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## YES, IOWA!

*Iowa court OKs same-sex marriage; one couple weds.*

BY LISA KEEN

In a state where the nation's eyes are frequently focused this year, a district court judge in Iowa ruled Aug. 30 that the state constitution requires that same-sex couples be allowed to obtain marriage licenses. In doing so, he explained with greater clarity and thoroughness than any previous court decision why denial of marriage licenses to gay couples "perpetuates the stigma historically attached to homosexuality, for them and all gay persons."

One gay male couple was able to obtain their marriage license in Des Moines on the morning of Aug. 31 and were married just one hour before the state obtained a stay of the judge's order pending its appeal to the state supreme court, according to the Des Moines Register. The couple, Iowa State University students Sean Fritz and Tim McQuillan, are now the only gay couple to be legally married in the United States outside of Massachusetts. The Register said 26 other same-sex couples also applied for marriage licenses that morning but were unable to complete the process before the judge postponed enforcement of his order. (The judge's order applies only in the fifth district, which encompasses Polk County and includes the state capital of Des Moines.)

The case, *Varnum v. Brien*, originated with six same-sex couples in Polk County, Iowa—including Kate and Trish Varnum—who sought but were denied marriage licenses from the county clerk, Tim O'Brien. The lawsuit, filed in 2005 by Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, challenged a state law banning same-sex marriage in 1998.

Following the ruling, the Register reported that Republican state legislators vowed to pass

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## MELISSA: WIDE AWAKE



Interview on page 20

## CRAIG RESIGNS

*Men's room scandal leads to senator's departure.*

BY BOB ROEHR

Idaho Sen. Larry Craig resigned from the U.S. Senate on Sept. 1, effective at the end of the month. It was just five days after news broke that he had pled guilty to "lewd conduct" in a Minneapolis airport restroom in June.

The senator had been battered by Republican leadership who sought to break him and rid themselves of the problem as quickly as possible.

They had stripped him of seniority on Senate committees almost immediately, and threatened an ethics investigation and public hearing that could have become salaciously ugly.

"I apologize for what I have caused. I am deeply sorry," Craig said at the Boise news conference announcing his resignation. "I have little control over what people choose to believe, but clearly my name is important to me and my family."

Craig will fight to withdraw his guilty plea to the charges. He has hired Washington attorney Billy Martin, who has represented the high profile cases of White House intern Monica Lewin-

sky and former NFL quarterback Michael Vick.

"His actions in Minnesota and the way he handled this situation showed a profound lack of judgment. Senator Craig obviously failed to live up to the principles he espoused as a lawmaker," said Patrick Sammon, president of Log Cabin Republicans. "Senator Craig had no other choice but to resign." Sammon earlier had called for Craig to resign.

Steve Elmendorf told the Washington Post, "There seems to be a double standard that reflects the GOP's fear and discomfort with all things gay." He is openly gay and was a senior advisor to former Democratic Leader Rep. Dick Gephardt.

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director Matt Foreman deplored the differing

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Richard Knight, Jr., reviews *The Bubble* (above) and *3:10 to Yuma*. See page 16.

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Daniel Sotomayor, 1958-1992

Danny Sotomayor (pictured above in a flier) was remembered at a ceremony at Gerber/Hart Library. See page 7.  
*photo of flier by Andrew Davis*

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Find the FULL interview with superstar Melissa Etheridge as well as our Media Watch column and reviews of two more plays, including *Paradise Lost* (right) online.



*photo by Lara Goetsch*

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See pictures from Windy City Rodeo 2007, plus much more.

*photo by Kirk Williamson.*



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# Church Rebukes Spahr

BY CHARLSIE DEWEY

On Aug. 23, the Synod of the Pacific Permanent Judicial Commission, a regional body of the Presbyterian Church (USA), reversed the Presbytery of the Redwood's previous acquittal of any wrongdoing by the Rev. Jane Spahr in her decision to officiate at marriage ceremonies for two lesbian couples.

The Synod stated, "Although the Rev. Dr. Spahr had acted with conscience and conviction, her actions were contrary to the [Presbyterian Church (USA)] Constitution as it is authoritatively interpreted." In a 6-2 vote, the Synod directed that a finding of guilty be entered, and Spahr receive the censure of rebuke, which was the lightest punishment possible for the offense.

Originally, the Presbytery of the Redwoods, a lower governing body, had voted 6-1 for her acquittal, finding that she had acted within her rights due to her conviction of conscience.

Rev. Spahr told Windy City Times, "For me not to do these weddings would be going against

my call, going against my conscience and going against my faith."

According to Spahr's attorney, Sarah Taylor, prohibiting same-sex marriage is not an essentially held belief of the church and, therefore, Spahr had the right to act out of private conscience, whereas, if it were an essential belief of the church she would not have had that right.

Taylor said that a 1991 case that could appear to prohibit same-sex marriage does not contain the necessary wording to do so and that specific language is required for such a restriction.

Since 1978, the role of the LGBT community has been a controversial issue within the Presbyterian Church (USA). Presently, LGBT folks are welcome to attend mass and participate in the church, but are restricted from holding leadership positions.

Taylor explained that, in essence, the church seems to promote the belief that the individual is not a sinner, but that the practice is sinful.

The church is also clearly divided on the issue of supporting same-sex marriage. Taylor pointed

out, "At no level of the church, the presbytery or the synod, is there any lack of support for what she was doing."

Spahr explained that in the past the LGBT community came to her for commitment ceremonies and only in the last two to three years has there really been a specific request for the marriage ceremony as it is performed for their heterosexual counterparts in the church.

"For me to say that one is better than the other...I don't even think like that. It's got to be equal. ... I'm not only for equal rights, I'm for equal rites," explained Spahr.

Spahr believes that the mixed message the church is sending is harmful to the LGBT community—a message that could create internalized homophobia, and must be changed to promote a healthy and equal community of worship.

"I think the thing is when you have the church saying that our relationships are less than and that we cannot be in leadership, think what that does to a person," Spahr said. "It says not only that we are not equal, but it also promotes stereotypes and myths about who we are. And, in some cases, it gives people license to do violence against us. That is atrocious. So with that, it affects people when you say come and be with

us, but you can never serve in leadership...I believe that the church participates and is complacent with the violence that happens to us."

Spahr points to the foundations of the Presbyterian Church: "The founder of this religion challenged every system of oppression, in his faith community and in government. ... He empowered those that were labeled less than and we have a responsibility of stopping this violence, stereotyping and mythologizing who people are whatever the issue may be."

Spahr is set to appeal the case to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, the highest governing body of the Presbyterian Church, and whose decision will have a national influence on similar cases.

In discussing the decision, Taylor said, "I think the key thing is that the appeal is not about Jane and the discipline. The appeal is strictly about the full inclusion of all members of the church, and it is about every member of the church having discretion when this does not involve an essential."

"I want the church to become the hospitable welcoming place that I know it can be. I want the church to be a place that supports relationships," said Spahr.

## IOWA from cover

an amendment to the state constitution to ban same-sex marriage.

In a carefully detailed 63-page decision, Judge Robert B. Hanson wrote that denial of marriage licenses to same-sex couples violates the state constitution's guarantees of due process and equal protection, as a matter of law. As a matter of impact, he said, the law which prohibits issuing licenses to same-sex couples stigmatizes gay families, does damage to their dignity, and harms them in "numerous tangible and intangible respects."

"Through the marriage exclusion," wrote Hanson, "the state devalues and delegitimizes relationships at the very core of the [same-sex couples] sexual orientation and expresses, compounds, and perpetuates the stigma historically attached to homosexuality, for them and all gay persons."

The institution of marriage, wrote Hanson, "is so woven into the fabric of daily life and so determinative of legal rights and status," that denial of a marriage license "amounts to a badge of inferiority" imposed on gay couples and their children.

Same-sex couples "are continually reminded of their own and their family's second-class status in daily interactions in their neighborhoods, workplaces, schools and other arenas in which their relationships and families are poorly or unequally treated, or not recognized at all."

"It is impossible," wrote Hanson, "for [same-sex couples] by any alternate means to come close to achieving the security and certainty that the law automatically affords to married spouses, nor do [they] have any means to access the countless benefits reserved to married persons and children of the marriage."

"Gay and lesbian persons have the capacity to

form and are successful at forming lasting, committed, healthy, and mutually satisfying intimate relationships, just as heterosexual persons do, and which are equivalent to heterosexual relationships," wrote Hanson.

Hanson also noted that about 37 percent of the estimated 5,800 same-sex couples in Iowa are raising children under the age of 18 and that the state's interest in the welfare of this estimated 3,158 children "is as great as its interest in the welfare of any other children."

No presidential candidate changed his or her position on same-sex marriage following the news, but Republicans Mitt Romney, John McCain, and Sam Brownback issued statements criticizing the judge. Romney said the decision illustrates the need for a federal constitutional amendment. McCain said it illustrates the need for strict constructionist judges (who generally do not include gay people as equal citizens because the constitution does not explicitly instruct that gay people be included).

In an unusual move journalistically, the Des Moines Register carried a number of stories explaining to readers that Judge Hanson and the judge who waived a three-day waiting period for the gay male couple that was able to marry last Friday could be removed from office and explained how and when. The paper ran a photo of Hanson with a caption that said a bishop in his own denomination, Methodist, said it wouldn't be fair to call him a "godless secular humanist." And it ran a story by a "news columnist" who said "God, meanwhile, still believes marriage should be between one man and one woman." The columnist said he had attempted to reach Judge Hanson to discuss how devout he is to his Methodist faith.

Meanwhile, Camilla Taylor, the senior attorney from Lambda Legal who argued the case on behalf of the same-sex couples, said, "This decision recognizes that our clients and thousands

of other same-sex couples and their families across Iowa are devoted to each other and want the protections and responsibilities that only marriage can provide so that they can take care of each other."

Only Massachusetts currently issues marriage licenses to same-sex couples, and gener-

ally speaking those couples must be residents of Massachusetts or of states that have no law barring same-sex marriage (so far, that has been determined as New Mexico and Rhode Island). A ruling on the issue is currently pending before the Maryland Supreme Court and will soon be argued before the California Supreme Court.

## SIDEBAR: Lawyer 'Elated' with Ruling

Camilla Taylor, a senior staff attorney in Lambda Legal's Midwest regional office in Chicago, was beside herself with joy after Judge Robert Hanson ruled.

"We're thrilled and elated on behalf of all same-sex couples in Iowa," she told Windy City Times. "The decision really lived up to the promise of equality in Iowa's constitution." She added that "Iowa has historically been known for doing the right thing long before its neighbors. It's just another example of Iowa taking the first step in upholding civil liberties."

However, according to the Associated Press, although 20 couples had applied for marriage licenses by the morning of Aug. 31, current

Polk County Recorder Julie Haggerty said that he was told to no longer accept applications. (The judge's stay was confirmed shortly thereafter.) One couple—Iowa State University students Sean Fritz and Tim McQuillan—managed to become legally married by bypassing the three-day waiting period.

County attorney John Sarcone quickly appealed Hanson's decision, prompting the stay—which will be in effect until the legal situation is resolved. "We intend to litigate this case before the Iowa Supreme Court and we're confident that the lower court decision will be upheld," Taylor said.

Polk County, whose population in 2006 was estimated at just over 408,000, is in central Iowa. Its county seat, Des Moines, is also the state's capital.

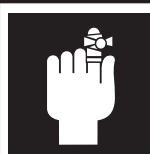
—Andrew Davis and Amy Wooten

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## 'Flip' Hardly a 'Flop'

"Flip Flop"—an Aug. 27 musical benefit that took place at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted—was a huge success, raising \$9,000 for About Face Youth Theatre.

Windy City Media Group's Amy Matheny emceed (and sang in) the event, which featured over 20 performers who each performed songs made famous by the opposite gender, hence the name "Flip Flop." Among the performers were Honey West, Stephen Rader, Elizabeth Laidlaw, Julius Thomas III and Amy Armstrong and Freddy Allen. About Face Youth Theatre's Scott Ferguson directed the event.

"It was an amazing night," Matheny told Windy City Times. "I don't think I've ever seen all those theater and cabaret performers in the same room. To have everybody from a child performer who's now in *Wicked* to Tom Michael and Beckie Menzie to Kate Fry, who's a very serious Jeff Award-winning actress, all on stage at the same time was such a delight. It was a really unique, magical evening."

Windy City Media Group was one of the sponsors of the event. More photos are available at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com); images by Tracy Baim.

## Local Events

**Coffee talk:** The Public Square at the IHC's Café Society and Intelligentsia Coffee, 3123 N. Broadway, are giving away free drinks to attendees at its Tuesday discussions (at 7:30 p.m.) on timely topics. Other weekly locations include Pause Cafe, 1107 W. Berwyn, and Valois, 1518 E. 53rd. See [www.ThePublicSquare.org](http://www.ThePublicSquare.org).

**Hungry eyes:** The Flesh Hungry Dog Show will take place Fri., Sept. 7, at Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark, with The Joans, Das Kapital and the Sass Dragons. Call 773-743-5772.

**A garde day's night:** In honor on Hispanic Heritage Month, the Aldo Castillo Gallery, 675 N. Franklin, will unveil the new works of Latin American avant-garde artist Ignacio Gana on Fri., Sept. 7, 5:30-8:30 p.m. (His works will be shown through Mon., Oct. 8.) Call 312-337-2536 or see [www.artaldo.com](http://www.artaldo.com).

**Wine and dine:** On Fri., Sept. 7-Sat., Sept. 8, the Windy City Wine Festival—complete with more than 250 fine wines from across the globe—will take place at Daley Bicentennial Plaza in Grant Park, 337 E. Randolph. Tickets are \$25. Visit [www.windycitywinefestival.com](http://www.windycitywinefestival.com) or call 847-382-1480.

**Sale away:** Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville, will hold its back-to-school book sale Fri., Sept. 7-Sun., Sept. 16. See [www.GerberHart.org](http://www.GerberHart.org) for more info.

**Stars in their eyes:** Lyric Opera of Chicago will present a star-studded free outdoor concert as its pre-season gift to the city on Sat., Sept. 8, at 7:30 p.m. in Millennium Park. Music Director Sir Andrew Davis will conduct Isabel Bayrakdarian, Elizabeth De Shong, Bryan Griffin and Stacey Tappan, among others, in arias and ensembles with the Lyric Opera Orchestra and Chorus (preparation by Chorus Master Donald Nally).

**On 'affirm' ground:** "Reconciling Journey—Affirming Devotional Study for GLBT Christians" will take place Sun., Sept. 9, at Ministry Cabin, 4025-A Route 34, Oswego, 6:30-8 p.m. Visit [www.GLBTChristian.org](http://www.GLBTChristian.org).

**On the edge:** "The Art of Edge," a group art show, will take place Sat., Sept. 15, at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center (in collaboration with Leather Archives & Museum), 703 S. 2nd, Milwaukee, Wis., 8 p.m.-12 a.m. Call 414-383-3727.

**Moving and grooving:** The Chicago Park District, in partnership with Deeply Rooted Productions, will present "Community Rhythms III: A Dance Festival in the Park" on Sat., Sept. 15 at the South Shore Cultural Center, 7059 S. South Shore. (Registration is at 9 a.m.; all ages are welcome.) Dance genres to be explored will include tap, ballet, African, hip-hop, pilates, praise dance, jazz, belly dancing, steppin' and Latin. Admission is \$5. See [www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com](http://www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com).

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# LGBT Youth Forum Stirs Controversy

BY AMY WOOTEN

Community leaders, youth, social service workers and politicians gathered at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, on Aug. 30 for a contentious, emotional town hall discussion regarding LGBT youth.

There have been an increasing number of complaints over the past few years regarding the youth who hang out along Halsted Street in Boystown, particularly late at night. That youth are attracted to what many describe as the only safe haven in Chicagoland is nothing new.

But recent Northalsted Area Merchant Association (NAMA) internal e-mails and conversations among certain area business owners, residents and members of various associations have caused much tension in the larger LGBT community. Some business owners and residents want to clean up the streets, and are citing youths hanging out in Boystown as a direct cause of a supposed increase in crime. Others disagree, and believe these complaints and concerns are rooted in racism and a general misunderstanding of youth.

## Business owners feel youth a "problem"

Several people, namely area business owners, expressed concerns about what they feel is an increase in crime and noise in the neighborhood, although police have stated in the past that overall crime in the 23rd District is down.

Roscoe's Jim Ludwig added that he felt "intimidated" by the "bands of gangs" hanging out along Halsted Street.

Other businesses members and a few residents said they were concerned about the safety of their patrons and themselves, and were inconvenienced by noise created by youth.

Stu Zirin of Minibar, who shot a controversial YouTube video of youth hanging around late at night, said, "[Halsted] Street changes dramatically" around 2 or 4 a.m.

## Police perspective

According to police at the meeting, the number of youth out late at night this summer has "absolutely doubled" from last year.

Officer Jose Rios, the 23rd District LGBT liaison, said he worked the midnight shift for two

months in order to learn more and speak with the youth.

"Ninety-nine percent of them probably weren't doing anything wrong," Rios said.

"Of [the youth], I'd say 98 percent were African-American and the other 2 percent Puerto Rican. They said they were there because they can't be who they want to be on the South and West sides," he added.

While the number of youths have increased, so have the number of crimes called in by residents and businesses. Police said they now receive over 1,000 calls every month. Among them are noise complaints and minor vandalism.

They added, however, that there is no evidence that points to more youths being out as the cause of great numbers of crimes.

## Racism?

In response to comments from some that the youth are intimidating, Let's Talk Let's Test Foundation's Lloyd Kelly quipped, "These people that intimidate you, what do they look like?" Kelly, among many others present, felt that concerns over the youth were a result of racist thinking. After all, the majority of the youth hanging out on Halsted late at night in recent years have been African-American and Latino youth.

Prior to the meeting, Piehole owner and NAMA member Doug Brandt expressed concern to Windy City Times that a "majority" of the association's members were making comments and sending e-mails that, at the very least, could be perceived as racist.

"Lakeview has a reputation of being homogeneous," Brandt said. "Instead of trying to turn this into a gated community, we should be more welcoming to everyone."

Many spoke out that evening, addressing what they feel is blatant racism.

"There is the issue of race in here, and the issue that we don't know how to deal with young people," said activist Renae Ogletree, a resident of the area who said adults in the area cause her the most headaches.

Many nodded in agreement when Ogletree suggested that adults in the room needed to understand issues of race and the needs of the youth, and embrace them instead of being intimidated by them.

There were adults present who have dealt with racism in Lakeview first-hand, such as Vernita Gray of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, who said that she and Ogletree could not get a cab the night of a Center dinner.

"I think a lot of people in this community need to check their racist attitude," said Gray, who was met with applause.

Kelly, when contacted the following day, said he felt "disgusted" by what transpired at the meeting. "The meeting accomplished what the business owners and associations wanted to accomplish. They set in everybody's mind that African-American youth are a problem in the area," he said.



Lloyd Kelly, pictured here at a press conference, was at the LGBT youth forum. Photo by Andrew Davis

## What youth want

One suggestion to decrease the number of youths on the streets: Give them something to do. Many agreed that the LGBT community needs to work together to create more safe spaces and programming for youth for the late hours.

The entire back row on the theater was composed of teens and young adults from Youth Pride Center (YPC). One youth stated, "They don't want services; they just need somewhere to be...and that's simply all there is to it." The other youths nodded in agreement, and also suggested that a 24-hour safe space is needed.

Although there are safe spaces such as Broadway Youth Center, YPC and Café Pride, Chicago Department of Public Health's Lora Branch noted that many safe spaces she went to when she was young have disappeared. Many felt the community needs to re-create these spaces.

Many in the room failed to notice until the end of the meeting that halfway through the discussion, all of the YPC youths had left. Ogletree and Kelly thought that the youths felt unwelcome and ignored.

"We had all these youth here, and they were shut out," Ogletree said.

## The Center's role

Some suggested the new Center on Halsted, which is located in the heart of the area most of these youths hang out, should be open longer and offer more programs and activities for youth. Others suggested that spaces also be created on the South and West sides of the city.

"If we got \$20 million for the infrastructure, we can find a few dollars for services needed by these kids," 44th Ward Ald. Tom Tunney said.

"This isn't the Center's problem, but Center, you are part of the community so you are part of the solution," Ogletree said.

Jose Rivera of the Chicago Department of Human Services promised to recalibrate the outreach team assigned to the Center, and "give the Center more resources." He also said the department would sit down with the Center and local organizations to collaborate on these issues.

He added that more money would help alleviate homelessness among LGBT youths.

## Next steps

While there was disagreement on what the ultimate solution(s) should be, there was agreement on the next steps.

Of importance was banding the community together to work towards a solution; forming a task force; ensuring the youth were involved in the process; and making sure the community gets its facts and statistics straight.

Sidetrack owner and longtime activist Art Johnston best summed up the evening, in many people's opinion, and some found hope in his words. "This is a good problem," he said. "We have folks who feel safe here. It doesn't mean we don't need to work on some things. But there could be worse things." He added that he recalled a time when Lakeview wasn't safe for anyone.

Johnston said the community should be happy that many are coming out at younger ages and migrating to Lakeview, an area they feel is safe. "These are our children. I'm glad for all of us that there is a place here."

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Lori Cannon holds a press pass that Danny Sotomayor made.  
Photo by Andrew Davis

## Sotomayor Honored at Closing Event

BY ANDREW DAVIS

On Aug. 30, Gerber/Hart Library honored the birthday and spirit of someone many considered a pioneer by hosting a closing reception for "Unrelentingly Drawn: The Editorial Cartoons of Danny Sotomayor." The retrospective exhibition featured the political and social works of the late cartoonist, who passed away in 1992.

The closing reception, entitled "Act Up, Fight Back," took place on what would have been Sotomayor's 49th birthday. David Munar, vice president of AIDS Foundation of Chicago, and Lori Cannon, an activist who was a close friend of Sotomayor, spoke at the event.

Munar, who "got to know Danny through the papers," said that Sotomayor "was an ordinary man who faced extraordinary obstacles and challenges [who] rose to the challenge to really find his voice and speak the truth." He added that he "feel[s] a kinship with Danny. Two years after his death, I was diagnosed as HIV-positive and we share a Hispanic heritage. ... [We] both found ourselves growing up way too soon, at a time when there were very [few] options." In addition, Munar—who also talked about the lack of health care and supportive housing for HIV-positive individuals—noted that he noticed how many of the issues that Sotomayor commented on "are still issues that we're battling today."

Cannon, who said that earlier that day she continued her annual tradition and visited Sotomayor's grave in Roseland Cemetery, talked about how she asked famed activist Larry Kramer for Sotomayor's cartoons back. (She had Kramer hide them for safekeeping.) "Every time another birthday or anniversary came around, it just hit me that the [works] should really be enjoyed and they should live," she said. Cannon also commended Karen Sendziak, the library's president, and Wil Brant, the exhibit's curator, for putting together "a wonderful homage to one of our heroes."

Sendziak told the audience that while watching outtakes of Short Fuse: The Story of an AIDS Activist, which features Sotomayor, she "got a sense of what Danny was like: his playfulness, his seriousness, his dedication... In some respects, I feel that I've made a new friend."

More photos of the event are at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

## Lesbian on Ballot to Be Bishop

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The Rev. Tracey Lind—the dean of a Cleveland, Ohio, cathedral who has a female partner—is one of five nominees that the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago has chosen to be on a Nov. 10 ballot for bishop, according to [Gay.com](http://Gay.com).

If Lind is selected, she would follow New Hampshire Bishop V. Gene Robinson as the second bishop living with a partner of the same sex. Robinson was consecrated in 2003.

Lind's nomination is not without controversy. Robinson's selection had already created a schism within the world Anglican community, as many conservative members protested the development. (The Episcopal Church is the U.S. branch of the Anglican Communion.) Springfield Bishop Peter Beckwith told The Chicago Tribune that the city's nomination of Lind "is simply flying in the face of the desire of the Anglican Communion. It's a slap in the face."

When asked what he thought of Lind's nomination, Robinson (through his communications assistant) e-mailed Windy City Times that "I trust the people and the process in the Diocese of Chicago to make their choice of bishop thoughtfully and prayerfully. They have nominated a slate of strong, gifted and faithful candidates, and God will be their guide in choosing the next Bishop."

The other candidates for bishop of the Chicago diocese are the Rev. Timothy Safford, rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia; the Rev. Jane Gould, rector of St. Stephen's Memorial Episcopal Church in Lynn, Mass.; the Rev. Jeffrey Lee, rector of St. Thomas Church in Medina, Wash.; and the Rev. Margaret Rose, leader of national Episcopal women's ministries.

## Venus Publisher to be at Anti-Gay Banquet

BY AMY WOOTEN

Venus magazine publisher Charlene Cothran, whose publication used to be a voice for the Black LGBT community before it became a Christian publication, will be a special guest at an upcoming local anti-gay fundraiser.

Peter LaBarbera, who has headed the local anti-LGBT organization Americans For Truth (AFT) since leaving his position at the conservative Illinois Family Institute, invited Cothran to attend AFT's first annual banquet in Lombard. Cothran caused a ripple several months ago when she claimed she had become "ex-gay," and changed Venus magazine into a Christian magazine that features articles on ex-gay ministry and overcoming same-sex desire.

Cothran, who LaBarbera dubs a "hero for truth," will join Massachusetts activist David Parker, who made headlines in 2005 for refusing to leave his son's school after meeting with officials. Parker opposed his son learning about diverse families (which included lesbian and gay parents) in the classroom.

Originally, the banquet was intended to take place Oct. 6 at a Naperville Holiday Inn, but the hotel's manager cancelled the event after receiving pressure from Gay Liberation Network and other gay activists. The manager, according to a Concerned Women for America interview with AFT, cited safety issues for his guests after learning protests of the event might occur. According to LaBarbera's blog and AFT's Web site, the anti-gay organization has since secured another venue in suburban Lombard. Those interested in attending must call AFT's banquet coordinator at 312-315-6152 in order to learn about the event's location.

The event will take place Oct. 5.

## Man Accused of Assaulting Disabled Lesbian

BY AMY WOOTEN

A date has been set for a jury trial regarding a man accused of sexually assaulting a disabled lesbian in downstate Jasper County.

On July 31, Larry Campbell, 34, was arrested and charged with 13 felony counts of aggravated sexual assault, criminal sexual assault and aggravated battery. The alleged assault against the 25-year-old paraplegic lesbian took place July 6 in Newton, a predominately rural, small town.

According to the victim's mother, who spoke with Windy City Times out of concern that the story has been largely ignored by local media, the alleged attack occurred while her daughter was out with friends, but left alone with Campbell for a period of time.

Campbell was held at \$150,000 bond, but his bond was reduced to \$75,000 in Jasper County Circuit Court Aug. 28.

The pre-trial has been set for Oct. 19, and the jury trial has been set for Nov. 5 at 8:30 a.m.

## Russian to Speak at Shepherd Rally

Gay Russian leader Nikolai Alexeyev will be the keynote speaker at the 9th Annual Matthew Shepard March on Sat., Oct. 6. The rally/march,

organized by the Gay Liberation Network (GLN), will begin at 8 p.m. in the parking lot located on the corner of Halsted and Roscoe streets in Lakeview.

For the past two years, Alexeyev has led the efforts of Russian lesbians and gays to win the right to publicly organize, braving police arrests and physical attacks by neo-fascists and religious zealots, according to a GLN press release.

"The Gay Liberation Network is proud to host Alexeyev because his example of tenacious organizing demonstrates how rights have always been won, regardless of country," said GLN co-founder Andy Thayer.

On Wed., Oct. 3, 7-9 p.m., GLN will host a solidarity reception with Alexeyev at the Gerber/Hart Library, at 1127 W. Granville. For more information about either event, call GLN at 773-209-1187, e-mail [LGBTliberation@aol.com](mailto:LGBTliberation@aol.com), or visit [www.GayLiberation.net](http://www.GayLiberation.net).

## New Church at Center

On Sun., Sept. 9, [achurch4me.com](http://achurch4me.com) at 11 a.m. MCC will celebrate the launch of weekly worship services at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted.

Rev. Elder Jim Mitulski, a 24-year veteran of the MCC and denominational equivalent of a bishop, will provide the day's reflection, "Breaking Down Walls; Building Up Hope."

Among the others there will be the Rev. Deborah Lake of Sankofa Way. Lake formerly ministered at a church at 1352 S. Union, which is now closed.

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The Night Swimmer by Kass Copeland

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# WORLD ROUNDUP

BY REX WOCKNER

## Cameroon jails gay men

Six men were jailed in Cameroon in mid-August after a young man who had been arrested on theft charges was coerced by police into naming his gay friends, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission reported.

"The tactics of the Cameroonian government define the term 'witch hunt,'" said Cary Alan Johnson, IGLHRC's senior program officer for Africa. "Imagine being forced to denounce your friends. Imagine finding yourself in prison because your name is on a list."

More than 20 people have been detained in the past two years under Article 347 of Cameroon's penal code, which criminalizes consensual sex between men.

"Hardly a month goes by without reports of the arrests of people because of their sexuality," said Steave Nemande, director of the gay group Alternatives-Cameroun.

Nemande recently wrote a letter to the Ministry of Justice in an attempt to address the situation.

## Dutch gays worried about anti-gay attacks

An increase in gay-bashings on the streets of Amsterdam this year is worrying some Dutch gay people.

A new survey conducted by the EenVandaag television show and the national gay group COC found that 42 percent of gays and lesbians feel less safe in public than they did a year ago, dutchnews.nl reported.

Of that 42 percent, 38 percent said they have encountered anti-gay situations in the streets—



The world's first full same-sex marriages took place at Amsterdam City Hall on April 1, 2001. Photo by Rex Wockner

64 percent of which were verbal assaults and 12 percent of which were physical attacks.

Pollsters questioned 1,980 gay people as part of a larger survey of 23,000 Dutch residents.

Overall, 61 percent of respondents said the Netherlands is a gay-friendly country and 72 percent support the nation's law that allows same-sex couples to marry.

COC originally stood for Cultuur en Ontspannings-Centrum (Culture and Leisure Center) but the organization now is known solely by its former initials.

## Hungarian radio station fires anti-gay editors

An increase in gay-bashings on the streets of Budapest's Lánchíd Rádió station fired two editors Aug. 29 after they posted a doctored photograph on the station's Web site that showed openly gay government official Gábor Szetey wearing a pink triangle and standing outside the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Szetey, the federal human resources secretary of state, publicly came out July 5 as he opened Budapest's 12th Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Festival of culture and arts.

Responding to the photo incident, Szetey told reporters he "cannot be intimidated."

The radio station's management called the picture "impermissible and offensive" and apologized to Szetey and anyone else who found it upsetting.

Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány also denounced the image, calling it "a scoundrel act."

"The fascists are gathering," Gyurcsány said. "They are not knocking on the door, they are right here among us."

On July 7, Budapest's gay pride parade was attacked by hundreds of skinheads, neo-Nazis and other thugs. They threw eggs, bottles, smoke bombs, Molotov cocktails and bags of sand at the 2,000 marchers, physically attacked several marchers, and pelted police with beer bottles.

The protesters chanted, "Faggots into the Danube, followed by the Jews," "Soap factory" and "Filthy faggots."

Dozens more pride attendees were attacked in the vicinity of the post-parade party at the open-air, riverside Buddha Beach nightclub, the parade's endpoint.

In his pride-week coming-out speech, Szetey said: "It is not your choice whether you are gay

or not, but it is your choice to accept it. ... I believe in truth and I am sick and tired of lies. ... I believe that we can and we have to break the culture of silence. I have to say out loud who am I, so that finally my own decisions direct my destiny. We have to say it out loud so that we take control of our lives. So that we can be what we are meant to be. ... So that we don't have to live two different lives. One public life and one secret life."

## Madeira president denounces gay equality

The president of Madeira, an autonomous Portuguese archipelago located 360 miles (576 km) off the coast of Morocco, called same-sex marriage "filth" and "degradation" at an Aug. 18 political rally on Porto Santo Island, reported PortugalGay.PT.

"Wanting the marriage of homosexuals and all these things that the socialist government is preparing, these are not causes—this is filth, this is degradation," said Alberto João Jardim. "This is killing the values that we Portuguese—our national soul—have learned from the cradle and that our parents have taught us."

Jardim also denounced a new Portuguese law that permits abortion until the 10th week of pregnancy. He has refused to implement the statute in Madeira.

"When you make laws against human life, it is a precedent that we can't accept and then, afterward, they cover other rights or offend other people's rights in the name of the absolute state," the president said.

Madeira and another group of Portuguese islands, the Azores, have autonomous regional governments but are supposed to enforce Portuguese national laws.

Madeira has some 250,000 residents, of which about 101,000 live in Funchal, the capital city on Madeira Island.

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

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# NATIONAL ROUNDUP

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In Kansas, **Gov. Kathleen Sebelius has signed an order banning discrimination against LGBT state workers**, according to an Human Rights Campaign (HRC) press release. "Today is a good day for all Kansans who reject discrimination. This is an important and meaningful statement in favor of equal rights," said HRC President Joe Solmonese of the measure, which is effective immediately. However, Kansas is still one of 31 states that does not have sexual orientation discrimination laws for the private sector, Solmonese added.

In North Carolina, **Duke University officials have moved a student who is planning to switch genders out of a women's dorm**, according to ABC11TV.com. The school initially decided to allow a male student who is going to have sexual-reassignment surgery to live as a female in the dorm, but at least one shocked parent, Lee Chauncey, contacted Duke's officials. Chauncey said that he is fine with transgender individuals, but he didn't think it was right for someone who is currently male to reside in the building.

**Former New Jersey Gov. Jim McGreevey is now in the seminary**, according to NBC10.com. McGreevey will soon begin studying at General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in Manhattan.

Speaking of McGreevey, his estranged wife,

Dina Matos McGreevey, has said that **only Suzanne Craig, wife of former Idaho Sen. Larry Craig, can decide if she will stick with her husband**, the Associated Press reported. Dina McGreevey said that when Jim announced that he is gay and would resign, "I decided I was going to stand by my husband's side. I was in shock; I had not had an opportunity to absorb what was happening."

The Maine Supreme Judicial Court has unanimously overturned a lower court decision and is **allowing a lesbian couple to adopt two children they have been caring for**, the Associated Press reported. Portland residents Ann Courtney and Marilyn Kirby became the children's foster parents six years ago and filed adoption petitions last year; however, the petitions were not accepted.

Jeffrey Shapiro has filed a lawsuit against the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, **alleging that he was let go because he is straight**, according to 365Gay.com. In his suit, Shapiro claims that he was told that "everybody liked him as a person, but they needed somebody who better fit into the culture."

In Washington, D.C., **Superior Court Judge John Ramsey Johnson has dismissed charges against Phelps Collins and Michael Price** for reportedly robbing a townhouse where attorney Robert Wone was stabbed to death mere months earlier, according to The Washington Blade. Price is one of three gay men who said they were sleeping in the house when Wone was killed in August 2006.

In Texas, **Alton Police Chief Jose Luis Vela has allegedly sexually assaulted male work-**

**ers**, according to the Associated Press. Authorities say that Vela has violated two different men who passed out at parties at his home. Vela is currently on paid leave.

**Texas legislators have passed a measure called the Religious Viewpoints Antidiscrimination Act**, also called the Schoolchildren's Religious Liberties Act, according to Chron.com. The law states that as long as students do not engage in "obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd or indecent speech," certain student leaders can use an open mic to express their religious beliefs. School officials are concerned that the statute could prove to be disruptive.

In Florida, **a 17-year-old who seriously beat a transwoman after learning she was biologically a man** has been sentenced to a year's probation, according to The Palm Beach Post. The teen had been charged with aggravated battery, but Judge Peter Blanc decided not to call the incident a hate crime.

**The leaders at Colorado's New Life Church have warned former leader the Rev. Ted Haggard** that he violated an agreement after he e-mailed KRDO-TV in Colorado Springs and said he would become a counselor at a faith-based halfway house, according to 365Gay.com. After Haggard admitted he had an affair with and bought drugs from then-escort Mike Jones, the reverend signed an agreement saying that he would leave the ministry and not speak about the scandal in exchange for a year's salary and the church's continued support.

Conservative news commentator Tucker Carlson has admitted on an episode of MSNBC Live that **he once assaulted a man who he claimed "bothered" him in a restroom**, according to

Advocate.com. As he discussed the incident involving now-former Sen. Larry Craig, Carlson said that he responded to his own incident by going back to the bathroom "with someone [he] knew and grabb[ing] the guy." However, according to a Media Matters for America press release, Carlson later sent out a statement saying "My friend and I seized the man and held him until a security guard arrived. ... I wasn't angry with the man because he was gay. I was angry because he assaulted me."

**Isentress, a new drug that fights HIV, may be the best bet for some patients who have stopped responding to current medications**, according to an Associated Press item. The FDA has said that Merck & Co.'s studies of Isentress show that the drug is safe and effective for HIV patients resistant to other medications.

**Sexual orientation may not be set in stone**, according to one scientist. In Mother Jones magazine, psychotherapist Gary Greenberg said that even though gay and straight people exhibit some biological differences, there are studies that show, for example, that there are ex-straight in addition to ex-gays.

Easy banter marked Democratic presidential candidate **Hillary Clinton's most recent appearance on Late Show with David Letterman**, according to Advocate.com. She joked about everything from her husband, Bill Clinton, being her vice president to a summer in Alaska when she gutted salmon, describing the latter as the "best preparation for being in Washington that you can possibly imagine."

**Public nudity will soon be allowed in Brattleboro, Vt.**, according to the AP. A month after a temporary ban that ends this month, the city's board voted 3-2 to reject a permanent one.

## CRAIG from cover

ways that Republican leaders handled the hetero- and homo-sexual lapses of its Senators.

"One Republican Senator (Craig) is involved in soliciting (consensual, non-commercial) sex (not a crime) from a man and the Republican leadership calls for a Senate investigation and yanks the rug from underneath him."

"Another Republican Senator (Louisiana's David Vitter) admits to soliciting the services of a female prostitute (illegal) and there's not only no investigation but the senator is greeted with a standing ovation by his Republican peers. What explains the starkly different responses? I'd say rank and homophobic hypocrisy."

Homophobia liked did play a role, as did political considerations, but there are significant differences between the Craig and Vitter incidents. While Craig, perhaps foolishly, pled guilty to the "lewd conduct" charge though the judicial system, Vitter was never formally charged with a crime, and hence has no criminal record.

San Francisco activist Michael Petrelis found an unlikely hero in the Craig affair, the National Rifle Association (NRA). "I never thought I would say bravo to the NRA for anything," he wrote on his blog, "But I applaud the NRA for



Rendering by Thom Bierdz

allowing Larry Craig to retain his seat on the group's board."

### Opportunity Lost

Prior to the resignation, Alexander Robinson, executive director of the National Black Justice Coalition, had urged that the media and the country embrace the incident as a "valuable teaching moment...to talk candidly and knowledgeably about the fluidity of sexuality and its effects upon gay identity and gay sexual orientation."

"Society must come to terms with the fact that not everyone who has gay sex is necessarily gay...[Sen.] Craig rejects this [gay] identity, because this simply is not who he is. He is a conservative, married man who has very little in common with America's gay identity. In fact he is perfectly valid in stating that he is not a gay man."

Robinson compared media coverage of the Craig incident and then New Jersey Gov. Jim McGreevey coming out, with how the press treated the "down low" phenomena, which it identified as "heterosexual" Black men having sex with men on the side. What McGreevey and Craig "both prove is that the down low isn't just a Black thing, but instead it is a male thing."

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# THE LAST DAYS OF GEORGE W. BUSH: A TALE OF FAMILY VALUES

BY KRANDALL KRAUS



## Part 43. The Deal

Jack Adams, the Secret Service agent charged with assassinating President George W. Bush and being held for psychiatric evaluation, has told the psychiatrist the "public" story. In a computer file secretly delivered to his children, he now reveals the "real story". Here he tells about his friend and boss offering him a deal that would spare his life.

Two days ago I was called to a session with Dr. Haber. We have pretty much stopped meeting on a regular basis. I guess they got everything they needed psychologically to build their case, so I've been on my own for the past couple weeks. When I walked into her office the escorts shut the door and stood outside as usual. I sat down across from her and she said, "There's someone here to talk with you. If you want me I'll be just in the next room. You can tell them to summon me and I'll come in. Is that clear?"

I nodded. She left the room through a side door and closed it behind her. A few seconds later it opened again. I half expected one of you to walk through. Or perhaps your mother. Instead it was Raife.

We shook hands and he sat in the chair next to mine, while two guys who were with him swept the room with bug detectors. We sat quietly until they were through. "Clean," said the big guy and they went out the way they had entered.

"They treating you all right?" he asked. "You know they are. You're probably the one making sure they do," I said.

He smiled kindly. "Look, I'll get straight to the point. We have a proposal."

"Life without parole but I get color TV with cable?"

"Something like that," he said. "But without the life sentence."

"I don't understand."

"We know, Jack."

I couldn't just give in. "Know what?"

"You really want to play that game?"

"So what's the proposal? You aren't going to suggest she and I trade places are you?"

He smiled and shook his head as if to say, "Always the wise guy."

"Okay, okay, sorry. What's the proposal?" I leaned forward, resting my elbows on my knees.

"Step One: you take the wrap."

"There's a step after that?"

"You die."

"I get to refuse this proposal, do I?"

"You kill yourself," Raife said. I could see he was enjoying this. A cat playing with its dinner.

"Oh, I get it. Mafia stuff."

"Then you wake up in heaven, only heaven looks a lot like Southern France, or maybe Rio or even Italy. You always liked Italy. You pretty much get to choose."

"Heaven looks like Italy, does it?"

"Heaven looks pretty much any way you picture it. Within reason."

I burst out laughing. Couldn't help it.

"What?"

"This is Mehlman's idea. Or Rover. This is the RNC worrying about 2008. She gets widowhood;

I get my black place in the history book along with Booth and Oswald and Sirhan."

"I wouldn't put it quite like that, Jack."

"And how are my kids going to see it?"

"Jack, either way, your kids are going to see—and hear—pretty much the same story. At least this way you get your life back."

"I get my life back? Did you hear yourself say that?"

"Okay, you get a life back. Maybe not the one you had, but a life, never the less."

I mulled it over. I can do this, I told myself. I knew I could do this because I knew I could get word to you somehow. And I knew that Raife knew this, too. He just couldn't talk about it. "All right."

"All right? Just like that? You don't want to think about it?"

"I just did."

"You don't get to see your kids, Jack. You don't get to see anybody. You're going to be dead in 48 hours."

"How are you going to do it? Whose cadaver is going to be me?"

"You leave that to us."

"I want to know just this one thing."

Raife worried his jaw with his hand. "There isn't a cadaver."

"No cadaver. No corpse. That's a neat one. I get beamed up by aliens?"

"Jack, do you accept the proposal or don't you? I have to put things into motion."

"I already told you. I'm in."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

The Aug. 29 report in Windy City Times, "Chicago Wants Police Beating Case Dismissed," by Amy Wooten, raised serious concerns in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities about the City of Chicago's stance toward the 14th Amendment.

The City of Chicago's attorneys have clarified their position as follows:

"Statements by the attorney for Mr. Ruppert are misleading. This attorney brought the suit under both sections 1981 and 1983 [of U.S. Code Title 42]. The City is only moving to dismiss the 1981 claim because the U.S. Supreme Court holds that section is only available for actions based on ethnicity and ancestry. The City is not trying to dismiss the 1983 claim, which allows the attorney to proceed on the basis of sexual orientation."

The City of Chicago remains committed to the full equality of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities.

Yours sincerely,

William W. Greaves

Director/Community Liaison

Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues

Chicago Commission on Human Relations

Dear Editor:

I have read a number of recent articles criticizing the Governor for using his authority to amend the fiscal year 2008 Illinois State Budget and expand healthcare for everyone in Illinois.

It is true that he has fought to make health care a priority in this year's budget to ensure that everyone can access the health care they need, and that includes all those impacted by HIV/AIDS. The Governor's commitment to meeting these needs is unrivaled. In fact, overall HIV/AIDS funding has increased by almost 70 percent since Governor Blagojevich came into office—from \$46 million in 2003 to more than \$78 million in this year's budget.

Under this administration, we have seen the greatest expansion of the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) than ever before. New cutting edge life saving drugs are routinely added to the drug formulary as they are approved by the FDA and the formulary has been expanded to include drugs to help alleviate the sometimes difficult side effects of treatment. Under Governor Blagojevich, more than \$5 million dollars of state funds has been added to the ADAP program to insure that no Illinois resident who qualifies is denied access to these medications. This is being done at a time when federal funding is slowing and other states are enacting cost containment strategies. In Illinois, unlike some other states, there is no waiting list for access to these drugs under the ADAP program.

Housing for people with HIV/AIDS has also been at the forefront of this Administration's fight against HIV. More than \$2 million dollars of state funds were distributed last year to 16 community housing groups across Illinois to insure that people with HIV have stable housing in a supportive environment. Again, these are funds being added to the program as the federal commitment to housing for HIV positive persons shrinks.

We have also seen the introduction of one of

the nations most recognized HIV programs designed to eliminate mother to child transmission of the virus. Testing of newborn infants when the mother's HIV status is not known has been dramatically successful in helping attain our goal of eliminating mother to child transmission.

All of us in Illinois are keenly aware of the impact that HIV has had not only on the gay community, but the devastating impact now being seen in our minority populations. To address this issue, Governor Blagojevich created and funded the BASUAH (Brother and Sister United against HIV) program to raise awareness in the African American population with a prevention message designed to help stem the tide of infections. This year more than \$5 million dollars was made available for our Office of Minority Health, the BASUAH campaign and the newly created African American HIV/AIDS Response Act for culturally sensitive targeted prevention efforts.

As in any legislative session, program priorities and budget targets are negotiated and compromised. However, what has not been compromised by this Governor is his commitment to providing access to healthcare for all Illinois residents. This includes our fellow citizens living with HIV/AIDS.

Sincerely,

Eric E. Whitaker, M.D., M.P.H.

Director

Illinois Department of Public Health

NOTE: Letters may be edited for clarity, length or consistency.

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# OPINION Lake View

BY REV. DEBORAH LAKE



Washington madam Deborah Jeane Palfrey, accused of running a \$2 million prostitution ring, said that Louisiana Sen. David Vitter, outspoken politician against gay rights, paid her for sex. Surprised? Male prostitute Mike Jones revealed that Ted Haggard, the then-prominent preacher against gay rights, paid him for sex. Shocked? Venus Magazine publisher, Charlene E. Cothran declared she was saved from a lesbian lifestyle that she called the gates of hell. Astonished?

If the answers are no, then you recognize moral dishonesty in many leaders. Even more, you recognize moral dishonesty in our country. While America claims to embrace a God-fearing, pro-life morality, the number of women, children and men killed by violence and abuse rise; one of two marriages ends in divorce; new HIV infections rise; crime, drug abuse and homelessness all rise; political corruption rises; and a prominent religious institution agrees to pay \$660 million to the victims of its predatory priests. These are a few of the reasons why we are not surprised when moral dishonesty and shame in leadership are exposed. Why, in a country where freedom is fiercely protected, are so many of us dishonest, ashamed or afraid?

In Genesis 2:9 of The New Oxford Annotated Bible, we read that the Garden of Eden had a tree of life and a tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God told Adam and Eve that taking food from the tree of knowledge meant death (2:16). Adam and Eve chose to take from this tree (3:6), and immediately became ashamed (3:8) and afraid (3:10b). Today, we face a simi-

lar choice. We can choose to take from either the tree of life or the tree of knowledge. The facts that we—like Vitter, Haggard and Cothran—either live morally dishonest lives, are ashamed of who we are or are afraid to confront homophobia illustrates that we still choose to take from the tree of knowledge.

What would happen if we drew from the tree of life instead? Having the tree of life as a source would mean that we focus on the universal needs that connect us rather than the special interests that divide us. We would address problems based on the understanding that everyone needs to be safe and is concerned for the well-being of their loved ones. Choosing the tree of life would mean that we look for the gifts in each individual and include those gifts in the work of deconstructing what divides us.

Just as Adam and Eve, the choice is ours. We can find more ways to dominate, hurt and abandon one another. We can further weaken our societies by developing more division. We can keep taking from the tree of knowledge. At the same time, we can overcome oppression, heal hurt and create authentic inclusion. We can become strong in our unity and strengthen our communities using life-promoting assumptions. We can choose to take from the tree of life and begin to live morally honest lives free from fear and shame.

**Rev. Lake is head of Sankofa Way, a local pro-LGBT spiritual organization. See [www.sankofaway.org](http://www.sankofaway.org).**

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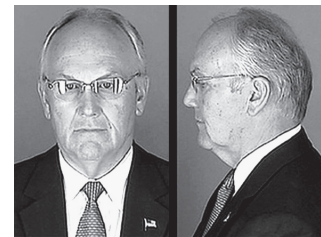


## QUOTELINES

BY REX WOCKNER

**"THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS PROPOSING REGULATIONS** that would effectively kill adult social-networking sites [such as Gay.com, BigMuscleBears, Manhunt, etc.]. This is being done under the guise of fighting child pornography. You have until September 10 to object to these regulations. ... Obviously, none of this has anything to do with child pornography. Instead, it is a blatant attempt to end the ability of consenting adults to use adult social-networking sites to meet other people for sex. Obviously, if these regulations go into effect, they will kill this industry." — *From an Aug. 28 action alert from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. See [tinyurl.com/2k4te9](http://tinyurl.com/2k4te9).*

**"ACCORDING TO THE POLICE REPORT, THE UNDERCOVER OFFICER** set up his position in the restroom at noon on June 11. A few minutes later, Craig entered and sat in the stall next to him. Craig began tapping his right foot, touched his right foot to the left foot of the officer in the stall next to him and brushed his hand beneath the partition into the stall next to him. He was then arrested." — *From an Aug. 27 Washington Post report on the "disorderly conduct" arrest of U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, in a men's room at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Craig pleaded guilty Aug. 8 and paid \$575 in fines and fees. A 10-day jail sentence was stayed. In an Aug. 27 statement, Craig denied he engaged "in any inappropriate conduct" and claimed the airport police "misconstru[ed] my actions." (Note from this column for lesbian and straight readers: The gestures cited in the police report have specific meanings and are universally understood in the men's-room cruising scene across the globe.*



U.S. Sen. Larry Craig's arrest photos

**Senator Larry Craig ... has violated the public trust. ... Innocent people don't plead guilty.**

—Log Cabin Republicans President Patrick Sammon

*The foot-tapping means, "I'm looking for sex." The brushing of the hand beneath the partition translates, "Get down on your knees and place your penis underneath the partition so I can touch or fellate it." Craig was outed by [blogactive.com](http://blogactive.com) last October. See [tinyurl.com/yxqqgr](http://tinyurl.com/yxqqgr).*

*The Idaho Statesman daily newspaper finally published all its research on Craig's sex life on Aug. 28. See [tinyurl.com/yrpqt2](http://tinyurl.com/yrpqt2). The police report can be viewed at [tinyurl.com/2sw3dw](http://tinyurl.com/2sw3dw).*

**"WHAT'S UP WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS LIKE SENATOR CRAIG?** They stand for so-called 'family values' and fight basic protections for gay people while furtively seeking other men for sex. Infuriating pathetic hypocrites. What more can you say? ... And by the way, why are Minneapolis tax dollars being used to have plainclothes police officers lurking idly in airport restroom stalls?" — *National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Executive Director Matt Foreman in response to the Aug. 27 news of the arrest of U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, in a cruisy men's room.*

**"SENATOR LARRY CRAIG ... HAS VIOLATED THE PUBLIC TRUST,** not just with his inappropriate and illegal behavior, but in the subsequent explanation of his actions. Innocent people don't plead guilty. ... Senator Craig owes the people of Idaho a more credible explanation than what he has provided. [A] nd now he's questioning the honesty of law enforcement officers. ... This situation may have permanently damaged Craig's ability to continue serving in the U.S. Senate. Log Cabin strongly opposes outing. It's unproductive and distracts people from the real work of convincing more Americans to support equality for gay and lesbian people. It's not for me to speculate about Senator Craig's sexual orientation. However, it's clear that whether it's Jim McGreevey, Ted Haggard, or someone else, life in the closet

often leads to destructive, harmful, and reckless behavior." — *Log Cabin Republicans President Patrick Sammon in an Aug. 28 statement.*

**"[T]HE FIRE CHIEF IS GAY, THE MAYOR HAS GAY SENIOR STAFF,** a City Council member and a state senator are gay, a superior court judge is gay, the county's district attorney and innumerable lesser officials: gay, gay, gay. Forget 'Don't ask, don't tell.' In millennial San Diego, the motto these days is, 'Who knows, who cares?'" — *Writer Eric Wolff in the San Diego weekly newspaper CityBEAT, July 18.*

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

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## GOINGS ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

## GIRLYMAN: 'SIGN' OF THE TIMES

Girlyman, featured this week in Pop Making Sense, will perform at Schubas Sept. 16. Page 18.

## MUSIC

Melissa Etheridge experiences an awakening. Page 20.



## KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Crowe's feat. Page 16.



## THEATER

Spotlight on The Other Dance Festival. Page 13.



## STAGE DOOR JONNY

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Jonny thinks that everyone who reads Windy City Times should be aware that the AIDS Foundation of Chicago's annual AIDS Run & Walk takes place on Sept. 15. Furthermore, for the first time this year, Season of Concern is sponsoring a team that will run, walk, hop, skip, jump, side-step, prance, dance, mince or get on its knees and crawl to the finish. Season of Concern, as many of Jonny's dear readers know, is the ongoing fundraising effort by the Chicago theater community to provide care for those living with HIV/AIDS or other catastrophic illnesses. The heart of Season of Concern is the Biscotto-Miller Fund, which provides personal financial support, housing care, meals, medications, legal assistance and other services. It's named after the first two Chicago theater artists who died of AIDS more than 20 years ago, and Jonny is proud to have been one of the founders and early board members of that fund.

The goal of Season of Concern is to raise \$15,000, and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago will donate to Season of Concern 100 percent of all funds raised through the Season of Concern team, including registration fees (if you decide to run, walk, hop, skip, etc., with the team) and matching gifts. It's such a deal, Jonny could plotz. To join the Season of Concern team, or sponsor a team runner, go to [www.aidsrunwalk.org](http://www.aidsrunwalk.org) and follow the links to (a) form/join a team or (b) sponsor a participant (enter Season of Concern as team name). Jonny suggests you sponsor Season of Concern Executive Director Stephen Rader, the well-known actor and singer whom Jonny thinks will look quite hot in his running kip.

Speaking of talented singers, Mssrs. Daryl Nitz and George Howe have reminded Jonny that they've been performing together as the Nitz

and Howe Experience for eight years, on weekends at Davenport's Wine Bar and Cabaret. On Sept. 22, the duo will celebrate its 500th performance and everyone is invited. Daryl and George hold forth—as is said in the cabaret biz—every Friday and Saturday night, 10 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Their show generally includes a lot of music, a lot of comedy, requests from the audience, a few of Nitz's famous celebrity vocal impressions and a wide range of music—Broadway, blues, jazz, rock and pop. You can catch the Nitz and Howe Experience any weekend, but if you wanna be there for the 500th show, you'd best make a reservation: 773-278-1830. The \$2 cover charge is a bargain. Howe is worth far more than that all by himself, more than making up for Nitz.

Nitz does dead-on impressions of so many female divas, you'd think he had tits. Well, he doesn't, but the participants in Dyke Mic 2.0 definitely do. Jonny is pleased to report that the weekly open mic variety show for queer women of all gender persuasions—and for audiences of all ages—has been extended through December at the Hoover-Leppen Theater at the Center on Halsted. Dyke Mic 2.0 is a rotating poetry-music-performance series with each performance unique. WCT critic Mary Shen Barnidge reviewed the pastiche in our Aug. 8 issue, saying "if the night that I attended is any measure, Dyke Mic 2.0 looks to settle in for a long run." Jonny's dear readers know they always can count on WCT to hit the nail on the head. Performances are Wednesday nights, 8-10 p.m. The series is co-hosted and produced by JT Newman and Nikki Patin.

This is the week that summer goes out not only with a bang, but with a very stylish bang at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park. On Wed.-Sun., Sept. 5-9, the pavilion is home to the third annual Blockbuster Week, featuring free concerts and performances by Chicago's

most renowned performing arts institutions, such as The Joffrey Ballet, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Blockbuster Week kicks off Sept. 5 at 6:30 p.m. with the Joffrey, performing Deuce Coupe (Beach Boys music), Motown Sweet and Sometimes it Snows in April (the music of Prince). Steppenwolf is up Thurs., Sept. 6, at 6:30 p.m. with I Sing America, pairing Steppenwolf ensemble members with the Chicago Children's Choir in poetry and song while exploring American citizenship and arts. Next, on Sat., Sept. 8 at 7:30 p.m., is Stars of Lyric Opera, led by mu-

sic director Sir Andrew Davis, and featuring operatic favorites performed by international stars including Elizabeth Futral, Isabel Bayrakdarian, James Morris and Sondra Radvanovsky. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra concludes things on Sun., Sept. 9, at 4 p.m. in a program including Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition.

But wait, there's more! Blockbuster Week also is opening daytime rehearsals to the public, at Pritzker Pavilion. The Joffrey rehearses Wednesday afternoon, Steppenwolf on Thursday afternoon, Lyric Opera on Friday afternoon and the Chicago Symphony on Sunday afternoon (12-2:30 p.m.)

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Sarah Rose Graber in *The Book of Liz*.  
Photo by Amanda Jung

## REVIEW

### The Book of Liz

Playwrights: Amy and David Sedaris  
At: Chemically Imbalanced Comedy at Conservatory, 4210 N. Lincoln  
Phone: 312-409-6435; \$12-\$18  
Runs through: Sept. 30

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

As soon as you spot the names Amy and David Sedaris attached to *The Book of Liz*, it's promise that the play is going to be drop-dead hilarious. Yet the play's promise oddly goes unfulfilled in Chemically Imbalanced Comedy's earnest but limp reading of *The Book of Liz*.

What went wrong? I'm still scratching my head since David and Amy Sedaris have provided a constant stream of laughter in all their other endeavors.

For those unfamiliar with the Sedaris siblings (hand in your gay card if you fall into that category), they both have carved out their own niches of hilarity and pop-culture fame.

David skyrocketed to fame on National Public Radio in the 1990s with his Santaland Diaries. He went on to be an out and proud public radio superstar with best-selling books like *Me Talk Pretty One Day* and *Naked*. Sister Amy's celebrity is largely tied to the hit TV comedy *Strangers with Candy*. Amy created Jerri Blank, a trashy recovering alcoholic who has struck a chord with many gay audiences.

In 2001, the Sedarises collaborated on the off-Broadway comedy *The Book of Liz* and one suspects that the original production must have been hilarious. The premise is certainly silly enough: A celebrated cheese-ball maker named Elizabeth Donderstock belongs to an Amish-type religious sect called "The Squeamish." Elizabeth leaves her community when she feels underappreciated and tries to make it in the "real" world, which challenges her religious views and

## CRITICS' PICS

**Cymbeline**, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, through Nov. 11. Even for Shakespeare, the rarely-staged *Cymbeline* is a convoluted and improbable romance, but it's dear to Chicago Shakes, now staging it for the third time as a lavish and colorful soap opera. JA

**Dyke Mic 2.0**, Hoover-Leppen Theatre, Center On Halsted, open run. Nikki Patin and JT Newman host a congenially all-inclusive evening of words and music after the Women on Wednesdays cocktail hour at the snazzy new community center in Boystown. MSB

**Sunday School Cinema**, Royal George Theatre, open run. Now that the summer of blockbuster sequels is over, go get Sister's take on them all in her own Late Nite Catechism franchise sequel. The Legion of Decency lives! SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

finds her sweating problem abhorrent.

The original *The Book of Liz* featured a four-member cast taking on a number of oddball roles from recovering alcoholic restaurant workers to Cockney-sounding Ukrainian immigrants. Not only did the show feature Amy as the sweaty Elizabeth, but the original cast also starred master comedians Jackie Hoffman (*Kissing Jessica Stein*, *Queer Duck: The Movie*) and author/actor David Rakoff (*Fraud*, *Don't Get Too Comfortable*).

Perhaps one mistake Chemically Imbalanced made was to cast nearly every role with a different actor. Some of the joy of seeing the same four actors conjure up a bizarre array of oddballs dissipates when you have an expansive cast each taking on (and not always succeeding with) sketchily underwritten cameo roles.

Along with a stop-and-start pacing for what should be a zippy comedy, director Angie McMahon hasn't properly guided each actor to stand out and exaggerate the basic text which is largely funny-weird instead of gut-busting funny-haha.

There are a few exceptions. Brian Kash's smarmy tics and bulging eyeballs as the interloper Brother Nathaniel Brightbee from another Squeamish community is great. More of Kash's style of extreme interpretation and eccentric line readings would have been welcome from the other actors.

The whole production also has a strong center in Sarah Rose Graber's earnest and funny turn as Elizabeth. Still, you can't help but wonder what extremes Amy Sedaris herself would have brought to this woman known for her cheese balls.

## SPOTLIGHT

### Other Dance Festival



The sixth annual Other Dance Festival opens Sept. 6 for a three-weekend run at the Hamlin Park Fieldhouse Theatre, 3035 N. Hoyne. The festival, presented by the Chicago Moving Company, was founded in 2002 by co-curators/producers Kay LaSota and Elizabeth Lentz. What started as a two-weekend event has now blossomed to three to accommodate the variety of artists wishing to be involved and the audiences (which usually fill the house) who are hungry to see the modern dance community's latest creations. Performances are Thursdays and Fridays at 7:30, Sept. 6-7, 13-14 and 20-21, with a different line-up each week. Call 1-800-838-3006; tickets are \$12-\$15, or there is a \$35 pass for admission to one night each weekend.

Photo of dancer Matthew Hollis by Misty Winters.

ensemble members Ian Barford, Alan Wilder and Francis Guinan



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## REVIEW

**Beast Women**

Playwright: The Performers

At: Clove Productions, Peter Jones Galley,  
1806 W. Cuyler

Phone: 773-914-3330; \$15-\$17

Runs through: Sept. 22

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Michael Martin and his Great Beast Theatre Company created *Beast Women* in 1997 as a showcase for female artists. He asked participants to "be bold, be original and do not bash the men folk," according to Michelle Power, who emceed the present performances. Managed by Jillian Erickson, *Beast Women* continued until 2002, when Great Beast disbanded. Now Erickson and Power have revived *Beast Women* on Friday and Saturday nights at the informal Peter Jones Gallery. From a roster of 20 singers, dancers, monologists, musicians, performance artists, poets and martial artists, each 90-minute variety show offers some eight or 10 of them. Erickson and Power say *Beast Women* will do other projects in the future.

The performance I attended opened and closed with contrasting love songs (love triumphant and not) played and sung by Diana Lawrence. She was particularly pleasing because (a) she rendered the only live music of the evening and (b) she was good, closing the night with an unexpected musical comedy turn. The acts in between included four monologs, a striptease, a dance duo and a silent physical performance

piece. The strength of each ebbed and flowed with the degree of novelty, the connection made between artists and any given audience member, and the increasing closeness (even with fans running) of the unventilated room.

Sarah Bendix—with pushed-up décolletage and masked face—charmed us with her silent performance piece in which she passed around cookies and encouraged the audience to comment and talk. JT Newman (who, with colleague *Beast Woman* Nikki Patin, produces the Wednesday night *Dyke Mic 2.0* at the Center on Halsted) surprised us with the evening's only multimedia piece. It began as a lament about motherhood and separation and ended as a strip performed to a totally soulful version of the Broadway song *Feeling Good*.

The evening's most erotic act belonged to a courtship dance between Gilliam Weston as Siren Jinx and Lindsey Marks as Lady Jack. Dressed, respectively, in clinging white and black outfits, the youthful Weston and Marks were lithe, lovely and sensual.

The monologs offered varied styles and themes, reaching conclusions unanticipated from their opening gambits. Kelsey Huff commented on religious hypocrisy (effective, but she could edit more), while Jillian Erickson used her beater car to underscore man's inhumanity. Kendra Stevens, in a little red dress, was pleasing in presentation—although her tale of a child with an alcoholic parent was a familiar one. Mannish Kelly Anchors made the best impression with her highly physical routine about a police scanner and a homeless woman on Christmas Eve. However, four monologs out of eight acts was one

## SPOTLIGHT

## Envoy



Art imitates life. Just last week in Afghanistan, the Taliban ended a hostage crisis by releasing the surviving Korean Christians they had held captive for weeks (after killing two). A similar crisis—ripped from the headlines, as they say—is the subject of *Envoy*, a world premiere by notable veteran Chicago actor, award-winning author and teacher Belinda Bremner; however, her focus is on a group of American university students motivated by the best of intentions, and perhaps naive innocence, to travel in a dangerous part of the world. The crackling drama is the inaugural production of Echo Theatre Company. *Envoy* is at Theatre Building Chicago, 1225 W. Belmont, through Sept. 16. 773-327-5252; \$15.

Photo of (from left) Caitlin McGlone, Stephen Louis Grush, Jenn Spain and Ben Carr by Greg Kolack

monologue too many. A martial arts act or more live music would have made a better mix on this particular evening.

## REVIEW

**The Fool (Returns to His Chair)**

Playwright: Conceived by John Pierson, written by Kurt Chiang

Where: The Neo-Futurarium, 5153 N. Ashland  
Phone: 773-878-4557; \$15

Runs through: Sept. 29

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

With *The Fool (Returns to His Chair)*, the Neo-Futurists do everything in their power to drive the audience from the theater before the roughly hour-and-40-minute, intermission-free performance ends. Conceived by John Pierson, this is a show with no plot performed in a theater so dark you can't see what's going on much of the time. And when you can see, the actors are wearing crates on their heads, thereby ensuring that nothing they do makes any connection whatsoever with their audience.

Not that there's anything to connect with anyway. Watching the *Fool* is an exercise in tedium. Here's what happens in *The Fool (Returns to His Chair)*: People on stage run around, squirt water at each other, climb giant stakes of crates, and go on lengthy, unfunny rants about the lives of J. Lo, Lindsay Lohan, Nicole Richie and Anna Nicole Smith. Sometimes they zip each other up

inside large black body bags and hop around. Sometimes they wear white paper suits and squirt bottles of red water at each other. One cast member spends most of the show trying to make a fake bomb and wearing what looks like an extra-large adult diaper; another comes out in a baby blue prom dress and cries for five minutes about Owen Wilson. Occasionally, someone plays a series of screeching, off-key notes on a violin or squeezes some random notes out of an accordion.

Actually, everything here seems random, self-indulgent, abrasive and—above all—meaningless. Maybe the cast is having fun running around and climbing on crates and jabbering over the ear-splitting soundscape, but they sure shouldn't be charging people money to watch them do so. The topper comes when one of the actors delivers a lengthy monologue in Italian. Even the program is off-putting, with the credits written in type face that requires a microscope to read on slips of paper the size of fortune cookie fortunes. I shuffled through these slips of paper multiple times and still couldn't tell you who directed this exercise in boring idiocy; maybe there was no director—or maybe, understandably, he or she just didn't want to make themselves known.

The Neo-Futurists are billing this show as an examination of the history of fools through the ages, covering everything from idiot savants to the ancient tarot-traveling fool to the Muppets. It's nothing of the sort. *The Fool (Returns to His Chair)* gives audiences no reason to stay in theirs.

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# BOOK REVIEW Cancer Guide Takes 'Integrative' Approach

REVIEW BY TRACY BAIM

Alternative Medicine Magazine's **Definitive Guide to Cancer: An Integrative Approach to Prevention, Treatment, and Healing**. By Lise Alschuler, ND, and Karolyn A. Gazella. Second edition, by Alternative Medicine Magazine, published by Celestial Arts, 536 pages, \$39.95, [www.tenspeed.com](http://www.tenspeed.com).

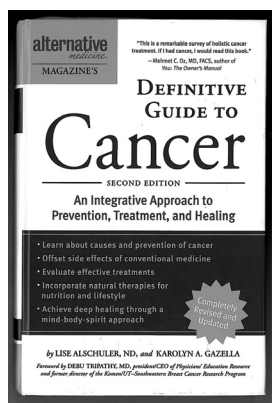
Cancer is a six-letter word that comes loaded with all kinds of medical, societal and psychological baggage. Understanding cancer fully is impossible, because even the medical community has not completely mastered its many forms and its hidden triggers.

But a lot is known about cancer, and The Definitive Guide to Cancer by authors Lise Alschuler (of Chicago) and Karolyn Gazella (of Boulder, Colo.) attempts to make cancer more understandable to those of us who are not in the medical profession.

The book has been completely re-done in this second edition, and the new authors provide very up-to-date details on a wide range of issues surrounding the complicated disease of cancer.

What's probably most key about the book is that the authors' approach is not one-sided, meaning they do not advocate removing oneself entirely from the traditional forms of cancer screening and treatment, when needed. Rather, they want patients to view the many potential paths to prevention and treatment, including "Complementary and Alternative Medicine," or CAM. CAM treatments might include everything from acupuncture and biofeedback to psychotherapy and Reiki.

The book does an excellent job of teaching readers how to evaluate for themselves a wide



range of traditional and CAM treatments, including tips on how to avoid being scammed by unproven new theories.

Patient perspectives are sprinkled throughout. These are personal stories of dealing with cancer. One such essay is "Third Time's a Charm" by Ann Adams, a Chicago activist who has three times faced death, first through an altitude sickness problem, and then two more times through cancer, breast cancer (in 2003) and thyroid cancer (in 2006). Adams is also the partner of the book's co-author, Lise Alschuler, and they are supporters of numerous Chicago-area LGBT organizations. Both of the book's authors are lesbians, but that is only relevant in that they have written a book that is truly accessible to all kinds of people. Cancer knows no sexual orientation, but there are some concerns that lesbians may face an increased risk of some cancers, possibly due to lifestyle choices, stress and a lower interaction with the healthcare establishment.

Thus, for the authors, cancer is a personal issue, one impacting their close families. Not only did Alschuler's partner Ann face cancer twice, but her father passed away from the disease in 2006. Gazella faced her own cancer, in addition to her sister's two-time battle and her mother's eventual death from the disease.

Alternative Medicine Magazine's Definitive Guide to Cancer begins by setting the stage in Part One for exactly what is known about cancer.

This includes the causes of cancer; prevention of cancer; and early detection and diagnosis. The primary causes of cancer can be grouped under four areas: genetics and family history (a small percentage), obesity and dietary habits; environmental influences and lifestyle factors (including smoking).

In Part Two, we learn about treatment options. This includes conventional treatment, CAM treatments, an integrative approach, diet and nutrition, lifestyle factors and supporting your body during conventional treatment (radiation and chemotherapy can knock the body down).

Part Three moves to the specifics of the immune system (a good overview for anyone dealing with a compromised immune system, including from HIV), inflammation, hormonal influences, insulin resistance and digestion. As with other parts of the book, the recommendations would serve readers well when facing the potential of many diseases beyond cancer, including diabetes.

Part Four is a chapter-by-chapter review of every major type of cancer, such as bladder, bone, breast, gastric, kidney, lung, ovarian, testicular and uterine.

While some of the information seems pretty basic, all of it is important to repeat, and having it in one book is helpful. For example, their Top 10 Ways to Prevent Cancer and Enhance Health go beyond basic lists and actually provide in-depth details on types of fruits and vegetables and what each might do in boosting the body's internal systems.

"Our goal is to present information on integrative cancer prevention and treatment in a practical, useful manner so you will be able to make informed decisions based on your specific

circumstances and comfort level," the authors write in their introduction. "You have choices. We will present scientifically substantiated information that will help you make decisions. We understand that the amount of information, the number of decisions and the implications of those decisions can be overwhelming. This book is here to help."

And the authors succeed in those goals. The book is accessible for those not in the medical profession. It is a great read for pretty much anyone, because everyone should be concerned about cancer. If it does not personally impact your own body, you will likely experience the disease through family and close friends. For people with HIV and AIDS, as certain drugs are able to make that disease more manageable, cancer could sneak in and attack their weakened immune system. The goal of this book is not to provide false hope, but to provide tools for potential survival. People will die from cancer, but the authors hope they can help everyone in easing their pain and suffering, even if their time left is short.

The incident rate for all forms of cancer is rising. Use this book as a guide for yourself in prevention, and keep it ready to use when a crisis might occur. As the saying goes, "information is power." That makes Alternative Medicine Magazine's Definitive Guide to Cancer a powerful new book.

**Authors Lise Alschuler and Karolyn Gazella will speak about their book, and sign copies, at a presentation Thurs., Sept. 6, 5:30-8 p.m. at Murphy Auditorium, 50 E. Erie. RSVP to Dawn Musich at 847-872-4025.**

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# KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

## REVIEW The Bubble, 3:10 to Yuma

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Writer-director Eytan Fox and his co-writer, producer and life partner Gal Uchovsky, continue to chronicle gay life in modern-day Israel in their third film collaboration, **The Bubble**. I'm still raving about their previous efforts, 2004's *Walk on Water* and 2002's *Yossi & Jagger*, their first feature collaboration. All three movies share the same hallmark—they're terrifically entertaining. Plus, given their location—with its inherent, ongoing political strife—there is added depth that makes them resonate long after they're over.

"The Bubble" refers to Tel Aviv, a cosmopolitan city that has gotten the nickname because, for many of its citizens, it seems to exist apart from the political unrest surrounding it. Three of those citizens are roommates Noam (Ohad Knoller), Yali (Alon Friedmann) and sultry Lulu (Daniela Wircer); the first two are gay. The twentysomethings chatter about the latest episode of the Israeli version of *American Idol*, their latest crushes, where to hold the next rave, etc.—pretty much anything but politics.

But politics arrives on their doorstep, literally, in the person of Ashraf (Yusef "Joe" Sweid) a young Palestinian who returns Noam's wallet after Noam, who's a member of the National Guard, lost it during one of his stints on checkpoint patrol. An attraction between Noam and Ashraf is immediately apparent. "So that's how Jews kiss," Ashraf says after he and Noam do just that. Later, after a first round of lovemaking on a rooftop, Noam replies, "So that's how Arabs do it." Noam then invites Ashraf to move in temporarily and entertains Yali to give him a

job at the café. They insist that Ashraf pretend to be Israeli to avoid problems and then indoctrinate him into their fun-loving life style. One night they're nightclubbing; the next visiting a gay cabaret; and on the third, Noam and Ashraf attend a production of *Bent*.



THE BUBBLE

But when Sharon recognizes Ashraf as a Palestinian and asks him point blank about it one day at the café, Ashraf, who is in the country illegally, takes off in terror of being arrested as a suspected terrorist. On a whim, Lulu and Noam decide to cross the border, posing as a French reporter and cameraman, to visit him and make sure he's okay. During the visit things escalate and, at this point, both get a wake-up call that moves the movie from a breezy romantic dramedy into a political melodrama.

It's to the credit of Fox and Uchovsky, who did much the same thing in *Walk on Water*, that the

change in tone doesn't completely negate what has gone on before. But the melodramatic excesses of the script at this point, while certainly entertaining, do seem to stretch credibility. It would have been more interesting but much less dramatic to have gone with a different non-resolution for the gay couple. By going the melodramatic route for the last quarter of the movie Fox and Uchovsky turn their movie into more of a tragic gay version of *Romeo & Jules* and less an entertaining slice-of-life variation on *Three's Company*, Israeli-style. Surprisingly, I wanted more of the latter. I wanted to stay inside *The Bubble* for the duration—visiting this rarely-glimpsed world that seems closely yet somehow desperately patterned after ours. In Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles. *The Bubble* plays exclusively at the Landmark Century Centre Cinema.

Earlier this summer, a resounding return of the musical occurred with *Hairspray*, and now the western comes galloping back in with **3:10 to Yuma**, a beauty of the genre with another star performance by Russell Crowe. Crowe plays a vicious outlaw who nevertheless speaks beautifully; sketches to pass the time away; is irresistible to the ladies; and is polite and gracious, for the most part. He's like a Wild West version of Hannibal Lector—a lethal lothario—who somehow connects and empathizes with Christian Bale, a one-legged former Civil War soldier-turned-cattle rancher who is down on his luck, in his eyes as well as those of his wife and two sons. The rancher is charged with delivering the outlaw to a train that will take him to prison and collecting a fat reward for his efforts. But before he can do that, of course, the rancher will have to just about go through hell in order to succeed.

*3:10 to Yuma* is director James Mangold's remake of a 50-year-old movie and works because, like its predecessor, it relies first and foremost on expert, compelling storytelling, the basis of any movie that hopes to stand the test of time. The bravura performances of the cast (aside from

Crowe and Bale, Ben Foster who played the misunderstood, coded gay mutant with the angel wings in *X Men: The Last Stand* is a standout) and the breathtaking location cinematography help this old-fashioned, entertaining western kick off a great start for the fall movie season.



3:10 TO YUMA

Circumcision, a topic that is surely of wide interest to men of all sexual persuasions, is the subject of **Cut**, a documentary made here by Chicago filmmaker Elyahu Ungar-Sargon. The film, which focuses on the controversial practice, explores the topic from religious, medical and ethical perspectives. Sargon will attend the film's Chicago premiere, which is being held on Sun., Sept. 9, at 5 p.m. at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State. See [www.siskelfilmcenter.com](http://www.siskelfilmcenter.com).

Check out my archived reviews at [www.windycitytimes.com](http://www.windycitytimes.com) or [www.knightatthemovies.com](http://www.knightatthemovies.com). Readers can leave feedback at the latter Web site, where there is also ordering information on my new book of collected film reviews, *Knight at the Movies 2004-2006*.

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**REAL ESTATE**  
*cont'd. on page 18*

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BY DAVID BYRNE WITH TONY PEREGRIN

**Darren Hayes** has a lot to sing about these days. This is rather apparent on the former Savage Garden vocalist's third solo outing, *This Delicate Thing We've Made*, a two-disc, 26-track set. Out on his own label, Powdered Sugar, the Truly Deeply Madly singer-songwriter branches out with more grown-up topics, such as divorce, coming out and losing a friend to AIDS-related complications. *Delicate Thing* is highlighted by the summer club hit *Step Into The Light*, where Hayes shows off his vocal range with the refrain "I've never been in love before." Having scored dance hits already on his own with *Insatiable* and *Popular*, expect Hayes to flourish with the aptly titled *On the Verge Of Something Wonderful*. The out singer is the spokesperson for *The Trevor Project*, a hotline aiding youth struggling with their sexuality.

Not ready to let go of summer? Then be sure to check out **Bebel Gilberto's** latest, *Momento*. Produced in part by Guy Sigsworth (Madonna, Bjork, Frou Frou) and the Brazilian Girls, *Momento* loses track of time with Gilberto's light, warm, breezy vocals as she croons in Portuguese and English. The cool electronic backdrop will not prevent body temperatures from rising, though. The beautiful Brazilian songbird will be making another stop in Chicago on Sept. 13 at Park West, 322 W. Armitage, with *Forro In The Dark* as her opening act.

One of the best new romantic remakes is *There Is Always Something There To Remind Me* by **Naked Eyes**. This British outfit captured the essence of the early '80s music scene with the personalization of this Burt Bacharach and Hal David standard. Now after a long hiatus, *Naked Eyes'* surviving member, Pete Byrne, returns, setting his sights on reworking his personal favorites on *Fumbling with the Covers*. Just do not

expect to hear the familiar '80s synthesizers. Fumbling with the Covers favors the simplicity of the acoustic guitar, which makes this album stand out in the vast ocean of cover albums. Opting for new takes on peculiar choices like Elvis Costello's *Man Out Of Time* and The Beatles' *Cry Baby Cry*, Byrne even tackles *Naked Eyes'* standbys *Promises, Promises*; *There Is Always There to Remind Me*; and *When The Lights Go Out*.

Fitzgerald's is the perfect setting for **Suzy Bogguss** to showcase her new material. Scheduled

to perform at the Berwyn hotspot on Sept. 16, this multi-platinum artist two-steps away from her familiar country sound on her latest album, *Sweet Danger*. On this Loyal Dutchess release, Bogguss is tempted by jazz and blues. Bogguss co-produced *Sweet Danger* with famed jazz and pop keyboardist Jason Miles (Miles Davis, Luther



Suzy Bogguss.

Vandross, Sting).

Also performing at Fitzgerald's SideBar is **Jamie Anderson** on Sept. 14, as presented by The Oak Park Area Gay and Lesbian Association (OPALGA) and the Oak Park Area Arts Council. The recently released *Three Bridges* compiles Anderson's most-requested material from her 20 years of touring. However, the prerequisite two new songs are included here, too. Just do not expect another coffeehouse tortured folk singer. Anderson's live shows leave the audience in fits of laughter; for proof, listen to *I Wanna Be A Straight Guy* or *Menstrual Tango*.

Playing at Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, on Sept. 14 is **Heavy Trash**. Never missing a beat, these gritty guitar rockers pay homage to Americana six-string pioneers, a recipe for an ideal '70s soundtrack. Check out *Pure Gold*, *Kissy Baby* and *Crazy Pritty Baby* for timeless rock. It may seem recycled, but there is no garbage on *Heavy Trash's* latest *Going Way Out With Heavy Trash*.

Especially hand picked again by The Indigo Girls to guest on the influential duo's tour, **Girlyman** is making two stops in The Windy City

without the Power Of Two singers. *Girlyman* will "serve it up" at 3 p.m. at the Midnight Special Folk Festival on Sept. 9 as well as on Sept. 16 at Schubas, 3159 N. Southport. The bluegrass-folk trio strays from Amy Ray's Daemon Records label and released its third album, *Joyful Sign*, itself.

Stepping into the spotlight on his own at Martyr's, 3855 N. Lincoln, on Sept. 7 is **Jesse Harris**. While Harris' name may not be instantly recognizable, he is best known for his work with Norah Jones and Bright Eyes. He even co-wrote Jones' Grammy-winning song *Don't Know Why*. His two most recent projects are his seventh solo album, *Feel*, and the soundtrack to the Ethan Hawke film *The Hottest State*, which features greats like Willie Nelson, Emmylou Harris, Cat Power and Feist performing Harris songs. On top of this, Harris is also a producer for the upcom-

ing Billie Holiday tribute compilation due out on Universal. Also on the bill at Martyr's is the buzz-worthy queer New York singer-songwriter Swati.

**Blaq Audio** skips past spell check and makes an impressive entry at the top of Billboard's Electronic Albums Chart with its debut, *CexCells*. Slated to take to the stage at the Double Door, 1572 N. Milwaukee, on Sept. 18, *Blaq Audio* blends the cold '80s electronic sounds of Depeche Mode, Ministry and even Human League with the sensation of more current bands like Evanescence and Shiny Toy Guns. There certainly are similarities to iconic gothic bands, since the *CexCells* is mixed by Dave Bascombe (Depeche Mode, Tears For Fears, Placebo, Suede) and *Blaq Audio* is the electronic side endeavor of AFI's Jade Puget and Davey Havok.

## DEEP INSIDE HOLLYWOOD

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

### Kidman Reunites with Hours Director

Nicole Kidman is, without a doubt, one of the great screen actresses of her generation. But since winning an Oscar for *The Hours*, she's appeared in several films not worthy of her talents, including *Bewitched* and *The Invasion*. So it's good news that she's reuniting with *The Hours'* gay director, Stephen Daldry, for a film that will co-star Ralph Fiennes. *The Reader*, based on the international best-seller, deals with a 15-year-old German boy who has an obsessive love affair with an older woman during World War II, only to find out after the war's end that she is the defendant in a Nazi war crimes trial and is quite likely guilty of an unspeakable offense. No word yet on when *The Reader* goes before the cameras, but it's all but guaranteed an eventual Oscar marketing campaign.

### Gordon-Levitt Grapples with Uncertainty

He may have begun his career with the silly sitcom *Third Rock from the Sun*, but Joseph Gordon-Levitt is rapidly becoming one of indie cinema's hottest actors, thanks to his roles in *Mysterious Skin* and *Brick*. He obviously hopes to keep his streak going with his next project, *Uncertainty*, from The Deep End's directing team, David Siegel (who's straight) and Scott McGehee (who's gay). This new film will be mostly improvised by the cast, from a script by the directors about a couple facing an important decision on the Fourth of July. Filming is currently underway, so *Uncertainty* could be a certain thing as early as 2008.

### Biel's Feeling Powder Blue

After *Crash* won the Best Picture Oscar two years ago (over *Brokeback Mountain*, alas), it was inevitable we'd get more intersecting-lives-of-strangers-in-Los-Angeles movies. Now comes word of *Powder Blue*, which takes place entirely on a Christmas Eve of chance connections. One stranger, played by newcomer Alejandro Romero, happens to be a transgender prostitute who crosses the path of priest Forest Whitaker and shares a secret past with him. Patrick Stewart, Jessica Biel, Kris Kristofferson, Patrick Swayze, and Ray Liotta all co-star. Shooting now, *Powder Blue* is expected to hit theaters in 2008.

### Making Oz a Darker Place

Talk about not being in Kansas anymore—Warner Bros. is returning to Oz, but this time it's not the Technicolor haven for singing Munchkins and horses of a different color that you remember. Todd MacFarlane, the artist who created the hellish world of *Spawn*, will bring his dark Oz toy line to the big screen in a new movie to be written by Josh Olson (*A History of Violence*). Oz will put a new twist on L. Frank Baum's gay-favorite classic, giving us a Dorothy who takes an active role to save herself from the bizarre world she's entered. The studio is currently seeking a director for the project.

**Romeo San Vicente enjoys dressing as one of the Wicked Witch of the West's flying monkeys each Halloween because the costume is skimpy. He can be reached at Deep-InsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.**

# REAL ESTATE cont'd. from page 17

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# Melissa Etheridge: Wide Awake

BY LAWRENCE FERBER

If Melissa Etheridge ran a metaphorical lemonade stand, she would serve some of the most delicious lemonade in the world. After all, she has mastered the art of turning lemons into lemonade, morphing pain and life's challenges into fantastic, transcendent music. Consider 2001's *Skin*, borne from and about her heart-wrenching split with partner Julie Cypher (who decided to pursue relationships with men). And her new album, *The Awakening* (Island), is the first since her 2004 breast cancer diagnosis and subsequent arduous battle with the disease. Her ninth album—which boasts a purity and truth she attributes to the ordeal—*The Awakening* is certifiably one of her strongest, accomplished and most career-defining works to date.

"OK," she responds to the compliment, "but can you tell the universe I'm done with the personal hell stuff?"

Both hellish lows and heavenly highs are represented on *The Awakening*, a concept album that traces Etheridge's life and career from the start, when the Midwest-raised singer/songwriter made her way to California and found her first gigs and same-sex affairs, to the triumphs of today, which include last year's Best Song Academy Award win for An Inconvenient Truth's *I Need to Wake Up*. With an additional theme of time travel, the singer takes the opportunity to confront the Melissa Etheridge of yesterday and of tomorrow (with the inspirational *Message to Myself*). She also allows listeners an intimate and raw peek into her experiences in love, relationships and the bedroom.

Having recently questioned the Democratic presidential candidates about LGBT issues on HRC/LOGO's historic panel, today's Etheridge is in a healthy and pleasant place. Wife Tammy Lynn Michaels (the inspiration behind Etheridge's "happy" 2004 album, *Lucky*) occasionally ap-

peared in the background as we chatted.

**Lawrence Ferber: I loved you on the HRC/LOGO Democratic candidates' forum.**

Melissa Etheridge: I was so honored to be there. The crazy thing is I was thinking, 'I'm going to represent my community,' which is an absolutely impossible thing to do because our community cuts across every single group, organization and kind of person. There's absolutely no way you can really represent everybody.

**LF: Who's the hottest Democratic candidate, having seen them all in the flesh?**

ME: You know, that John Edwards—he's a handsome boy. And he's got a million-watt smile.

**LF: Do you get a lesbian vibe from Hillary?**

ME: [Laughs] No. I think it's unfortunate that a powerful woman who is succeeding is labeled a lesbian. I don't know whether to take that as an insult or compliment. And so here she is, a powerful woman and of course lesbian stuff all around her, and if it had been a different sort of forum I would have said, "Hillary, I'm a lesbian, I know lesbians and you are not lesbian."

**LF: Congratulations on the Oscar win. Was it awkward receiving it from John Travolta and Queen Latifah—for reasons I won't elaborate on?**

ME: [Laughs] I was wondering if anyone noticed the subtle irony. And you know who I saw backstage after I won? Jodie Foster. I was like, "What is the universe telling me?" And you know

they're all looking like, "Congratulations, loud-mouth!"

**LF: So *The Awakening* is a concept album. How would you like listeners to approach it?**



ME: I would hope the listener would start at the beginning and listen all the way through and just take that hour if they can find it in their day. I used to grab the latest Bruce Springsteen album and listen to it from beginning to end. Marvin Gaye, John Lennon—their albums were pieces of art and you wanted to know what the artist was saying. I hope people will approach this album that way.

**LF: I love the upbeat pop song *Message to Myself* and the sentiment of telling and reminding yourself: "I'm sending out a message to myself/so when I hear it on the radio/ I will know that I am fine/ I will know that I am loved." Do you want people to adopt that song and say, "This is my message to myself?"**

ME: I would. It's just as cheesy and "up with people" as you can get, but I truly believe that change starts right inside yourself and you've gotta start loving yourself before anything else. Every single choice you make all day long it has to come from that, and if this song can inspire anyone to start on that journey I'm proud to have been part of it.

**LF: Tell me about the story behind the bluesy epic *An Unexpected Rain*.**

ME: It's me playing in the bars for five years and all the trouble one girl can get into. If you listen to the album from the first song all the way to the end, it's my journey from the Midwest to California; [the song] *Rain* is when I got to Southern California [and] first started really living the gay lifestyle, out and finding myself and having relationships. It's about meeting someone at a bar and having that one-night stand, but then [staying] in touch with them. [Later on] I got a job in Long Beach and they said, "Hey, come stay at my place while you play down here," and, "Gee, are we kind of girlfriends?" And I was like, "No," and I chicken-heartedly left, leaving a note: "Sorry, it's not going to work out—bye." I gathered some pretty bad karma in my early 20s. That's kind of what I'm stating; it's a large apology. I really made some bad choices and I'm so sorry for the unexpected rain and sadness.

**LF: On the country-rocker *Threesome*, you sing that you don't want to have a threesome**

"ever again," which implies you've had some. Tell me about the threesome that broke the camel's back—and were the women at least hot?

ME: [Laughs] Well, you know, they're interesting. And when you're in a relationship that is lacking and definitely not fulfilling emotionally or physically and someone comes along... Whatever adjective you want to put in there, it is that. But when

you find the relationship that fills you up emotionally, physically and makes you a better person and doesn't tear you down [and] that you can build a family or a life around, you don't have time or the need [for anything else]. You're not aching and looking for that drama. I barely have time to kiss you. We're in our life, you know?

**LF: You touch on the concept of time travel on the album. Is time travel a good idea, and if it was possible**

**would you go back and meddle?**

ME: I think if we ever got to the point ... where we truly understood the concept of time, then time travel would be understood—that it's all in the mind and you can go back and fix or meddle or make right the wrongs of the past by what you do right now in the present, and in the future. It's not like science fiction and you're gonna climb in a machine and turn a knob and go back to 1952.

**LF: So no Melissa going back in time and assassinating Hitler?**

ME: No. Sorry. We can deal with the Hitler issues right now in our life—that's what time travel is. Learning from our history and past mistakes.

**LF: How are the new twins, Miller Steven and Johnnie Rose?**

ME: Oh, they're beautiful. Ten months old, just starting to walk and talk and get into the world and discover things. Every day is different and beautiful...

**LF: Tammy Lynn's blog, *hollywoodfarmgirl.blogspot.com*, received a lot of attention in January when she wrote that entry about the Isaiah Washington fracas.**

ME: That freaked her out big time. I don't mean to speak for her, but she loves the blog because she gets to put out her own feelings. And because she's raising the kids right now—[which is] a full-time job—whenever she can run into the room and get 30 minutes to herself, she does it.

**LF: Does she have a favorite song on the album?**

ME: Oh... I wonder. [To Tammy] Honey, do you have a favorite song on my new album? [Tammy responds in the background.] Awwwww... You're sweet! I've Loved You Before. It's about her. It's really, really nice [to sing songs about her]. It's really tender and then you get to share it with the world. But the first moment of actually singing it to your loved one is really sweet.

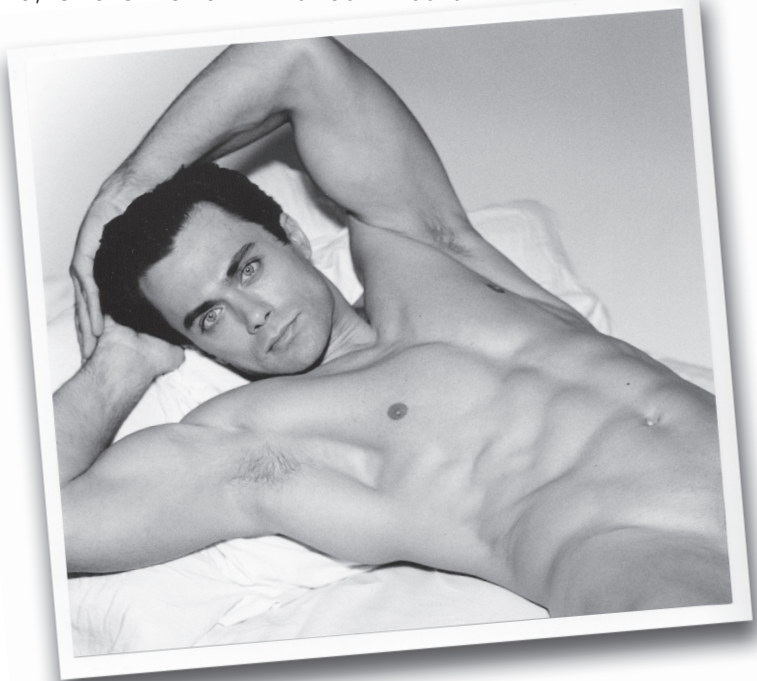
**Melissa Etheridge's new CD, *The Awakening*, will be out Sept. 25. See [www.MelissaEtheridge.com](http://www.MelissaEtheridge.com) for more info.**

To see the full interview with Etheridge, check out [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

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THE FULL MELISSA  
INTERVIEW

# WHAT TO DO?

## Wednesday, Sept. 5

**Association of Latino Men for Action** Gay Wednesday Nights at Bocadillos. Proceeds benefit ALMA. 8 p.m.-1 a.m., \$5 suggested donation, 6739 Ogden Ave., www.almachicago.org

**Center on Halsted** Wednesday programming: Youth Gym (4-5 p.m. and 7-8 p.m.); Job Club (4-5 p.m.); Dance Class; Let's Talk About Sex; What's in Your Future? (hear from those who made it in lives and careers). All groups meet 5:30 p.m., 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

**Dyke Mic 2.0** All-ages open mic for queer women of all gender persuasions. Every Wednesday, 8-10 p.m., \$10, \$8 with student ID, Center on Halsted Hoover-Leppen Theatre, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org, www.myspace.com/dykemic2, dykemic@gmail.com

**Gay Liberation Network** Meeting Monthly meeting, 7-9 p.m., Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville Ave., www.gayliberation.net

**National Lesbian and Gay Law Foundation** Lavender Law 2007 Conference. Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan. Through Sept. 8. Workshops, speakers, etc. See www.lavenderlaw.org.

## Thursday, Sept. 6

**American Veterans for Equal Rights** Chicago Monthly meeting, 7 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., 773-472-6469 or 773-752-0058 for more info, www.aver.us

**Broadway Youth Center** Queer It Up! an LGBTQ community youth project. 6-7:30 p.m., 3179 N. Broadway, for more info contact Lara at 773-935-3151 ext. 225 or larab@howardbrown.org

**Center on Halsted** Thursday programming: Youth Gym (4-5 p.m. and 5:30-

6:30 p.m.); BELONG (team building and conflict resolution); Art Group. All groups meet 5:30 p.m., 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

**Murphy Auditorium** Lise Alschuler and Karolyn Gazella presents the Definitive Guide to Cancer: An Integrative Approach to Prevention, Treatment and Healing. 5:30-8 p.m., 50 E. Erie St., RSVP at 847-872-4025

**NEWTOWN Writers** Chicago's GLBT literary workshop meets. 7:30 p.m. in a private home. Contact Barry at frauman8@gmail.com or 773-528-3637 for more info

## Friday, Sept. 7

**Flesh Hungry Dog Show** Live rock show for queers featuring The Joans, Das Kapital and Sass Dragons. 9 p.m. start, Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark St., www.fleshhungrydog.com

**Gerber/Hart Library** Back-to-School Book Sale. Through Sept. 16. 1127 W. Granville Ave., www.gerberhart.org for more info

**GLANTS** Co-ed nudist group outing to see Barenaked Lads on Broadway after a pre-party. Show starts 10 p.m., contact Carlos at nkcdhtwn@gmail.com for info

**West Suburban Gay Association** Dinner at Cheesecake Factory. 7:30 p.m., 2020 Spring Rd., Oak Brook, www.wsga.com, west\_burbs\_gay@yahoo.com, 630-512-0100

## Saturday, Sept. 8

Chicago Chapter of the NAMES Project Foundation Quilting workshop. Held every second and third Saturday of the month. 10 a.m.-1 p.m., second floor of Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, 773-661-0922 for more info

**Eagle Buzz** Kutt Crazy, free haircuts by Alan, 11 p.m., 5015 N. Clark St.

**Lakeview East Chamber of Commerce** 3rd Annual Lakeview East Fine Art Festival. And Sept. 9. Free juried art festival features 15 emerging Chicago artists and 125 world-renowned artists. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sunday), Broadway between Belmont and Roscoe, www.lakevieweast.com

**Test Positive Aware Network** Annual Aware Affair: 20 Years on the Edge. Cocktails, dinner buffets, entertainment, art on display by HIV/AIDS advocates, silent auction, raffles. 7 p.m.-12 a.m., \$100-\$300, MCA Warehouse, 1747 W. Hubbard, RSVP by Aug. 17, www.tpan.com/awareaffair for tickets and info

## Sunday, Sept. 9

**Center on Halsted** achurch4me worship service: Breaking Down Walls and Building Up Hope with Rev. Elder Jim Mitulski. 11 a.m., 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

**PFLAG/Aurora/Fox Valley** Monthly meeting; meets second Sunday of each month. 2 p.m., New England Congregational Church, UCC, 406 W. Galena Blvd., Aurora, www.pflagchicago.com

**PFLAG/Glenview** Monthly meeting; meets second Sunday of each month. 2 p.m., Congregation BJBE, 901 Milwaukee Ave., Glenview, 773-935-2398

## Monday, Sept. 10

**Center on Halsted** Monday programming: Meditation/Feelin' Good; Young Men's Group; Zee's Discussion Group (youth-guided). All groups meet 5:30 p.m., 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

**City of Chicago** celebrates September as Unity Month. Kick off event. 12-1 p.m., Daley Plaza under the Picasso, 50 W. Washington, RSVP by Sept. 5 at 312-742-0212

**Sidetrack** A special showtune Monday celebrates The Color Purple, meet cast members and win tickets to the show. 3349 N. Halsted St., www.sidetrackchicago.com

## Tuesday, Sept. 11

**AIDS Foundation of Chicago** AIDS Housing Town Hall regarding the city's AIDS housing crisis. 6 p.m., Chicago Bar Association, 5th floor, 321 S. Plymouth, contact John Peller at 312-334-0921 or jpeller@aidschicago.org

**Center on Halsted** Positive Living with HIV: Examining Quality of Life Issues 6:30-9 p.m., free, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

**Chicago Foundation for Women** Iranian human rights activist Shirin Ebadi headlines the annual luncheon. Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 E. Wacker Dr., www.cfw.org for more info or call 312-577-2801

**Gerber/Hart Library** Lesbian Book Group: Kindred by Octavia Butler. 7:30-9 p.m., 1127 W. Granville Ave., www.gerberhart.org

**Lake County Council Against Sexual Assault** Focus group for LGBTQ community (anonymous and confidential) to address barriers experienced in obtaining services in areas of health care, legal and law enforcement. Call 847-244-1187 ext. 25 to register and for more info

**Spitfire Comedy** Performance featuring all remaining Chicago members. 7 p.m., \$10, \$7 students with ID, Apollo Theater Studio, 2540 N. Lincoln Ave., www.spitfirecomedy.com

**When You Care** Weekly meeting for LGBTQ loved ones struggling with substance abuse. 7-8:30 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

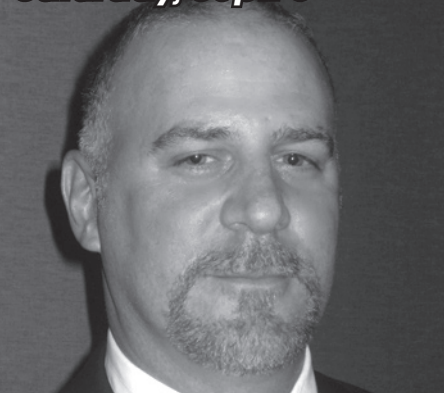
## Monday, Sept. 10



### PURPLE REIGN

The cast of *The Color Purple* will make an appearance at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted. photo by Paul Kolnik

## Saturday, Sept. 8



### AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER

Test Positive Aware Network (headed by Rick Bejlovec, above) will mark its 20th anniversary with a celebration at MCA Warehouse, 1747 W. Hubbard. photo by Emmanuel Garcia

## WIN with Windy City Media Group



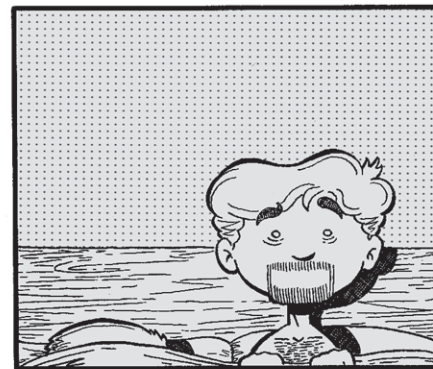
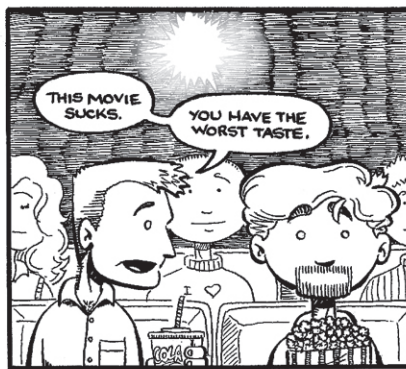
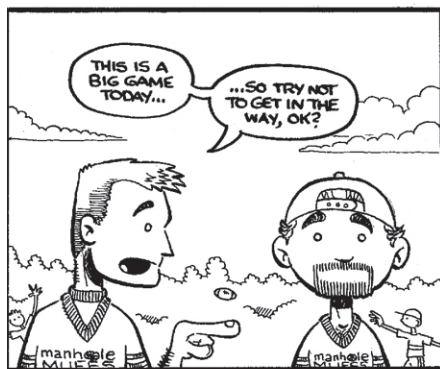
**Ani DiFranco**  
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CONTINUED...

# A Truly Amazing Race

BY ROSS FORMAN

Joe LaMuraglia has a ringer for a teammate in the annual Fireball Run Transcontinental Rally, a 125-team, 3,500-mile Orlando-to-Los Angeles adventure rally that begins Sept. 29 at the Amway Arena in downtown Orlando.

LaMuraglia joins forces with Evan Darling, who happens to be the SCCA Southeast Division champion who recently placed seventh in the Homestead-Miami Speedway Grand-Am Cup Race.

LaMuraglia and Darling also are gay, thus becoming the first out, all-gay team to participate in this yearly cross-country driving event.

"Bottom line, I'm a car geek," said LaMuraglia, 39, of Nashville, Tenn. "I remember watching the movie *The Cannonball Run* as a kid and always thought those type of rallies were cool. But I never thought I could take part in that."

Well, event organizer J. Sanchez, who is Hispanic and the first Generation X chairman of the



Joe LaMuraglia.  
Photo courtesy of LaMuraglia.

Orlando Regional Small Business Chamber, is all about diversity.

"Diversity plays an important role in every aspect of the business community, so why shouldn't it be the same in motor sports?" Sanchez said.

LaMuraglia has had a partner, Steve, for six years.

"It's a great race, but it's not all about racing. It's about having fun," LaMuraglia said. "We're using [this event] to show diversity, to show that not all gays wear Prada and have a size-29-

inch waist.

"Evan, for instance, is a [professional] race car driver who just happens to be gay. I think we're going to have a lot of fun together. He's our secret weapon the two days we're on the track."

LaMuraglia is serious about his affection for cars. He is, after all, the founder and CEO of Gaywheels.com.

"I'm doing this [race] for a lot of reasons, but I'm competitive, so I want to win. But that certainly is not the only reason," LaMuraglia said. "We also want to generate exposure for Gaywheels.com and, just as important, change a lot of people's perceptions about what it is to be gay. We want to show people that we're just like the guy [living] next door. Hopefully we can dispel a lot of stereotypes."

"This event is not all about (prize) money or a trophy. But rather, about people who love cars, love driving, camaraderie, seeing the country and having fun doing it, and also of course helping a good cause."

For instance, the hosts and sponsors have chosen to use Fireball's massive cross country exposure to help locate America's missing children. Every Fireball Run team will be assigned a different missing child. The mission: distribute as many posters as possible along the 3,500 journey. All teams also will apply a full-color removable decal of their missing child to their vehicle.

Fireball is working in conjunction with the Child Rescue Network.

Gaywheels is a resource for the general gay car consumer, not just the gay car geeks. "We're trying to raise awareness of gays in the automotive industry and how [gays] take all shapes and sizes, and this will hopefully dispel some myths," he said.

LaMuraglia has been running Gaywheels for about 10 years and it is the premiere gay-friendly automotive resource center.

Gaywheels showcases gay-friendly companies – and also those that are not, such as, Honda, BMW, Acura, Kia and others.

So what qualifies a car makes as non-gay-friendly in LaMuraglia's world? "They do not offer domestic partner benefits to all of their U.S.-based employees," he said.

Gaywheels offers an easy-to-navigate informational resource for gay car consumers and car-geeks. The top-10 car list from the nationally-known Kelley Blue Book is drastically different from GayWheels' top 10 list.

Gaywheels' top 10 cars are strictly based and ranked on how often cars are researched on the site. The list is published, revised every quarter.

"Everyone assumes that [the No. 1-ranked car] would be a BMW 3-Series convertible, or some other luxury car, but what our data says is, that's not what the gay consumer is looking at [purchasing]," said LaMuraglia, whose site attracts about 35,000 visitors per month.

The Toyota Yaris currently is the top-ranked car on Gaywheels, based on the number of times people have read the [car's] reviews or data about the car.

The No. 2 car is the Saab 9-3, followed by the Mazda MX-5 Miata, Volkswagen Jetta and Volkswagen EOS.

"There are cars on the top 10 list that support the stereotype that all of us [in the LGBT community] drive luxury cars, such as, Audi A3 or Saab 9-3. There also are cars on that list that dispel the stereotype, such as the Toyota Yaris or Toyota Camry," LaMuraglia said.

Articles and reviews on Gaywheels.com are written by gay writers. Gaywheels also offers insurance and financing from a gay-friendly com-

panies. And, it has a list of gay-friendly dealers.

GLEE.com (the Gay, Lesbian and Everyone Else social networking Web site) is a co-sponsor, along with Gaywheels and Saab. GLEE.com promotes itself as the only social and professional networking site for the online GLBT community.

A GLEE.com spokesperson, Taryn Langer, said it is "taking part in the sponsorship because it's important to open up cultural experiences across a wide spectrum to their GLBT members."

BY THE WAY...

Joe LaMuraglia's top three car choices: Saturn VUE, Audi TT convertible and Volkswagen Jetta.



Fireball event pic.  
Photo courtesy of LaMuraglia.

## Blackwolves Split Cup Games

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Chicago Blackwolves couldn't retain their championship in the annual Coors Cup predominantly-gay hockey tournament, held Aug. 31-Sept. 3 at the Ice Centre at the Promenade in Westminster, Colo.

But the Blackhawks kept the L.A. Blades from advancing to the playoffs —and it was the Blades who won the gold medal last summer in Chicago at the Gay Games.

The Blackwolves, who were playing in the top-tiered Competitive Division (as opposed to Recreation in 2005), lost their first two games, falling 6-0 to the Consenting Adults and 8-0 to the host Colorado Climax. The Chicagoans regrouped in their third game, defeating Mutiny 6-2 behind a five-point performance (three goals, two assists) from Rusty Fleury, the goaltending of Keith Halverson (22 saves) and solid defense from Billy Reay and Elizabeth Arundel.

Fleury earned the game's MVP honors.

Laura Moss split time between forward and defense for the Blackwolves, while Larry Zyks centered several scoring chances.

The Blackwolves build a 2-0 lead over the Blades before the Blades cut it to 2-1. Fleury scored what proved to be the game-winning goal as the Blackwolves ultimately triumphed, 3-2.

"After a rough start to the tournament, I was glad to see the team rebound in our final two games, especially hanging on to defeat the Blades after they came to Chicago last summer and won first place in the [Gay] Games,"

said Chuck Jacobson, founder of the Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA), who scored a goal against the Mutiny. "The Coors Cup has developed into, arguably, the best gay hockey tournament in the nation."

Chicagoan Austin Baidas played for the Hollywood Blades in the Recreation Division.

The 2008 Coors Cup will be held next Labor Day weekend in Los Angeles.



Austin Baidas.  
Photo by Ross Forman.

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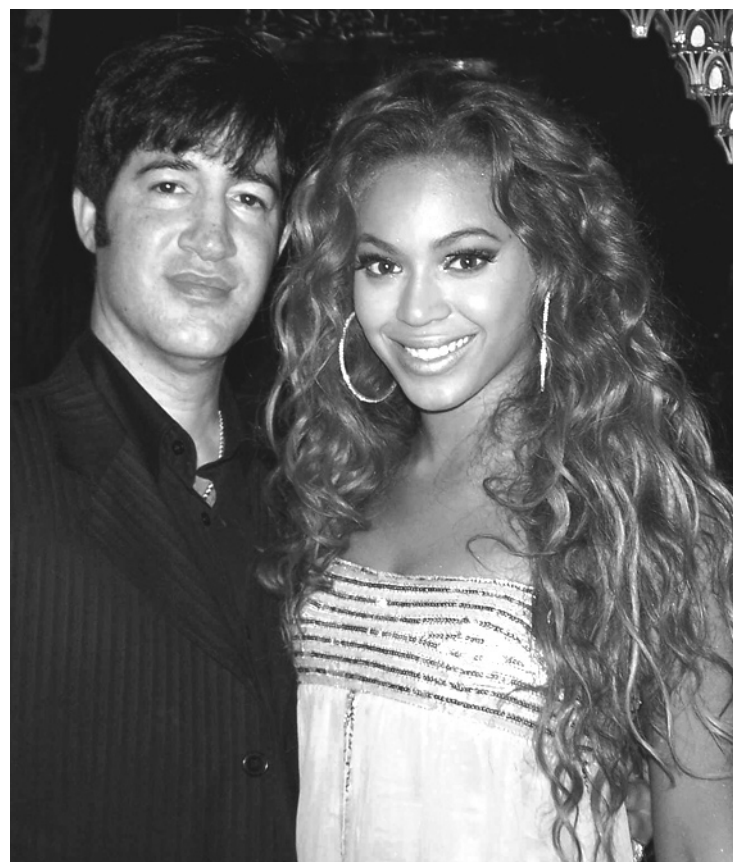
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## STARRLIGHT

BY STEVE STARR

Beyonce Knowles, one of the most beautiful and famous music and film stars in the world, arrived amid intense excitement at the incredibly opulent Alhambra Palace, 1240 W. Randolph, on Aug. 18, where she socialized with dozens of friends and special fans in the luxurious VIP room hidden away in the south corner of the dramatic tiered balcony.

Hundreds of gorgeous people socialized in the Alhambra's exotic lounge, and a thousand more dined, drank and danced below the Alhambra's gigantic star-shaped fixture as they awaited a glimpse of their idol.

Knowles truly is as breathtaking in person as she is in her videos and on the screen in Dreamgirls, and I was truly thrilled when she posed for me.

Beyonce Giselle Knowles was born Sept. 4, 1981, in Houston, Texas. She began performing at the age of seven and the little girl became a soloist in her church's choir. In 1997, she became the founder, lead singer and chief songwriter for Destiny's Child. They sold over 33 million albums, which

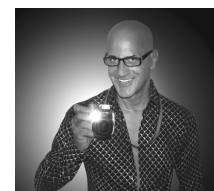
made them the best-selling female group of all time while winning dozens of awards and three Grammys. In 2001, Beyonce became the very first African-American woman to win the ASCAP Pop Songwriter of the Year Award, and the second woman to ever receive the honor. In 2003, she began her solo career, and was the best selling female artist of that year, winning a record-tying five Grammy Awards.

Knowles has also appeared in several Hollywood films, including Austin Power's Goldmember (2002), The Fighting Temptations (2003), The Pink Panther (2006) and Dreamgirls (2006).

*Photo of Dr. Amer Rustom and Beyonce Knowles at the Alhambra Palace, Chicago, on Aug. 18 by Steve Starr*

*Steve Starr is the author of Picture Perfect-Art Deco Photo Frames 1926-1946, published by Rizzoli International Publications. A photographer, designer and an artist, he is the owner of Steve Starr Studios, celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2007. Phone 773-252-5171 for further information.*

*Photo of Steve Starr in Chicago, Sept. 2, 2006, by Patrick Hipskind*





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