, but stopping is in your best interests.'"

The ASRM said it will revisit its guidance no later than March 30 and "periodically as the pandemic evolves." Bergman said this reassessment might be as often as every two weeks. She noted, "Everything is geared up so that as soon as things are safer and we get a green light, there's going to be tons of cycles, more than usual."

In fact, some of Bergman's clients who hadn't felt quite ready to begin have recently told her that the pandemic has given them a new perspective, saying, "Now I see what's really important in life. It's me being a parent and I want to go for it."

Of course, anyone wanting to use third-party assisted reproduction will have to wait until the restrictions lift. In the meantime, Bergman offered the words of comfort she gives anyone going through infertility or the IVF process: "It will happen. You will be a parent."

She added, "In the marathon of family building, you're going to have some really exhilarating miles, some really hard miles, some tedious miles, some boring miles, some joyful miles. Every mile's different and it's a really long road. This happens to be probably one of the hardest miles we've ever had, collectively, but like any marathon, we will get to the finish line. People will still be mommies and daddies and people will have their families."

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

letters

In praise of Pritzker

To the Editor:

Illinois physicians and hospitals commend Gov. J.B. Pritzker for his steadfast leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every day he faces tough choices and he is clearly making decisions with the interests of Illinoisans in mind. Our governor is also taking the time to listen to the experts. A good example was his recent executive order extending civil-liability protection to health professionals and hospitals during this crisis. The Illinois State Medical Society and the Illinois Health and Hospital Association jointly asked his of-

fice to issue this order. It did not take long for our conversations with the governor's office to lead to much-needed protections for frontline health care workers. We thank Pritzker for his leadership.

Increasing COVID-19 testing statewide, the incredible momentum to turn McCormick Place into an alternative care site and engaging the Army Corps of Engineers to open shuttered facilities are significant accomplishments. The order from a few weeks ago requiring health insurer payment of telemedicine is another decisive action that cleared the way for non-COVID-19 patients to maintain treatment with physicians and health systems.

Pritzker's daily battles to obtain personal protective equipment, ventilators and other critical resources are very much appreciated as we near a

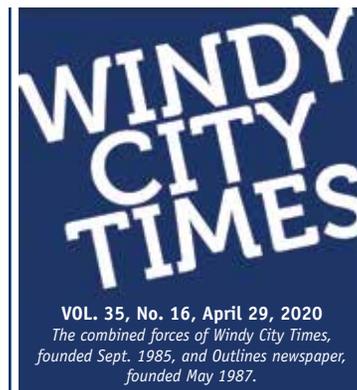
surge of expected COVID-19 hospitalizations.

The days and weeks ahead will be difficult, but decisiveness and ability to make hard choices is critical right now. Thank you, Gov. Pritzker, for doing what is right to protect the wellness and safety of us all.

Sincerely,

*Paul E. Pedersen, MD
President, Illinois State Medical Society*

*A.J. Wilhelmi
President and CEO, Illinois Health
and Hospital Association*



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Television personality Tim Gunn continues to take over the world of reality shows with a brand-new offering on Amazon Prime Video called Making the Cut. Many will recognize the openly gay fashion advisor from Project Runway, where he earned a Primetime Emmy Award in 2013 for outstanding host for a reality or reality-competition program.

He followed that show with several spinoffs, such as Tim Gunn's Guide to Style and Under the Gunn. He not only mentored, but executive-produced Project Runway: Junior. This led to acting roles on Ugly Betty, How I Met Your Mother and Gossip Girl.

On Making the Cut, he again teams with Heidi Klum—this time to create a fashion competition show in which each round's winner has his or her garments immediately available to be sold on Amazon.com. The judging panel includes Naomi Campbell, Nicole Richie, Chiara Ferragni, Carine Roitfeld and Joseph Altuzarra. The 12 contestants travel throughout the world to compete for the prize of 1 million dollars while making it work.

Tim Gunn: Hi, Jerry. How are things in Chicago?

Windy City Times: Quiet.

TG: It's so strange in New York, everybody has been cooperating and behaving well, until yesterday. Suddenly, there are dozens of people on the sidewalks, where before, they had been empty. Half of them aren't wearing masks. There's a ton of traffic and all the construction sites are active again. I don't understand it. I feel like I am Rip Van Winkle and who fell asleep for 20 years!

WCT: Do you think it's the weather?

TG: I don't know. I talked to a neighbor about it and she's a psychologist. She feels that people are just tired of this and this is their own way of acting out. This is certainly not good for people's health.

WCT: How have you been staying busy?

TG: It's never an issue for me. As a matter of fact, I actually love being home alone. [Laughs] What's different about this is we have a bayonet in our backs.

WCT: I know you are a hugger, so this must be challenging.

TG: That's definitely changing. We have been having conceptual conversations about the second season of Making the Cut and what it will be like. It can't be the way it was.

WCT: You produced the show. What ideas did you bring to the table for the first season?

TG: It was a huge collaboration of the most wonderful kind. I usually think design by committee is a bit of a foible, but this was me, Heidi and Sara Rea, who was the show runner for the last 11 seasons of Project Runway. The three of us had been in conversation for season after season about the changes that we would like to make on Runway. The network people wouldn't let us do it.

It took us 10 seasons to have models of all sizes. When the show left Lifetime, we decided it was time for a change.

We have great respect for the fashion industry and for entertainment, but we wanted a show that was more relevant. When Project Runway was born, it was very relevant, but today, the fashion scene has changed and the retail scene has changed. We felt we needed to do something different.

The best collaborators of all have been the Amazon team. Jennifer Salke and her team are phenomenal. They nurture and probe in the most positive ways. Their feedback is invaluable.

It's been a dream to work on it and see it evolve.

WCT: What was your favorite American expression to stump Heidi on?

TG: [Laughs] "Titillating" was the best!

WCT: Were there any diva moments from Naomi Campbell on set?

TG: Jerry, what do you think?

WCT: Did she have any special demands?

TG: Yes, but she knows her stuff. What really impressed me is that she

Turn to page 14



NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

Tim Gunn on his new show that's a 'Cut' above

BY JERRY NUNN

Tim Gunn.
Photo by Scott McDermott



Tim Gunn on Making the Cut, with Will Riddle.
Photo courtesy of Amazon Prime Video

GUNN from page 13

really cares for the designers. When she gets mad, it's because she's frustrated and wants them to do better.

WCT: I didn't know you fenced until seeing a segment on Making the Cut. Have you ever been hurt while fencing?

TG: No, but I will tell you that I work with a personal trainer twice a week.

Last fall, I got a terrible hernia doing something I shouldn't have been doing, so after that I haven't been on the fencing strip as much as I would like to. I can't have anything done about this hernia until after this crisis.

WCT: There was a pop-up shop on one episode of Making the Cut. Have you ever worked retail before?

TG: Yes. In fact, it was my first job. I was fired the next day. I was working for the Hecht Company in Washington, D.C. The company is now gone.

I had a week of training and that went well. My first day was a Saturday and there was a sale. The manager and coworker called in sick, so I was alone. It was the olden days of the cash register. I knew to put the check number in, but then hit cash. People came to the register with no price tag. I would ask them, "How much do you want to pay?" It was a mess!

I felt set up in a way, because I was all alone!



Heidi Klum and Tim Gunn.
Photo courtesy of Amazon Prime Video

WCT: What would you like to do differently on the next season of Making the Cut?

TG: I loved everything about it, to be honest. We are all proud of it, but we can't get into a rut. Runway wound up being a rut, a rut of the best kind and a success, but we need to change things up. We had a conversation about this before the pandemic and still want to travel, if we can. We still want the show to be global in terms of presentation. Branding has to be at the core of it.

WCT: Do you feel the designers this season on Making the Cut were stuck in a rut? There was Jonny Cota with all that leather and Esther Perbandt with sticking to black.

TG: I feel it's important for them to stick with what they do well, but at the same time you don't want them to bore the judges.

When you consider Amazon fashion, they each have to keep in mind how the Amazon shopper will see their work in a little tiny photo. In Esthers' case, all those beautiful details go away.

WCT: You have been a big advocate for not using fur in clothing.

TG: Big time!

WCT: How do you feel about leather?

TG: PU leather [artificial leather that is coated with polyurethane] needs to evolve more. Right now, faux leather looks faux. It looks, quite frankly, cheap. I am a PETA advocate on the fur side, but there are vegans and some people that believe in absolutely no animal products, includ-

ing silk.

I had been involved with PETA when I was at Parsons. I was much maligned with the school after they said you can't have fashion without fur. I begged to differ because you can. I thought that was appalling and had PETA come in and speak to the students.

When I went to Liz Claiborne and had 48 brands, we went fur free as well.

WCT: What do you think about RuPaul on his show being a mentor similar to you in the workroom with suits and glasses?

TG: I love him. I feel a spiritual kinship!

WCT: Will you work on another book, since you have a lot of time on your hands currently?

TG: Actually, I have been. It's on hold at the moment, because I don't know how appropriate it will end up being. It's about me at age 62, four years ago when I started fencing and working out, [and] having never been a jock of sorts, although I was a competitor swimmer when I was a teen.

I want to make a fun, inspirational book. I have been working on it with my trainer who makes these routines accessible and relatable. I am the least likely candidate for this, which is why I wanted to share the story.

The entire first season of Making the Cut is currently available on Amazon Prime Video.



Photo by Jerry Nunn

Midsommarfest moved to August

The Andersonville Chamber of Commerce (ACC) will postpone the 55th annual Andersonville Midsommarfest, originally scheduled for June 12-14, to the weekend of Aug. 21-23.

This decision was made with consideration in light of the current restriction of large gatherings needed to bend the curve and stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Likewise, ACC said it will make any future decision regarding the Aug. 21-23 weekend with the health and safety of the community at the forefront.

Held annually to mark the celebration of Midsommar in Sweden—which falls during the summer solstice (June 20)—Andersonville Midsommarfest is a celebration of Andersonville's Swedish heritage, LGBTQ+ pride, vibrant local business community and usually, the unofficial start of summer in Chicago.

The deadline for applications for Midsommarfest has been extended for vendors through Friday, July 3. Information on applications can be found at StarEvents.com. ACC will continue to provide updates as they become available on the Andersonville Midsommarfest website at Andersonville.org/midsommarfest.

Jeff Awards going virtual June 8

The Jeff Awards—the Chicago theater community's annual awards recognizing non-Equity theater productions—will be presented in a virtual format on Monday, June 8.

In preparation for this program, the 2020 non-Equity nominations will be publicly announced, as previously planned, on Tuesday, April 28.

To protect the health and safety of the community and comply with government guidelines on public gatherings, this new format is the first time in Jeff Awards history that awards for theater excellence will be shared through a free online program. Information on accessing the program will be available in early June.

Non-Equity Chicago theater company productions eligible for 2020 Jeff Awards consideration were staged from April 1, 2019, through March 13, 2020. Traditionally, the eligibility period is April 1 through March 31; however, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the eligibility period ended with the theater community's cancellation of shows after March 13.

Laura Dreyfuss
and Rahne Jones.
Photo by
Sarah Toce



TELEVISION

Laura Dreyfuss, Rahne Jones on season two of 'The Politician'

BY SARAH TOCE

The quirky Netflix dark dramedy *The Politician* teems with scandalous satisfaction from the moment rich kid Payton Hobart (Ben Platt) invites viewers into his Santa Barbara, California, mansion. Born into a poor family and adopted by Georgina Hobart (Gwyneth Paltrow), literally nothing is as it originally appears. It's worse, actually.

Award-winning television creators Ryan Murphy, Brad Falchuk and Ian Brennan offer audiences impossibility with every episode in the first season—and there's now a second in the works. The trio also serves as executive producers, with Alexis Martin Woodall, Platt and Paltrow joining the ranks.

In addition to the aforementioned megaplayers, Platt and Paltrow are joined on-screen by Jessica Lange, Zoey Deutch, Lucy Boynton, Bob Balaban, David Corenswet, Julia Schlaepfer, Laura Dreyfuss, Theo Germaine, Rahne Jones and Benjamin Barrett.

At first Jones, an out lesbian, didn't think she had the part whatsoever.

"I didn't hear anything for about two weeks after the audition, and then I got a call back and [was asked] to audition in front of Ryan [Murphy], Ian [Brennan] and Brad [Falchuk]. So,

no pressure, no pressure," Jones told *Windy City Times*.

Dreyfuss has previously worked with Murphy on *Glee*. Prior to *The Politician*, Dreyfuss starred opposite Platt as Zoe Murphy in the Broadway musical *Dear Evan Hansen*. The audition process was familiar, but still nerve-wracking for the star.

"I felt like I didn't want to disappoint them and I had so much respect for them," she remembered.

Ultimately, she got the part and the entire show was filmed more than six months before it was available for streaming on Netflix, which meant the actresses had to be tight-lipped about every minute detail, including their on-screen surprise romance.

Jones felt a responsibility to portray their relationship in an authentic way.

"As far as someone who looks like me—who's African American and more masculine presenting—I do feel the burden of being a positive representation," she said. "I credit Ian and Brad for writing [my] character because I can only hope that it will continue and people recognize that these stories need to be told."

The characters on the show are multidimensional and dichotomous on many levels, including basic human decency. Additionally, *The Politician* regularly touches on topics of depression, psy-

chological warfare (including a high school peer who believes she actually has cancer for most of the season), and other perplexing perusals.

Dreyfuss dove back into her *Dear Evan Hansen* days to reconnect with the "heavy" subject matter.

"You always want to handle those things with care," she said. "For me, it was like I was doing *Dear Evan Hansen* again, where a lot of mental health issues were in the themes of that show. It was really very hard to hear a lot of stories being told and sharing stories. It's also amazing because it brings people together, but there is a very hyper-awareness of your responsibility within that."

The two actresses prioritized self-care by taking time in between filming the series and its release date on Netflix to find peace of mind. They also consult with therapists regularly.

"You do just have to take care of yourself because if you don't take care of yourself, you can't help anybody else," Dreyfuss said. "We had psychotherapists and psychologists to talk with on the set to color how certain situations should be handled."

The second season of *The Politician* is gearing up for a July release date on Netflix. The first season is available for streaming now. Learn more about *The Politician* by visiting Netflix.com.

Nicole Maines as Dreamer.
Photo courtesy of the CW

Actress Nicole Maines represents a new generation of transgender activists who are growing both artistically and publicly.

Maines was assigned to being male at birth and at three years old showed that was incorrect. Later in life, she became Susan Doe to fight for bathroom rights in the landmark case *Doe v. Regional School Unit 26*. In June 2014, the Maine Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the school district violated her rights and she was awarded compensation.

Following the victory, her acting career took off with the USA Network show *Royal Pains* and The CW series *Supergirl*. Maines began a recurring role on the fourth season of *Supergirl* with a character named Nia Nal aka Dreamer, a relative of DC Comics Legion of Super-Heroes member Dream Girl. She continues on crossovers with another comic-based series called *Legends of Tomorrow*.

Her new queer film, *Bit*, mixes vampires and feminism in unexpected ways and with edgy humor. She won the Grand Jury Prize for Best Performance at Outfest for the film in 2019.

Maines has taken home many important trophies for the important work she has done for the trans community such as the Roger Baldwin Award, the Young Women's Social Justice Award and the Visibility Award (the latter from the Human Rights Campaign of Chicago).

She wrote a book, with the assistance of writer Amy Ellis Nutt, called *Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family* that shared her background and became a New York Times Best Seller.

Windy City Times: So, your last name is Maines and you are from Maine?

Nicole Maines: Yes. Even weirder is my dad's name is Wayne and there's a town in Maine called Wayne. We took a road trip there and went to their general store. We bought a bunch of merchandise and the workers there thought we were crazy until we explained his name.

WCT: You are currently with their parents in Austin during the pandemic?

NM: Yes—Austin, Texas.

WCT: I watched the HBO Documentary *The Trans List*, in which you explained about how your dad evolved in terms of your trans journey.

NM: Yes and it's also in the book *Becoming Nicole*. My family went through a lot of transformations, especially my dad. That's why it is so powerful when he and I go around the country speaking together at schools and community centers. He went on such a 180 with everything. He had to totally rewire his thinking and reevaluate his stances on many things. He's come a long way.

WCT: We all still learn new things.

NM: Totally. It's a testament that we never stop learning.

WCT: You represent a young population of the trans community. What advice do you have?

NM: Right now specifically I would tell people to stay the hell indoors. Through all this, I think it's important to stay connected. While we are isolating and alone, we are not emotionally isolating. People shouldn't feel alone.

I think that is hard for all of us who are in a situation where we have to stay in the house with unsupportive parents. That can be really hard.

We should take advantage of social media and the internet. We need to keep connecting with our community in those ways.

WCT: [Switching topics,] what is your favorite meme currently?

NM: The one where all the people going outside right now are the same people that would hide a zombie bite.

WCT: Speaking of bites, I saw your film *Bit* at Outfest...

NM: Oh, good segue!

WCT: What can you tell our readers about *Bit*?

NM: I want to tell people that it will be coming out soon. It was supposed to be this month, but the coronavirus has thrown everything up in the air.

Queerness and transness aside, it's such a fun movie! People will have a really good time watching it. It's got horror, comedy and an important message. Who doesn't love blood orgies and grenades?

WCT: Is there someone you would bite right now?

NM: Someone I don't particularly like, although one rule of Bite Club is you kill what you eat, so they don't necessarily live forever.

WCT: Was it scary making a movie with no formal training?

NM: It was terrifying! That has been the scariest part of acting in general. *Bit* was my first movie project and I was the lead, so I had to carry the whole thing. I am acting against Diana Hopper and James Paxton. They are insanely talented. I tried to act like I knew what I was doing.

After that, I went straight to *Supergirl* where I am doing scenes with Melissa Benoist and David Harewood. It has been terrifying to say the least.

WCT: How did you land the role in *Supergirl*?

NM: That came with an audition through my agent. I was still living in Maine and making audition tapes in my basement. It was an open casting call for trans talent. I decided to shell out a few bucks and not film it on my laptop. I paid a kid \$70 to come film and edit it—best \$70 I ever spent!

WCT: Has there been a favorite special effect on *Supergirl* for you?

NM: My favorite one so far was in the 100th episode where there was a big dream shield that Dreamer did. I have a GIF of it saved on my phone that I look at. The way they animated it was so cool!

WCT: Do you perform your own stunts?

NM: As much as I can. For fight scenes, I learn the choreography and do the whole thing. I'm not particularly graceful. The stunt people are shot from behind. If watchers think it looks good and don't see my face, then it's probably a stunt performer and not me! [Laughs]

WCT: What would you like to see the character do on the show in the future?

NM: I would like them to explore the lore of Naltor. I go crazy when there is a slight mention of Dream Girl and the Legion of Super-Heroes. I would love to dive deeper into that and see my character's heritage. I think the planet Naltor has an unexplained history.

WCT: Were you into comics before this show?

NM: A little, but not in the way I am now. They sent me some Legion comics and I tore through them.

WCT: Do you make appearances at comic conventions?

NM: I do and have a blast at them. We started doing at home conventions for people quarantined. We did panels over Twitch. People could pay to have one-on-one Zoom calls with actors in place of a meet-and-greet. A portion of the proceeds went to first responders.

I did FAN Expo Vancouver before all of this happened.

WCT: What is next for Nicole Maines?

NM: I am excited for the release of *Bit* and the sixth season of *Supergirl*. I want to play different kinds of roles, like a villain at some point. Maybe there will be an episode of Nia having a red kryptonite moment that turns her evil. I hear playing the bad person is cathartic.

WCT: Come visit Chicago sometime soon.

NM: My twin brother, Jonas, just moved there. He's working on being a stage actor. He is a rising star in Chicago! *Supergirl* is on the CW Sundays at 8 p.m. CT.

NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

Trans actress' dreams come true on 'Supergirl'

BY JERRY NUNN



Buffalo Grove Pride Parade in 2019.
Tim Carroll Photography



No Pride during the pandemic? Buffalo Grove steps in

BY RANDY STERN

What if we told you that a new kind of pride celebration will be happening in a suburb of Chicago? And it's one that fits within the framework of what we are dealing with during this health crisis.

Last year, the Chicago area saw a growth in pride celebrations in its suburbs. While the larger celebration is still held the final weekend of June on Halsted Street in Boystown, there are many LGBT citizens who live well beyond Chicago's city limits who would rather enjoy Pride not far from their backyards.

In recent years, the communities of Aurora, Buffalo Grove, Naperville, Elgin, Skokie, Evanston and Oak Park have held pride celebrations. While Evanston, Oak Park, and Skokie can be reached by the Chicago Transit Authority's "L" system, others require some trekking either on the expressway or on suburban commuter trains to these locations. Last year, a pride celebration took place in Buffalo Grove, a community northwest of Chicago. On June 2, 2019, more than 2,000 people representing 80-plus groups marched on the streets of this village located on the border of Cook and Lake counties. It was because of the idea of an out teenage GLBT woman and her parents to bring the celebration once reserved for the crowds in Chicago's Lake View/Boystown neighborhood.

This year, a lot of Pride celebrations around the world scheduled in May and June are either postponing or cancelling their events all due to the COVID-19 outbreak. For the sake of safety and of government-imposed orders to stay safe at home, it was seen as a risk to have thousands of people in close quarters as this virus can spread quickly by touch and other means.

However, the organizers of Buffalo Grove Pride came up with a great solution. Instead of a traditional parade through the village with floats and marching contingents, they will do a car parade instead. This will be done on the same date as their scheduled pride celebration on Sunday, June 7.

The idea of a car parade has been happening recently where car enthusiasts have organized birthday parades for children in front of their homes. The idea is simple: a local resident can

decorate their home to show their pride, they contact the Pride committee, and they'll note to have participating automobiles drive by the decorated homes in a parade to show their pride.

This not only meets the guidelines of social/physical distancing, but it fulfills a need for a

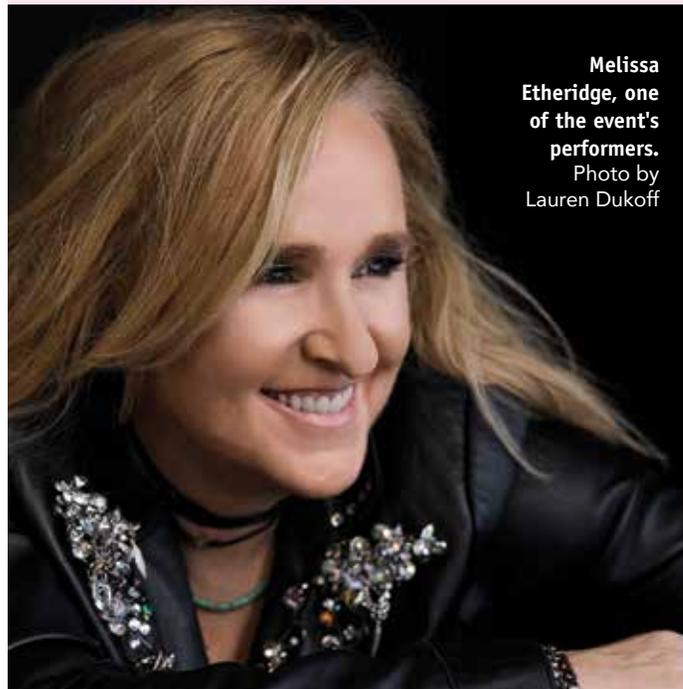
community looking to show their LGBT pride—right in the suburbs of Chicago!

Buffalo Grove Pride got its start when a young woman, Molly Pinta, was inspired by another suburban pride celebration that she attended with her parents in the far west community of Aurora

GLAAD digital event raises \$225,000

On April 26, GLAAD hosted a digital event to highlight the LGBTQ response to COVID-19 and to raise money for CenterLink and local LGBTQ centers affected by COVID-19.

"Together in Pride: You are Not Alone", hosted by Billy Eichner and Lilly Singh, brought the LGBTQ community together with messages of acceptance and honored LGBTQ heroes providing direct services during COVID-19. The event raised an initial donation of more than \$225,000 for the LGBTQ community centers that are members of CenterLink. (Donations are still being accepted at [GLAAD.org/togetherinpride](https://www.glaad.org/togetherinpride).) The Ariadne Getty Foundation (AGF), GLAAD's largest donor, made a donation of \$150,000 to the event.



Melissa Etheridge, one of the event's performers.
Photo by Lauren Dukoff

Billy Eichner, and Mayor Pete and Chasten Buttigieg.
Screen shot



Hosts Billy Eichner and Lilly Singh interviewed LGBTQ notables throughout the event, which also featured several musical performances from talent including Kesha, Melissa Etheridge, Mj Rodriguez and George Salazar, Alex Newell and the cast of Broadway's Jagged Little Pill.

Participants included Barbra Streisand, Billy Porter, Mayor Pete and Chasten Buttigieg, Rosie O'Donnell, Matt Bomer, Wilson Cruz, August Getty, Gigi Gorgeous and Nats Getty, Sean Hayes, Adam Lambert, Dan Levy, Tatiana Maslany, Ross Mathews, Javier Munoz, Tyler Oakley, D.J. Shangela Pierce, Bebe Rexha, Brian Michael Smith, Patrick Starr, Sharon Stone, Jonathan Van Ness, Michelle Visage, and GLAAD President and CEO Sarah Kate Ellis.

Highlights included Eichner interviewing the Buttigiegs about the election; Van Ness talking with Singh about breaking down stigma around living with HIV; Oakley and Cruz interviewing the executive directors of local LGBTQ centers who are offering front-line/direct services to LGBTQ people in need a special message from Streisand to the LGBTQ community.

Actor/producer Erich Bergen directed the event and was an executive producer with GLAAD staff.

Official media partners included Bustle, Entertainment Weekly, Los Angeles Blade, LGBTQ Nation, Logo, Metro Weekly, NBC Out, People, Pride Media (Advocate, Out, Pride.com, PLUS), Queerty, The Randy Report, them, Thomson Reuters Foundation (Openly), Washington Blade and Windy City Times.

Also, GLAAD has launched a COVID-19 portal on its website, which provides the latest news updates, self-care tips, how-tos, stories of inspiration from LGBTQ leaders, and more to help the LGBTQ community through this unprecedented time. See [GLAAD.org/publications/coronavirus-overview](https://www.glaad.org/publications/coronavirus-overview).

on the Fox River outside of Chicago. They had their first pride celebration the year before in 2018.

But, it takes a different approach to instill LGBT pride in a community, such as Buffalo Grove. Carolyn Pinta, Molly's mother and founder of The Pinta Project, said, "Everything that we do [in Buffalo Grove] is family-friendly, so we are targeting families from birth up. I do still feel that the city is a special experience for [LGBT] folk; Boystown, etc, but feel that with creating this online community, hundreds of people in the burbs have been able to connect with each other and to know who is a part of the community, allowing for new friendships to form. We have now hosted two Drag Queen Story Hours, which tends to be a city thing.

"We hope to see more and more happening out this way."

The idea of taking an event that would attract thousands to the village of Buffalo Grove and turning it into something that meets the guidelines set forth by the government is very innovative. If you're in a smaller community and think this is a great idea, there are plenty of LGBT and allied folks with cars ready to parade by your home.

See more vehicle-related items at [Gaywheels.com](https://www.gaywheels.com).

Trent Crews.
Photos courtesy of Vaughn Alvarez

MUSIC

Trent Crews on his new song, coming out and Jennifer Lopez

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Trent Crews is a singer with several tunes to his credit—but some may know him best from reality TV.

Crews made history when he appeared on season eight of *Love & Hip Hop: New York*, in which he was the boyfriend of make-up artist (and cast member) Jonathan Fernandez. However, that relationship ended on a tempestuous note that involved allegations of cheating and the presentation of proof that one of them was married to someone else.

Crews is focused on being a musician (and has been one for more than two decades). He recently talked with *Windy City Times* about his newest release, “Papi” (which features transgender rapper/actress Precious, and which samples Jennifer Lopez’s “If You Had My Love”)—but the conversation started with Crews being reflective about what he said are the hardships he’s endured by coming out of the closet.

Windy City Times: How are you handling the quarantining?

Trent Crews: I just woke up to find out that our order has been extended to May 15. I’m so over it!

WCT: I saw you on a YouTube interview saying that you came out in 2017. What has been the general reaction to you coming out?

TC: Wow—that’s a really hard question, to be honest with you. It’s a question I don’t want to answer anymore because it causes so much controversy? To be honest, I almost wish I never came out.

WCT: Why?

TC: Because my life is so terrible and miserable. What a lot of people don’t quite understand is that for people who choose to be artists, it is our lives; you eat, breathe and sleep music. It’s a non-stop hustle. The reason I came out in 2017 is because I had so many managers and labels I went through; labels kept asking, “What are we going to do if people find out you’re gay?”

When I first started in the industry, when I was super-young, my generation of artists were supposed to be seen and not heard. You’re just supposed to look amazing, sing your song and go home; you had no opinion. I was raised that way; I got my first deal when I was 11, and I’ve been in the studio with Beyonce, Chris Brown, Cher, Mariah Carey and Britney Spears. You were also told that if you’re into certain things, you hide them—like being gay. So I played straight in my personal and professional lives.

Then labels told me I wasn’t Black enough—and they could see I was gay. So after being turned down by so many labels (with them saying if I had a gay audience, they would push me). So then I decided to officially come out as gay—but then I lost the support I thought I was going to get because, unfortunately, gay men don’t support each other. I wasn’t going to gay parties and clubs, but I was under the impression that the gay community

would look out for me.

WCT: I take it that hasn’t been the case.

TC: Are you kidding me? I have to fight tooth-and-nail just to get them to look my way. And this is where the conversation really gets complicated because, from my experience, the only gay boys who win are those who are truly a mess or who are drag queens. And if you’re not a drag queen or “Yesss, queen” or “Work!,” then there’s no lane for you.

I spent the first 20 years of my professional life being straight. I almost wish I didn’t come out; I can’t go back because I was gay on TV. I was recently booked for an event, but I was notified before it happened that I [was being pulled]; I was told, “Right now you’re not poppin’ and no one knows you.” This happens to me all the time—and I was replaced by a drag queen.

When I wasn’t out, things were moving much faster. I thought my brothers would come out and support me when I did. I’m just going to keep hoping.

WCT: Let’s talk a little bit about *Love & Hip Hop: New York*. It seems like that experience was more of a minus than a plus for you.

TC: Yeah, it was definitely a minus. Again, it was the same thing. Unfortunately, so many people were expecting me to turn up, act a fool or be saucy.

What I thought was a blessing in my life ended up being a curse because I got in the industry so early. Again, I was trained to shut up, do your thing and look amazing—I didn’t know how to act a fool. When I was in the studio with Mariah, it wasn’t “What’s up, bitch?” I was let go [from the reality show] because I wasn’t “gay” enough. I don’t have a problem with overly effeminate gay men, but that’s not who I am.

We’re so much more than drag queens and effeminate men. I don’t want to be a character—I just want to be Trent.

WCT: Also, I understand you went from Columbus, Ohio, to New York City with only \$12.

TC: I had just moved back in with my mom, after a boy band I was in failed. My birthday was coming up and she gave me \$100. So I bought a Greyhound bus ticket that was, like, \$76 and I got a meal from McDonald’s. With that [remaining] \$12, I went to New York City.

My mother screamed and cried; she was scared, of course. I stayed with a friend I had met on MySpace—and I never went back.

WCT: And you were homeless at one point?

TC: Oh, yeah—that’s a rough one. I went to Atlanta, thinking it would be my big break. I was working with a production company called Songbook Entertainment; their

Turn to page 20



Quick facts about
Trent Crews:

- Favorite snack:** Candy, “like Gummy Bears, Now & Later and Starburst”
- First crush:** Aaliyah
- First guy crush:** “My eighth-grade math teacher, Mr. Brown”
- Favorite person on reality TV:** NeNe Leakes
- Dream collaborator:** Britney Spears

VIRTUAL VIBES

Support your favorite LGBTQ bar events online.

Physical distancing, social togetherness.



Virtual Men's Room Wednesday Insta Live

Sidetrack brings the men right to you. How's that for service?!

Check-in with Team Sidetrack on Insta Live, Wednesday, May 6, 9 p.m. - 2 a.m.

When they reopen, join them for the regular party where the lights go down, the men come out and Team Sidetrack is geared-up and ready to Party with Dixie.

Instagram: @sidetrackbar

Follow www.facebook.com/SidetrackBar/



Chicago's Best Worst Digital Drag Show!

Monday mayhem done right, **Jackhammer**-style.

Chicago's "Best Worst Drag Show" goes online Monday, May 4, with Dymond V. Westbrooke, Batty Davis, Synthetic, Maori Beverly Hillz, Keri Traid, Shalita Cake, Androgynique Iman, Ariez Imam, Christie Da Vinci and London Fog. The hostess with the moistest Mother Arben leads the pack.

<https://www.twitch.tv/jackhammerchicago>

Follow www.facebook.com/chijackhammer/



Digital Doggy Days – May The Third

Blasting back into orbit with **The SoFo Tap** on Facebook LIVE, 2-3 p.m., Saturday, May 2. Grab your Wookiee, a cookie and a cocktail and join Tom 2 and his incredible, intergalactic guests, including comedians Mary Catherine Curran and Chris Kervick; marionette performance by Root Stock's Mark Blashford and live Doggy Portraits by Dave Davila, with special drag from NYU's Pam Who and Ms. Mustache. Musical Guests: Jayson Brooks, Adam LeBlanc and Joe McDaniel. Follow www.facebook.com/TheSoFoTap/



BILLY Masters

"Wow. OK, that's really ignorant!"—**Anderson Cooper**'s response when **Las Vegas Mayor Carolyn Goodman** said, "This isn't China. This is Las Vegas, Nevada." In her defense, Las Vegas has an Eiffel Tower, but it sure ain't Paris.

Let's start with the elephant in the room—and trust me when I say it ain't no elephant. As we were going to press, "someone" online was making a very big deal about a certain video in which two divers were seen making out. First—I have the video. When these things leak, we all get them. It's of UK diver **Tom Daley** kissing U.S. diver **Tyler Downs**. Downs is kinda a young Tom Daley—and who thought that was even possible? Downs is 16 and, in an ironic twist, has stated that his favorite diver is—wait for it—**Jack Laugher**!!! Who is Jack Laugher? Another British diver! In fact, Laugher won a synchronized diving event with Tom Daley back in 2012! Oh, diving is an incestuous business—and I say this as a former award-winning diver myself. (OK, all I won was my high school letter, but still...)

In the video, Downs and Daley are at an event in a hotel room where they're both shirtless. Again, as a former diver, let me tell you that swimmers and divers are far more UNcomfortable when they have to put on clothes. As for the kiss, it has all the passion of kissing your mum—which, unless you are from certain Southern states, is not very. Not even a scintilla of spit is shared. To my expert eyes, the term I'd use is "clenched." So, if "someone" feels compelled to pass it along "to the authorities," I have one thing to say—bitch, please!

However, it has led to renewed speculation about the relationship of Tom Daley and **Dustin Lance Black**. Is there any evidence that they have an "open relationship?" None that I'm



Diver Tom Daley is again the subject of speculation.

Photo courtesy of OUT

aware of. Sure, there was some dallying prior to their marriage. But if it doesn't bother them, it doesn't bother me. Others have issues with a 25-year-old kissing a 16-year-old. Hey, what do I know? Tom was 18 years old when he started dating then-38-year-old Dustin, and nobody was bothered by that. You can go to BillyMasters.com and decide for yourself.

Meanwhile, everything's smooth sailing at another talk show—**Billy Masters LIVE**. We finally had the episode you've all been waiting for: Billy Masters and **Jenifer Lewis**. To say we fulfilled your expectations would be presumptuous on my part. But since I started doing yoga, I'm now able to toot my own horn. We laughed, we sang, we showed videos of Miss Lewis performing (with and without me), and we were joined by some special guests. Director, choreographer, dancer, actor, and ageless beauty **Jerry Mitchell** surprised his old college friend. So did **Mark Alton Brown**, who not only went to college with them but also wrote the script for Jackie's Back. Obvi-

ously we had to perform a scene from the cult classic—and were joined by esteemed songwriter **Marc Shaiman**. In this 90-minute marathon show, you got to see the real Jenifer (and, consequently, the real Billy). And, see it you must—on Billy Masters TV at YouTube.

Last week was a big week for haircuts. First, **Colton Haynes** took to the web, saying "Here's my attempt at making a YouTube video...pls don't try this at home kids haha." Clippers in hand, he said, "We're gonna do a haircut today. I'm not a professional hair stylist, so don't call this a tutorial at all. Don't do this at home, kids." As to his skill, I don't anticipate a career at Supercuts. But we'll post the clip on BillyMasters.com.

There must have been something in the water, because **Anderson Cooper** also attempted a self-cut. As with Colton, Coop was not particularly successful, as he explained to Sanjay Gupta. "I'm hoping you make a tutorial about how to give yourself a haircut, because last night I took a razor and buzzed my head and I gave myself a giant bald spot over here, which I find very ... I missed." We'll post that, too.

While many asked me about this, our "Ask Billy" question comes from someone here at Billy Masters Multimedia. Aaron in Texas wrote, "Please tell me you have the uncensored photo of **Ansel Elgort** in the shower."

For those of you who don't get out much—which is all of us, these days—lemme explain. Little Ansel (we'll get to that) wanted to raise money for Brooklyn for Life, an organization that helps restaurants provide 75-100 meals per day to Brooklyn frontline workers. On Instagram, he posted a photo of himself in the shower ... naked! Of course, he censored his nether regions. To see all, you had to join an OnlyFans page, and the money would go to the charity. Clever, right? Not clever enough. Instagram took down the censored photo—but not before Ansel raised over \$300K!

So, Aaron was asking whether I could find the uncensored photo. Ask and you shall receive. I hasten to add that whatever Ansel was covering

is roughly the size of his thumb—which perhaps is enormous. I was amused to learn that Elgort had his father take the photo. "Ansel clearly has a very different relationship with his dad than I had with mine," said Aaron. You can see the photo on BillyMasters.com.

When we're questioning Ansel and Tom's daddy issues, it's definitely time to end yet another column. What a week! That cutting Billy Masters humor is always on display, both in print and on the air. Check out "Billy Masters LIVE" on YouTube at 3 p.m. Eastern every Tuesday and Thursday. Of course, my written barbs can be found at www.BillyMasters.com—the site where a picture is worth a thousand words. Send your questions along to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Colton and Cooper cut each other! 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

Culinary spots to consider for delivery/pickup

BY ANDREW DAVIS

As with practically all businesses at this time, restaurants are fighting to survive—and have had to adapt by, among other things, getting creative with curbside/delivery offerings since dine-in service is currently shuttled. Here are a few to consider, covering a variety of cuisines and locations:

—**Nutella Cafe:** Nutella Cafe is exclusively serving customers via non-contact methods such as phone-ahead/curbside pickup or delivery through DoorDash. The cafe, at 189 N. Michigan Ave., is currently open, and store hours are Monday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m. (Note: First-time Nutella Cafe orders on DoorDash, with a \$15 minimum order, will receive free delivery). It's also on Uber Eats.

—**Prairie Grass Cafe** (PrairieGrassCafe.com): The Northbrook spot is offering something different every day, with items including grilled salmon, casserole packages and even fresh fish for you to cook/freeze for later. Curbside pickup of signature menu items is available as well, 4-7 p.m.

—**Pearl's Place** (PearlsPlaceRestaurant.com): This Bronzeville restaurant, at 3901 S. Michigan Ave., has tempting items like shrimp po'boys, New Orleans Breakfast, fried green tomatoes and



Clockwise from left: Jake Melnick's Corner Tap's honey-garlic wings; Francois Frankie's avocado toast; Mango Pickle's cauliflower filet.

Above photo by Andrew Davis; other PR photos



even a jerk turkey dinner. Pearl's is available on Grubhub.

—**Mango Pickle** (MangoPickleRestaurant): This North Side spot, at 5842 N. Broadway, is taking orders of its Indian dishes for carry-out, curbside pickup and neighborhood delivery (within two miles) at 4-8 p.m. daily. I had the pleasure of dining at this restaurant, so I know that the offerings are top-notch.

—**Temporis** (TemporisChicago.com; items on Caviar and Tock): The upscale restaurant has several items available, ranging from the Wagyu burger (\$25, but it's Wagyu, with black truffle aioli), truffled mac 'n cheese and what's

called THE Brownie (with Okinawa brown-sugar ganache)—and there's also dinner for two, for \$70. Items are available 4-9 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays.

—**Francois Frankie** (FrancoisFrankie.com): Located in the Loop, this is one of three spots of the Well Done Hospitality Group (along with Cochon Volant and Taureaux Tavern) that's offering family meals for two (\$30) and four (\$60). (The meals are available on Tock for delivery and curbside pickup Monday through Saturday for dinner.) Visit ExploreTock.com/welldonepickup to view daily rotating menus to order.

—**Eduardo's Enoteca:** This Gold Coast spot specializes in Italian dishes, and is available on Caviar. Menu items include spicy kale Caesar salad, lemon parsley spaghetti, hot honey pizza (with cayenne-infused honey), seafood tortellini, antipasti, tiramisù and more.

—**El Mariachi Restaurant and El Mariachi Tequila Bar & Grill** (ElMariachiTequilaBar.com): The Lake View restaurants are on Grubhub and Caviar, and have a variety of their Mexican items to order. Taquitos, quesadillas, the pork dish cochinita pibil and salmon a la talla are just a

Turn to page 21

CREWS from page 18

first hit was [sings Tyrese's "Sweet Lady"] and they also signed Trey Songz. Basically, they had an issue with me being gay, and there was the whole conversation of "You sound too white." [Note: Windy City Times asked Songbook for a reply to Crews' statement. However, there was none as WCT went to print.]

So I left New York City for Atlanta, and it ended up being one of the worst decisions of my life. It ruined me; they were so mean and nasty to me because they made me doubt my talent. When I returned to NYC, I had no home and no job, and I wasn't going back to Columbus and look like a failure. So I slept on friends' couches and even a men's shelter; I was homeless for about a year.

WCT: Let's move on to your music. I saw your video for the song "Blow" [available on YouTube]. It's a cool song, but you also catch attention for what you wear.

TC: The pink coat? You know what's funny? I have so many horror stories about that coat.

I saw a girl on with a long coat, and I said, "I want a pink coat." My friend made it for me. I got a coat from H&M for \$40, and then we got the pink "fur" to add to it. When we released the video, I got so much hate for the coat; people said, "It looks tacky!" But [a few] months later, that coat is everywhere. Lil Wayne wore a pink, furry coat and—of course, because they're straight men—they got praise for it.

WCT: Where is that song available?

TC: It's everywhere, like iTunes. Love & Hip Hop turned down that song, though. It wasn't "urban" enough.

WCT: And on "Papi," you sample Jennifer Lopez.

TC: Yes. It's funny—she's one of those artists I really, really love because she's old-school and she fought for her career. I love someone who's fighting for their career. She's been told "no" her whole career, and she kept fighting. We all have to fight in this industry. This shit is not easy and it's not fun.

WCT: And how did the collaboration with Precious come about?

TC: So I was on Instagram when this friend of mine sent her [Precious'] page. I thought it was so dope and asked, "Who is she?" We talked on the phone for about two hours about what it means to be [and LGBT] artist in this world. We literally became friends. I recorded this song and thought, "This is the perfect song for her." I sent it to her and she had it back the next morning, in less than eight hours. She killed it.

WCT: Going back to the quarantine, we're all fighting on some level. What have you learned about yourself through this?

TC: That I'm mentally stronger than I give myself credit for, because music can drive you crazy if you let it. I feel like I've had this mental toughness. I've been the positive one for my friends, which I hadn't [envisioned]. Even if you can't work on your craft or see loved ones, you can work on your game plan.

The single "Papi" is available on many platforms. Crews can be found on Facebook and Instagram (@trentcrews).



SAVOR from page 20

few of the items available.

—**Maple & Ash** (MapleAndAsh.com/menus-chicago/#pick-up): The Near North Side steakhouse (on Caviar) has listed popular items such as the little gem Caesar salad and its downstairs burger as well as wild Alaskan king crab legs, ricotta agnolotti, Slagel Farm crispy fried chicken and chocolate cake, among others.

—**Lao Sze Chuan**: Craving Chinese? Then you might want to check out this spot's offerings that include dry chili chicken, sliced tender pork with garlic sauce, wonton soup, peapod leaves and prawn (with shell). It's on Caviar. (BTW, this restaurant has been feeding a lot of first responders, for free, the local ABC affiliate reported.)

—**Jake Melnick's Corner Tap**: In connection with ESPN's The Last Dance 10-part documentary series on the Chicago Bulls during Michael Jordan's last season, Jake Melnick's is offering a special "Chicago-Style 3 for \$23" every Sunday through May 17, including three Chicago-Style Polish Dogs with one quart of Jake's BBQ beans. Jake's is offering curbside pickup and delivery (Doordash). Also, Jake Melnick's has its unique burgers, wings and other items.

—**90 Miles Cuban Cafe**: On Caviar and Grubhub, this Roscoe Village spot has some delicious items you may want, such as papatas bravas, tuna ceviche, pescado, grilled-cheese sandwich, braised oxtails and, of course, the Cubano, among other items.

—**True Food Kitchen** (TrueFoodKitchen.com): Those who want more healthful items may want to check out this restaurant (available on Grubhub). Whether it's ancient grains, teriyaki quinoa, kale salad, spaghetti squash casserole, a turkey burger or family meals, you'll find it here.

CLASSIFIEDS

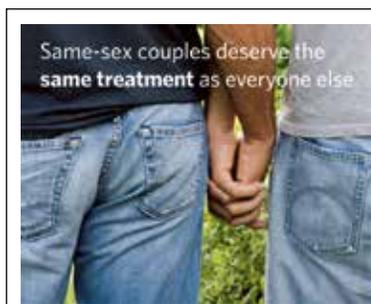
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'10% Show' panel talk on April 30

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives will host a virtual panel discussion involving The 10% Show on Thursday, April 30, at 7 p.m.

The 10% Show was a cable access Chicago-based LGBTQ monthly newsmagazine which ran 21 episodes between 1989 and 1991. The show covered the wide diversity of LGBTQ life in Chicago, including politics, entertainment and community organizations.

Lauren Herold—a Ph.D. candidate at Northwestern University whose research is focused on LGBTQ cable access shows—will interview Executive Director Jack Ryan, co-host/segment producer Sarah Seigel and segment producer Tom Rowan.

The interview will cover their involvement in and development of the show as well as the show's reception and impact. Episodes have been posted at gerberhart.org/the-10-show.

Email info@gerberhart.org for the link info.

League fights to help save Chicago venues

As the effects of COVID-19 continue to devastate businesses and communities around the world, the Chicago Independent Venue League (CIVL) has continued to fight for the survival of Chicago's independent music venues, and is expanding its coalition as founding members of the newly formed National Independent Venue Association (NIVA), which now includes more than 1,000 members representing all 50 states.

CIVL is a coalition of more than 20 local music venues, including Avondale Music Hall, Beat Kitchen, Cafe Mustache, Cole's Bar, Dorian's, Empty Bottle, GMan Tavern, The Hideout, Lincoln Hall, Martyrs', Metro, Park West, Patio Theater, The Promontory, Reggies, The Riviera Theatre, Schubas, The Silver Room, Sleeping Village, Smartbar, Subterranean, Thalia Hall, Tonic Room, The Vic and The Whistler.

During March 15-April 30, 16 of the venues had 1,219 events cancelled, resulting in lost revenue of \$7.176 million.



Giorgio Moroder at Thalia Hall in 2018.

Photo by Vern Hester

CIVL and NIVA stated in a press release that they're concerned that the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) is not designed to meet the needs of independent music venues. In a letter to Congressional leadership, CIVL and NIVA urged Congress, especially the Illinois delegation, that changes need to be made to the program in order to ensure the survival of small, independent venues that have been shuttered as a result of government mandates.

See CIVLChicago.com.

Victory Gardens unveils 2020-21 season, streaming 'Fun Home'

Victory Gardens Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Chay Yew and Executive Director Erica Daniels, announced the lineup for its 2020-21 season.

The venue's 46th season will include the Chicago premiere of Poor Yella Rednecks by Qui Nguyen; the world premiere of In Every Generation by Ali Viterbi; the acclaimed Chicago play Exit Strategy by Ike Holter; the Chicago premiere of cullud wattah by Erika Dickerson-Despenza, and the Chicago premiere of Heroes of the Fourth Turning by Will Arbery.

Note: Victory Gardens has canceled its productions of Dhaba on Devon Avenue and Right To Be Forgotten due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2020-21 season is set to begin in September 2020. Subscriptions are currently available at VictoryGardens.org or 773-871-3000.

In addition, Victory Gardens announced a two-week-only streaming event of its critically acclaimed production of Fun Home, from the 2017-18 season. With music by Jeanine Tesori and book and lyrics by Lisa Kron, Fun Home will host 12 performances running May 12-24.

Each digital performance will admit 259 patrons—the same number of seats in the Victory Gardens house. Tickets, priced at \$20 each, are available at VictoryGardens.org.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

[NOTE: Events may not occur because of compliance with guidelines connected with the COVID-19 outbreak. Please contact the venue if interested in a particular event to see if said event is still scheduled.]

Thursday, April 30

Rainbow Railroad Locomotion Live! Interactive digital drag quarantine experience, hosted by RuPaul's Drag Race Season 11 sensation, Brooke Lynn Hytes! With performances from a variety of Toronto queens, surprise guests, and a special appearance by our Executive Director Kimahli Powell. Going a little stir crazy? Just love a sing-a-long? Register to be a part of the party and get a link to attend virtually via Zoom 6:00pm. See "Rainbow Railroad Presents: Locomotion Live!" on Eventbrite.com

'10% Show' panel talk Gerber/Hart Library and Archives virtual panel discussion on the cable access Chicago-based LGBTQ monthly newsmagazine which ran 21 episodes between 1989 and 1991. View episodes at G/H site and email info@gerberhart.org for link info. 7:00pm



CLOTHES CALL Saturday, May 9

Joan Allen (above) will be part of 'Pants Optional: A Steppenwolf Soiree,' an online event.

Photo by Steve Starr

Please check with the event organizers to see if the event is still scheduled or cancelled. Online <http://gerberhart.org/the-10-show>.

Friday, May 1

Dance Party at Your House By DS Tequila Co. and DJ Vlad. Get your virtual quarantine and quaran-tequila Friday nights with DJ Vlad! Tune in and join in the fun with our Friday night resident DJ Vlad! All donations will be distributed to our staff. 10:00pm - 2:00pm

Please check with the event organizers to see if the event is still scheduled or cancelled.

Online <https://www.twitch.tv/dstequilaco>

Tuesday, May 5

OUTspoken monthly storytelling event **TEMPORARILY CLOSED** Celebrating uniquely personal stories from across the LGBTQ community. OUTspoken is held on the first Tuesday of each month at Sidetrack. Doors to MainBar open at 6 p.m. 7:00pm

Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://sidetrackchicago.com>

Saturday, May 9

Pants Optional: A Steppenwolf Soiree online event Festive and free virtual gathering celebrating the power of theater and raising vital funds. Ensemble member Audrey Francis will emcee with special appearances by Steppenwolf ensemble members Joan Allen, Gary Cole, John Malkovich, Sandra Marquez and Laurie Metcalf, along with celebrity guests who will be announced on Steppenwolf's social-media channels and website. More on how to stream at the link. 6:30pm <http://Steppenwolf.org/pantsoptional>

Tuesday, May 12

Fun Home streaming event Two-week-only streaming event of our critically acclaimed production of Fun Home from the 2017/18 Season, based on the Graphic Novel by Alison Bechdel. \$20. Create a VG account and get instructions on how to view on Vimeo May 12-24 Time:TBA

Please check with the event organizers to see if the event is still scheduled or cancelled.

Vimeo Tickets: <http://victorygardens.org/event/fun-home-streaming/>

Thursday, May 21

IML Weekend in Chicago **POSTPONED** Please check with the event organizers to see what the new dates will be. <http://www.imrl.com>

Saturday, May 30

Wonka Ball, About Face Theatre's annual benefit gala **POSTPONED** lease check with the event organizers to see what the new dates will be. <http://aboutface-theatre.com>

Friday, June 5

Frida Kahlo 2020 **POSTPONED** Originally scheduled for June to August 2020, will be rescheduled for June 5 to Sept. 6, 2021. McAninch Arts Center at College of DuPage 425 Fawell Blvd Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 <http://thecma.org/rescheduled>

Sunday, June 7

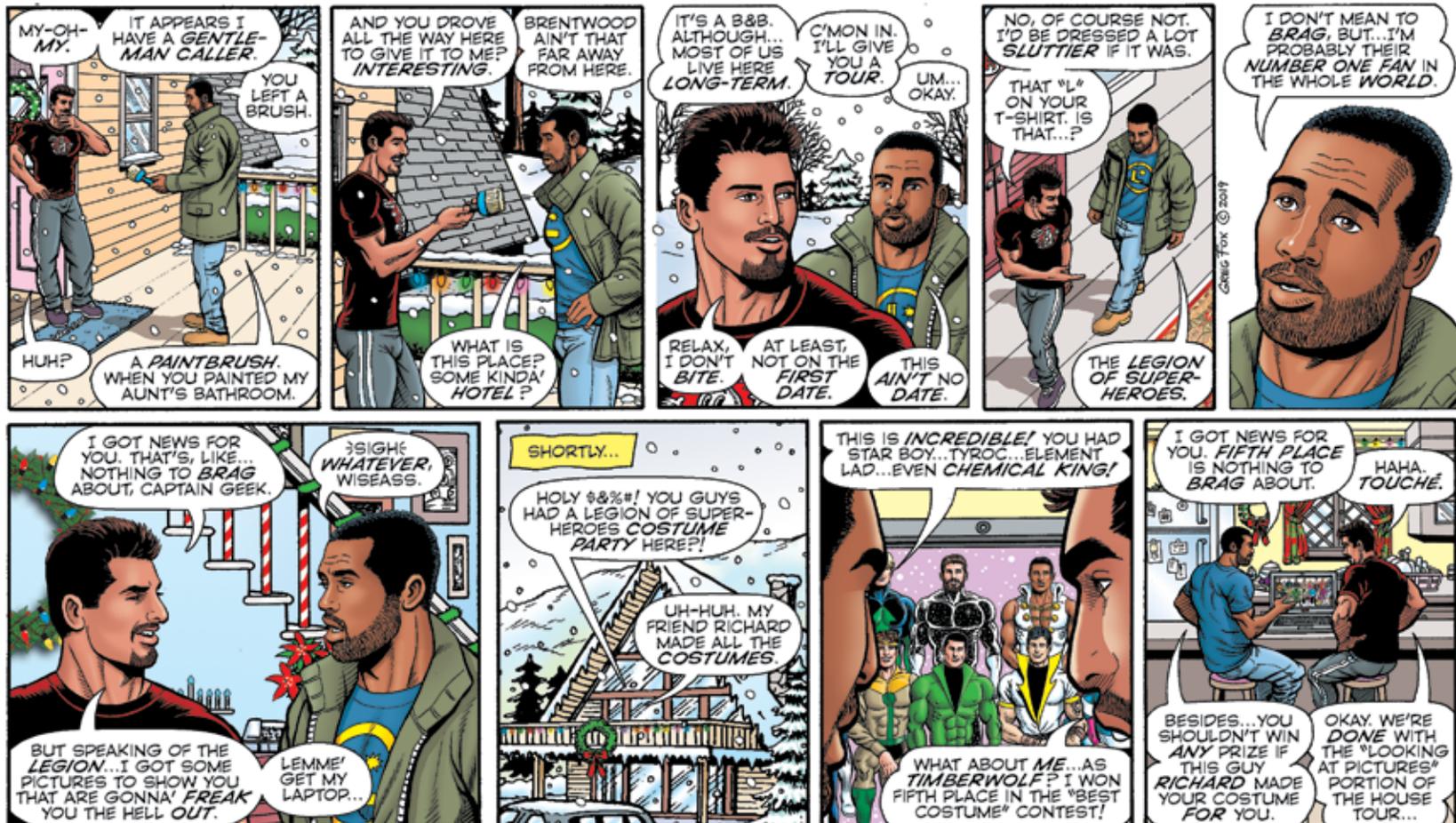
Buffalo Grove Pride. Now it is a car parade. Family-friendly. More info to come 11:00am Checker Dr., Buffalo Grove

Monday, June 8

Virtual Jeff Awards The Chicago theater community's annual awards recognizing non-Equity theater productions. Information on accessing the program will be available in early June. <http://www.jeffawards.org>

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by Greg Fox



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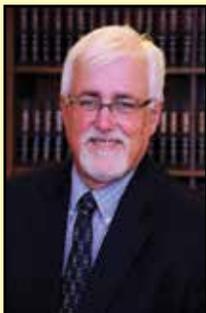
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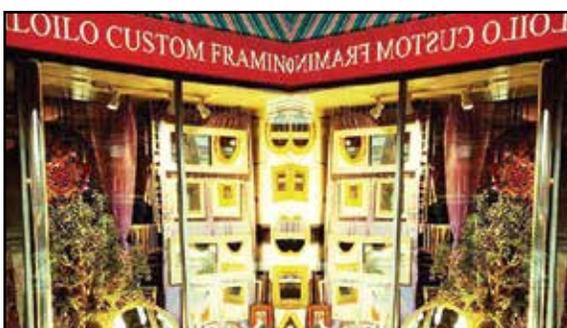
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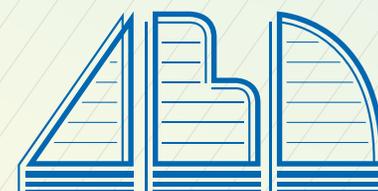


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