



RITA MORENO TALKS WITH WCT

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Same-sex weddings start in New York



Mayor Bloomberg officiates at the marriage ceremony of two of his aides, John Feinblatt and Jonathan Mintz, July 24.
Photo by Edward Reed

BY CHUCK COLBERT

The marriage-equality movement enjoyed a burst of new energy July 24, as jubilant same-sex couples across New York state began marrying under a new law that took effect at midnight.

"Today we celebrate our families, our equality, and how far we have come as a community," said Kevin Cathcart, executive director of Lambda Legal, a national advocacy organization, in a statement.

New York City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn, who is openly gay, told NBC Nightly News, "Today those families were told they matter and that the state of New York cares about them as much as anyone else."

From Niagara Falls to Albany to New York City hundreds of gay and lesbians applied for marriage licenses.

The first couple to marry under the new law was Kitty Lambert, 54, and Cheryl Rudd, 53, of Buffalo, who exchange vows in a religious ceremony at Niagara Falls—shortly after midnight.

In New York City alone, 823 couples were granted marriage licenses with many of those couples expected to marry right away. City clerks' offices opened in all five boroughs as judges were on hand to officiate and to waive the state's mandatory 24-hour waiting period between licensure and wedding ceremony. By day's end, city officials said 659 couples had picked up their licenses.

The first couple to marry legally in the city was Phyllis Siegel, 76, and Connie Kopelov, 84. The Chelsea couple has been together for 23 years.

Even the mayor got into the act Sunday

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Lakeview crime: The numbers

BY ERICA DEMAREST

In the wake of several recent violent crimes in Boystown, many residents are adamant that crime is on the rise in the neighborhood. Hundreds have gathered at community meetings demanding solutions, and some even claim this summer's incidents are the worst they've ever seen.

To get a better picture of Lakeview crime trends, the Windy City Times examined citywide and district-by-district Chicago Police Department crime data going back to 2006. While some media outlets have claimed there's been an increase in crime in the neighborhood, our findings suggest otherwise.

"The crime rate has been fairly steady and kind of on a downward trend for the past several years," said Commander Kathleen Boehmer of the 23rd Police District, which includes Boystown and most of Lakeview.

With the exception of a spike in 2008 (which correlated to a citywide crime increase), crime rates in the 23rd District have dropped every year since 2006. That year, there were 3,629 reported crimes in the district. By 2010, the number had declined more than 8 percent to 3,326.

So far, 2011 crime rates look like they'll follow a similar trend. Between January and June 2010, there were 1,508 crimes reported in the 23rd District. This year's numbers are remarkably similar, with 1,506 crimes

through the end of June. While the change is minute (only 0.1 percent), it does mark a decrease in reported crimes.

"Sometimes it's more of a perception issue than it is an actual crime issue," said Max Bever of Alderman Tunney's office. "With the advent of the Internet and media attention, sometimes there can be more attention paid... and then there's a perception that there's been a huge spike in crime."

On July 3, a Boystown resident filmed a rowdy late-night altercation that led to a stabbing, and posted the video on YouTube. The third violent attack in three

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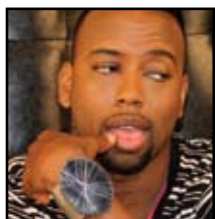
Photos on cover (left, from top): Rita Moreno photo by Mike Lamonica; Image of President Obama certifying DADT repeal by Pete Souza; Point Foundation gala photo by Kat Fitzgerald; photo of Ifti Nasim by Hal Baim; picture of Dave Koz by Greg Allen

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BRING HER SOME WATER
Read Bent Nights' reviews of concerts by Melissa Etheridge (left) and Patti LaBelle.
Photo by Vern Hester



Read an interview with out gospel singer B. Slade.
PR photo



The stars of the lesbian-themed movie The Fish Child talk about making the film.
Photo by Sebastian Puenzo

ON THE LOCAL FRONT
There's even more news online, including an account of a strike at the Park Hyatt and a shooting involving a man in drag.

RAP IT UP
The gay rap duo known as Freaky Boiz talked with Windy City Times. Read the discussion online.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT
This week's entertainment round-up includes items on Andrew Garfield, Barbra Streisand and Kelly Clarkson.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS



WILD FRONTIER
Coinciding with the debut of The Dish in print, the food column Savor will profile restaurants. Read about Frontier online.
Photo by Jerry Nunn

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N.Y. marriage equality spurs on other states

BY DANA RUDOLPH
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

Hundreds of same-sex couples married in New York July 24, the first day they could legally do so.

Just as the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City provided a lift to the nascent movement for equal rights for gays across the country, same-sex weddings in the Empire State appears to be giving a boost to marriage-equality efforts outside its borders.

Activists in at least two states (Maine and Colorado) are pushing for 2012 ballot measures to seek marriage equality there, a lawsuit has been launched in New Jersey for full marriage rights, and in Maryland, a Democratic governor is prepared to follow the example of New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo in leading the state legislature to marriage equality.

With the addition of New York, the percentage of same-sex couples living in states that allow them to marry has now more than doubled—from 6.9 percent to 14.3 percent, according to an analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey by the Williams Institute of UCLA.

Also, the percentage of the U.S. population living in a state that allows same-sex couples to marry has more than doubled, from 5.1 to 11.4 percent, according to Census 2010 and the Williams Institute.

"Having New York end marriage discrimination is a turning point for the country," said Evan Wolfson, executive director of the national Freedom to Marry group, in an essay on the group's Web site June 27, three days after New York Governor Cuomo signed a marriage equality bill into law. "The world watches New York, and, as New Yorkers say, if we can make it here, we'll make it anywhere."

Wolfson noted that passage of the bill in New York was the first time a legislative chamber with a Republican majority—the state Senate—had "voted to advance a bill to end marriage



Gov. Martin O'Malley.

discrimination, and Republican senators provided the winning margin." He called the bipartisan vote "a major shift in the national political calculus for both parties" that "points the way to more victories."

The New York legislature was also the first to pass a marriage bill without first passing civil unions or domestic partnerships, Wolfson said.

In New Jersey, which allows same-sex couples to enter civil unions, but not marriages, Steven Goldstein, the chair of the LGBT advocacy organization Garden State Equality, said in a statement June 24 that "the victory in New York, and its choice of marriage equality over civil union inequality, set the stage for our continuing fight for marriage for same-sex couples in New York's sister state just a mile away."

Four days after the New York bill became law, Garden State Equality and Lambda Legal, a national LGBT legal group, filed a lawsuit in a New Jersey Superior Court in Trenton on behalf of seven same-sex couples. They argue that the state's existing civil union laws do not provide the couples with full equality—an equality the state Supreme Court said, in October 2006, is

guaranteed by the state constitution.

Garden State Equality also held a rally July 24 at a New Jersey park closest to New York, with a view of the Manhattan skyline across the Hudson River.

In Maryland, where a marriage equality bill passed the state House but failed to pass the Senate in March, Gov. Martin O'Malley seems now to be following the example of Cuomo, saying he will take a more active role in pushing for marriage equality next session.

Cuomo, whom Wolfson called the "indispensable champion" of the New York bill, had worked closely with marriage equality advocates and sent the initial version of the marriage bill to the legislature. He then met with legislative leaders to work out a final version of the bill that addressed some lawmakers' concerns about additional protections for religious groups and the charities and educational institutions they operate.

O'Malley announced July 22 that he would sponsor marriage equality legislation in the 2012 legislative session. He tasked his director of legislative affairs, Joseph Bryce, with coordinating efforts among a broad coalition of LGBT, civil rights, and faith-based groups, as well as people across the state.

O'Malley said at a press conference that the law provides equal protection and the free exercise of religion to all, adding, "other states have found a way to protect both of these fundamental beliefs."

In addition, in Maine, Equality Maine Executive Director Betsy Smith said in a statement June 28 that the "victory in New York generates wind in the sails of the national movement to win marriage, and more specifically, of our efforts here in Maine."

Equality Maine and Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders announced June 30 that they are taking steps to place a citizen's initiative on the November 2012 ballot, asking Maine voters to approve a law giving same-sex couples the right to marry. The move comes after a referendum in November 2009 overturned a marriage-equality law passed by the legislature and signed by Gov. John Baldacci in May 2009.

Colorado may also see a question on its 2012

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NATIONAL NEWS

—GOP Gov. Rick Perry (left) supports gay marriage in N.Y.

—Gay San Diego man stoned to death

—Pop-up gay museum in New York City

ballot to approve marriage equality. The state Title Board, on July 20, approved language for such a question. Supporters of marriage equality must now collect 86,105 signatures in order to place it on the ballot.

Similar measures could also appear in California and Oregon.

An exception to the trend comes in Minnesota, where the legislature has approved a ballot question that seeks to ban marriage of same-sex couples under the state constitution. It is already banned under state law. The same could happen in North Carolina, where the legislature is considering bills for such a ballot measure.

Cuomo, in a press conference after he signed the marriage equality bill, called New York "a beacon for social justice," noting that the movements for equality for women, for protection of workers, for preservation of the environment, and for equality of gays each have roots in New York.

"New York," he said, "made a powerful statement, not just for the people of New York, but the people all across this nation."

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Anti-gay allegations in Minn. school case

In Minnesota, the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and the law firm Faegre & Benson, LLP, filed a federal lawsuit challenging what they call "the pervasive anti-gay harassment in schools within the Anoka-Hennepin School District" in addition to the district's "gag policy" that prevents teachers from discussing LGBT-related issues, according to a press release.

The suit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota after the complainants said the school district did not address the abuse or repeal its policy.

The lawsuit charges that students who were or were perceived as LGBT were subjected to slurs daily and were physically threatened or attacked by peers. The lawsuit contends that the district's gag policy and its alleged failure to protect these students violated the students' rights under the United States Constitution, Title IX and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Earlier this year, the SPLC, the NCLR and Faegre & Benson filed a federal suit against the Anoka-Hennepin School District and Champlin Park High School on behalf of two lesbian students, Desiree ("Dez") Shelton and Sarah Lindstrom. The school stopped the students from participating as a same-sex couple at a school assembly. The matter was eventually resolved, with the students allowed to participate.

Officials collecting school supplies

State Sen. Heather Steans, state Rep. Kelly Cassidy and Ald. Harry Osterman are collecting school supplies for low-income children in the neighborhood. The fourth annual "Sponsor-a-student" is a partnership with Care for Real-Edgewater's food and clothing pantry, and other local non-profits to provide school supplies for children in Rogers Park, Edgewater and Uptown.

Donors will sign up to sponsor a student and will receive either an elementary school or high school bag. The bags cost \$75 on average, but less expensive lists are available as well. The drive lasts through Aug. 19.

To complete a form, visit <https://spreadsheets.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dG40RUtnTFBpaTlfUkZib3ptTnNaNGc6MQ>.

'Civil Unions' panel July 28

The event "Illinois Civil Unions and Beyond: Marriage Equality and the LGBTQ Latin@ Community" will take place Thursday, July 28, at the Institute of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture, 3015 W. Division.

A reception with appetizers will take place 6-7 p.m.; a panel and entertainment will take place 7-9 p.m.

Vida/SIDA and Lambda Legal are sponsoring the event. Email RicardoJ@prcc-chgo.org or EricH@prcc-chgo.org for more information.

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NEW YORK from cover

night. On the lawn of Gracie Mansion, his official residence, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg officiated the wedding of his chief policy adviser, John Feinblatt, 60, and Jonathan Mintz, 47, the city's commissioner for consumer affairs.

Notwithstanding the initial rush of same-sex marriages, other couples are waiting for the just the right time. One couple is Philip Trzynka, 52, and Brett Henry, 52, of New York City.

Trzynka hails from Fort Wayne, Ind., and is an ordained minister of word and sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He currently serves as pastor of Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran.

Henry grew up outside of Chicago in the suburb of Glen Ellyn and works in sales for Federal Express.

The couple met in September 2000 at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center in New York City. In 2006, they celebrated two religious commitment ceremonies, one in Glen Ellyn, the other in their Manhattan home parish on Oct. 7, 2006.

At the time, "We decided it was important to us that our family and friends were able to publicly hear about our commitment to each other and were able to show their support for our relationship," Rev. Trzynka said.

"We wanted to try to accommodate all of our friends and family who wanted to show their support. I think, like most couples, we wanted our families and our church to give us a sign of support and acceptance of who we are and the family we were creating," he added.

In 2008, the couple adopted a then-8-year-old son.

"Our reason for wanting a civil ceremony in New York is the same as it was when we had our religious ceremonies. We want to give our family the opportunity to receive a sign of support and acceptance from the state in which we live and have grown to love," Trzynka explained.

"Of course, we also desire the protections and



Philip Trzynka and Brett Henry with son Joey and Otis, their dog who died a few months ago. The couple plans an October wedding in New York City. Photo courtesy of the couple.

safeguards that legal recognition of the state can give our family," he said, adding, now with New York's support, "We feel home."

The couple has tentative plans to celebrate civil marriage this coming Oct. 7—five years to the date of their religious commitment ceremony.

New York is the third state to legalize gay marriage by legislative action. The other two are New Hampshire and Vermont.

On June 15, New York's Democratic-held Assembly voted 80—63 in favor of the gay marriage bill. On June 24, the Republican-led Senate passed it by a vote of 33—29. Immediately,

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who championed the bill, signed the measure into law, which required a 30-day waiting period before taking effect.

The legislative victory gave new life to same-sex marriage advocates after attempts to enact gay marriage fizzled in Maryland and Rhode Island.

The win in New York is indeed a big prize. The state, the nation's third most populous, joins five other states—Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont—and the District of Columbia in allowing gays to wed.

Altogether, New York's population of 19 million is greater than the combined total of those

five plus the nation's capital. With New York now among the marriage-equality fold, the number of Americans living same-sex marriage states more than doubles—from 16 million to 35 million people.

New York's Marriage Equality Act is unique insofar as it has the most extensive religious exemptions of any gay-marriage law so far enacted. For example, the law makes explicit that no member of the clergy is required to marry a same-sex couple.

In addition, the Marriage Equality Act and other New York law exempt religious organizations and "benevolent orders," like the Knights of Columbus, from non-discrimination requirements of public accommodations, for instance, commercial banquet halls.

As lawmakers in Albany, the state capital, debated marriage equality, media gave extensive coverage to church opposition to it and to detractors' insistence on exemptions to protect religious liberties.

Trzynka voiced frustration over the media. "Much of the news coverage made it feel as though religious people were against [same-sex] marriage—period!" he said, adding, the media gave the impression, moreover, that "the church" wanted religious exemptions "so that it did not have to support gay marriage in any way."

Trzynka knew differently, he said, referring to his own denomination and pastors' support of marriage equality, as well as that of Episcopal priests, United Church of Christ pastors and Presbyterian clergy.

Partly out of frustration, he said, "I decided to put out a sign in front of our church, saying that here at Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran Parish, the pastor—me—would perform free LGBT marriages for the coming year."

Apparently, "It got a lot of buzz," Trzynka said. "I hope it caused people to hear again that many religious people believe God loves to bless such marriages."

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DADT dies for good Sept. 20

BY REX WOCKNER

Don't Ask Don't Tell, the military gay ban, will be fully and permanently dead on Sept. 20.

It already can't be enforced against active-duty troops, courtesy of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

But on July 22, the military's readiness to implement Congress' repeal of DADT was certified by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta; Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and President Barack Obama, setting in motion a 60-day waiting period until the policy is history.

The certification confirms that the armed forces' implementation of the repeal and the tran-

Don't Ask, Don't Tell was necessary but it is not sufficient for ensuring equality in the military," Sarvis said. "It's critical that gay and lesbian service members have the same avenues for recourse as their straight counterparts when it comes to harassment and discrimination."

SLDN also promised to advocate for legally married service members to receive the same benefits as their straight counterparts, and to assist veterans in correcting or upgrading discharge paperwork.

Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese called Obama's certification of repeal "a monumental step not just for those forced to lie in order to serve but for all Americans who believe in fairness and equality."



President Barack Obama signs the certification stating the statutory requirements for repeal of DADT (Don't Ask, Don't Tell) have been met, in the Oval Office, July 22, 2011. Pictured, from left, are: Brian Bond, deputy director of the Office of Public Engagement; Kathleen Hartnett, associate counsel to the president; Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta; Kathryn Ruemmler, counsel to the President; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen; and Vice President Joe Biden. Official White House Photo by Pete Souza

sition to open service will not affect "military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting and retention of the armed forces," Panetta said.

"The final countdown to repeal begins today," said Servicemembers Legal Defense Network Executive Director Aubrey Sarvis, who urged Obama to now issue an executive order banning anti-gay discrimination and harassment in the military.

"Signing legislation that allows for repeal of

Servicemembers United Executive Director Alexander Nicholson said: "Today, gay and lesbian service members can and will breathe a huge sigh of relief. While we still must wait 60 days for this change to formally take effect and for the law to officially be off the books, this step is nothing short of historic."

"This is the final nail in the coffin for the discriminatory, outdated and harmful Don't Ask, Don't Tell law," Nicholson said.

OutServe, the association of actively serving

LGBT military personnel, hailed the announcement.

"In 60 days, my life and the lives of thousands of other gay and lesbian troops changes," said OutServe co-director "JD Smith." "I cannot be more proud to be able to serve during this time."

Lesbian U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., said people victimized by DADT now deserve an apology.

"I remember and honor the service of all the courageous lesbian and gay members of our armed forces who have been required to live a lie so that they can serve our country, or have been discharged because of who they are," Baldwin said. "These patriotic Americans deserve our thanks and our apologies."

President Obama issued this statement:

"Today, we have taken the final major step toward ending the discriminatory Don't Ask, Don't Tell law that undermines our military readiness and violates American principles of fairness and equality. In accordance with the legislation that I signed into law last December, I have certified and notified Congress that the requirements for repeal have been met. Don't Ask, Don't Tell will end, once and for all, in 60 days—on September 20, 2011.

"As Commander in Chief, I have always been confident that our dedicated men and women in uniform would transition to a new policy in an orderly manner that preserves unit cohesion, recruitment, retention and military effectiveness. Today's action follows extensive training of our military personnel and certification by Secretary Panetta and Admiral Mullen that our military is ready for repeal. As of September 20th, service members will no longer be forced to hide who they are in order to serve our country. Our military will no longer be deprived of the talents and skills of patriotic Americans just because they happen to be gay or lesbian.

"I want to commend our civilian and military leadership for moving forward in the careful and deliberate manner that this change requires, especially with our nation at war. I want to thank all our men and women in uniform, including those who are gay or lesbian, for their professionalism and patriotism during this transition. Every American can be proud that our extraordinary troops and their families, like earlier generations that have adapted to other changes, will only grow stronger and remain the best fighting force in the world and a reflection of the values of justice and equality that define us as Americans."

Panetta issued a statement which said, in part: "All men and women who serve this nation in uniform—no matter their race, color, creed, religion or sexual orientation—do so with great dignity, bravery and dedication. As secretary of defense, I am committed to promoting an environment free from personal, social or institutional barriers that prevent service members from rising to the highest level of responsibility that their talents and capabilities warrant. They put their lives on the line for America, and that's what really matters. Thanks to the professionalism and leadership of the U.S. military, we are closer to achieving the goal that is at the foundation of America—equality and dignity for all."

A statement from Mullen said: "Certification does not mark the end of our work. Ready though we are, we owe it to ourselves and to the nation we defend to continue to train the remainder of the joint force, to monitor our performance as we do so, and to adjust policy where and when needed. My confidence in our ability to accomplish this work rests primarily on the fact that our people are capable, well-led and thoroughly professional. I have never served with finer men and women. They will, I am certain, carry out repeal and continue to serve this country with the same high standards and dignity that have defined the U.S. military throughout our history."

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

Officials discuss HIV/AIDS strategy

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

It has already been one year since President Obama announced the implementation of a National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS). The strategy's long-term goals are to reduce incidences of HIV, improve access to health care and reduce health disparities across the country.

To check in and meter the progress of the strategy in its first year, the HIV Prevention Justice Alliance held a live webinar July 20 consisting of brief presentations from federal officials as well as leaders of some of the most prominent HIV/AIDS-related organizations in the country, including the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. Although there was some praise of the NHAS in year one, much of the dialogue focused on areas for improvement, especially if the strategy is to meet its goals for 2015.

Christopher Bates of the Department of Health and Human Services and Gregorio Millet from the Office of National AIDS Policy represented the federal government. Other speakers included Carole Treston, executive director for the AIDS Alliance of Children, Youth and Families; Venton Jones, senior program associate for the National Black Gay Men's Advocacy Coalition; Catharine Hannsens, executive director for the Center for HIV Law and Policy and David Ernesto Munar, president and CEO of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

One of the most emphasized points involved establishing better metrics for assessing the NHAS. Currently, the metrics are not entirely in place to efficiently measure progress at all HIV/AIDS service providers across the nation.

The 12 Cities Project is one way the government plans to assess the distribution and scale of federally funded HIV services and bring those practices to the state and local levels. Its launching marks one of the highlights of the first year, and Chicago is among the dozen cities included.

However, various webinar attendees expressed their concerns about certain populations with unique economic situations not being part of the 12 Cities Project, such as the Southeast. Munar said the project only represents 44 percent of the epidemic. Bates said the project is still in the early stages and no other cities would be added in the short term.

In terms of more pressing issues, Munar said the debt-ceiling negotiations and proposed cuts from the "Gang of Six" congressional conservatives threatens progress against HIV/AIDS and that it "could render the strategy and global AIDS commitment impossible to meet." Treston also emphasized this as a "real threat."

One avenue that nearly all speakers agreed needed to be explored is the engagement of allies outside the national HIV/AIDS advocacy community.

For more information from the webinar, visit <http://www.preventionjustice.org>.

Hall of Fame nods extended to Aug. 2

The 2011 deadline to nominate individuals and organizations for induction into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame has been extended to Tuesday, August 2.

Nomination forms can be downloaded and printed from the Hall of Fame's Web site (<http://www.GLHofFame.org>) or requested by calling 312-744-7911 and leaving a mailing address.

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Lakeview residents want Night Ministry bus out

BY KATE SOSIN

In a move that is shocking many in the LGBT community, a group of Lakeview residents is asking MB Financial bank to close off its parking lot to young people who line up there for services from the Night Ministry bus.

For 20 years, the Night Ministry, an organization that administers services to homeless youth and adults, has done street outreach in Lakeview. It has spent 10 of those years providing food and other services on the street in front of the MB Financial bank (formerly Corus bank).

However, some residents on "Take Back Boystown," a Facebook page dedicated to addressing crime in Lakeview, say that the young people who line up for services outside the bank are making the neighborhood unsafe.

The campaign is the latest development since Lakeview residents started expressing fears that crime in the neighborhood is on the rise. Those conversations have sparked a debate over whether or not some tactics for stopping crime

are unfairly targeting LGBT youth who come to Lakeview for services.

On July 22, some residents began asking their neighbors on "Take Back Boystown" to call MB Financial and ask the bank to close off its parking lot, located near Halsted and Belmont.

"[Night Ministry] does their thing and departs the scene taking no responsibility thereafter," said one commenter on the page, who appeared to be leading efforts to close down the parking lot. "MB [Financial] also takes no responsibility though it is their private property. Something's got to give. We cannot and must not have sex traffickers, drug dealers, thugs hanging out in that lot."

Windy City Times reached out to this commenter and others in support repeatedly, but none responded to inquiries.

One member of "Take Back Boystown" posted multiple photos of people standing in the lot, apparently waiting in line for the bus. While some commenting said they saw nothing illegal in the pictures, others argued that loiter-

ers were hiding illegal activities by standing in large groups.

Rev. Barbara Bolsen, the vice president of programs for the Night Ministry, said the organization's mobile health bus serves between 25-150 homeless and struggling young people in Lakeview two nights a week. Every Tuesday and Thursday, the bus passes out food, safer-sex supplies, personal hygiene products, bandages, socks and underwear to those in need.

"A lot of them don't have young adults they can feel safe with or they can trust," said Bolsen, adding that the van is a non-threatening way to offer services.

"Physical abuse, neglect... all of these things come into play when people become homeless," she said. "Lots of folks are not going to be comfortable walking into a building and asking for help."

According to Bolsen, the Night Ministry has had a verbal agreement with MB Financial since the bank moved in approximately two years ago. The bus parks on the street while those waiting for services line up in a designated section of the parking lot.

The bank's Lakeview branch manager was on vacation and not available for comment. However, Karen Perlman, chief marketing officer for MB Financial, said her company was taking resident

concerns seriously.

"Our major thing is making sure that the neighborhood is secure and safe," Perlman said. "We want to be a good community citizen, and that may mean different things to different people."

Perlman would not comment on whether or not the bank planned to ban Night Ministry clients from the lot.

Ceresse Depardieu, a community activist, said that if that happens, crime will only increase.

"There will be a backlash," Depardieu said. "Because where will people go?"

Depardieu argued that services like the Night Ministry bus prevent many people from committing survival crimes.

"[The residents] are complaining about [sex] workers on the street, but that's just going to add to the problem," she said.

City won't support Hall of Fame

BY KATE SOSIN

City officials have announced that the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame (GLHF) will no longer benefit from city support due to financial constraints.

GLHF has historically been funded by community fundraising efforts, not the city. However, in past years, the city donated postage, copying, staff support and underwriting to hold the reception at the Chicago Cultural Center. (The event is scheduled for Nov. 8.)

"Prior to the election [of Mayor Emanuel], we knew there were going to be some changes," said Gary Chichester, a GLHF committee member. However, he said the committee had been told to proceed as usual. Chichester said the news left the committee feeling "blindsided."

Chichester estimates the sticker price of aid from the city between \$7,000-\$10,000, which includes the \$3,300 bill to hold the event at the Chicago Cultural Center. That is money the committee will have to raise on its own now.

GLHF, which annually inducts Chicago champions of LGBT causes, is typically funded by donations and two fundraisers, both of which were planned for this year. GLHF celebrated its "Pride and Joy" fundraiser in June and will hold its celebrity-auction fundraiser Sept. 20 at Sidetrack.

GLHF also set up a 501(c)(3), Friends of the Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, earlier this year in anticipation of possible cuts.

Bill Greaves—director of Chicago's LGBT Advisory Council, which has provided support in past years to GLHF—declined to comment on the news and said that his office would be issuing a statement shortly.

Chichester said the news could mean that the induction ceremony doesn't happen. However, the Chicago History Museum has offered its auditorium for the ceremony, meant to coincide with its LGBT exhibit, "Out in Chicago." Chichester said that the committee is in negotiation with the museum currently and that if the two parties reach an agreement, the induction ceremony should continue as planned.

Rick Garcia, a longtime LGBT activist and former GLHF inductee, said the announcement is of little significance.

"The city has never paid anything for the Hall of Fame," he said. "I don't even know why this is an issue. ... This could create controversy where no controversy exists."

The outstanding question however, will be if the Hall of Fame is still even a city project. Without support, questions about if GLHF should keep its relationship with the city are growing. Those questions are not off the table, said Chichester.

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CRIME from cover

weeks, it caused an uproar in the community. Some residents feared the stabbing was part of a larger trend, but Boehmer said all three attacks were isolated incidents. Each involved a one-on-one argument that turned violent.

"Obviously it's very disconcerting for people to see [the video], and I can understand why people would be afraid," Boehmer said. "But I wouldn't want people to think that there are people running through the neighborhoods with knives just stabbing people because that's not a fact."

Another factor that could be contributing to the perception of increased crime is the weather. Crime rates across the city spike during summer months, simply because it's finally warm enough for people to be outside. And Lakeview is no exception. The neighborhood typically sees more incidents of crime during the summer, but rates drop back down as temperatures cool.

"Last summer we had a pretty quiet summer," said Jay Lyon, executive director of the Northal-

sted Business Alliance, "but it was really cool. We didn't have a lot of really hot nights when everybody was out and about."

Many Boystown residents have accused youth who visit the neighborhood from the South and West Sides (most of whom are of racial minorities) of loitering and causing crime in the area. On the Take Back Boystown Facebook page, some have argued the Center on Halsted, which has provided free services to the youth since 2007, should be shut down.

Boehmer said blaming the young visitors is unfair. "It's a small minority of youth [who cause problems], and people tend to paint them all with the same brush," she said. "So we're trying to reach out and have some of the youth take some leadership roles. I don't want to blame the youth for everything because adults have committed crimes also."

The commander worries focusing so intently on a handful of violent crimes might distract citizens from other safety concerns - namely, theft. She said theft is up citywide, and the Chicago Police Department has located and shut down several chop shops. In June 2011, Boehmer said,

there were many burglaries along the Belmont corridor.

The 2011 burglary rate in the 23rd District jumped 11.7 percent from last year, while motor vehicle theft has increased by 19.3 percent. Violent crime rates, on the other hand, have remained relatively stagnant. In 2010, there were 210 violent crimes. This year, there were 214.

"For the most part, this is one of the safest communities in the city," Boehmer said. "We have the second lowest crime rate in the city." Between January and June of this year, the only district that reported fewer crimes than the 23rd (1,506 total) was the 20th. Home to Andersonville and Lincoln Square, this district reported 1,173 incidents.

In comparison, the majority of Chicago's 25 police districts reported somewhere between 2,000 to 4,000 crimes. The 8th District, which includes Chicago Lawn, even topped 5,000 by the end of June - that's more than three times what Lakeview's 23rd District reported.

The 23rd District accounts for a little over 2 percent of all of Chicago's crime. Compared to other areas, it has some of the lowest murder,

arson, motor vehicle theft and burglary rates in the city.

Both the district police and several local organizations are working to keep those rates low. Since 2008, the Northalsted Business Alliance has hired private security details to patrol five nights a week between the hours of midnight and 4 a.m., when crime is most likely to occur in the entertainment district. While the patrols originally consisted of private contractors, the alliance now hires off-duty police.

"They're more familiar with our climate on Halsted because they work within the area already," Lyon said. "It was just familiarity with the neighborhood."

Boehmer has also increased the numbers of officers patrolling the neighborhood. "The only acceptable number of robberies or violent crimes, any kind of crime, is zero," Boehmer said. "We have changed our patrol, shifted our schedule around... We'll continue to work to be more creative. We're going to work with the community and youth-based groups to see if we can help everybody work together and go in the same direction."

Lakeview crime statistics

Crime stats based on Chicago Police Department, crime charts by Erica Demarest/Windy City Times

Crime in the 23rd District January-June 2011

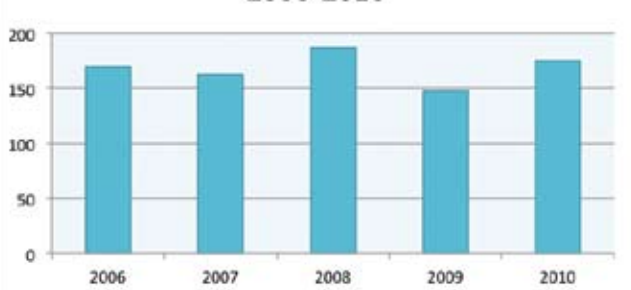


Crime in Chicago January-June 2011

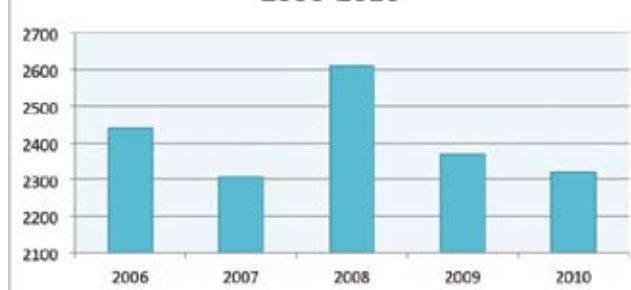


- Murder
- Criminal Sexual Assault
- Robbery
- Assault & Battery
- Burglary
- Theft
- Motor Vehicle Theft
- Arson

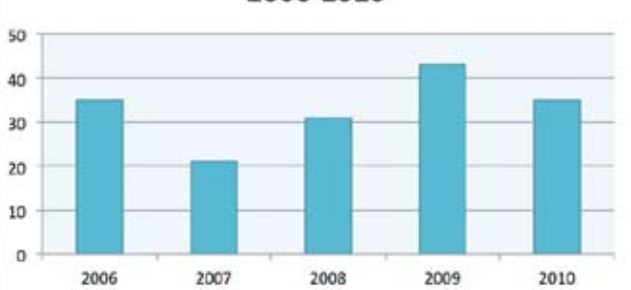
Aggravated Assault and Battery 2006-2010



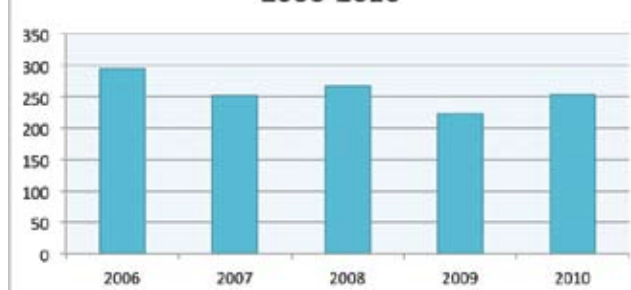
Theft 2006-2010



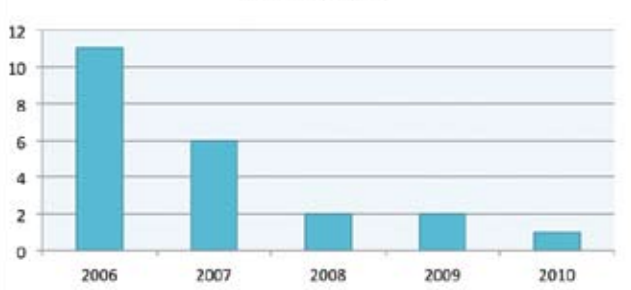
Criminal Sexual Assault 2006-2010



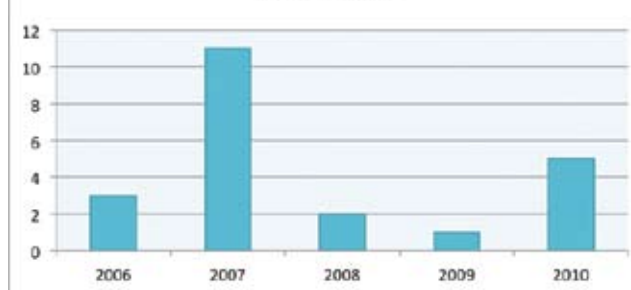
Motor Vehicle Theft 2006-2010



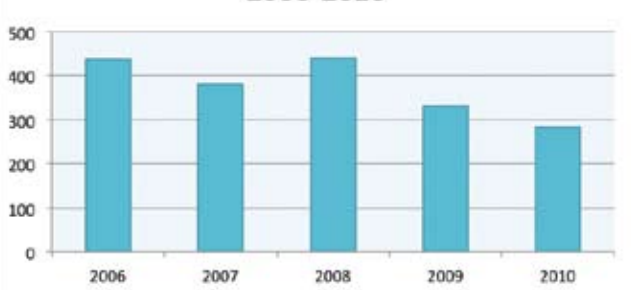
Arson 2006-2010



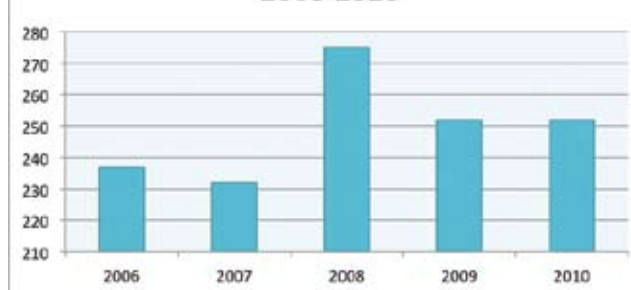
Murder 2006-2010



Burglary 2006-2010

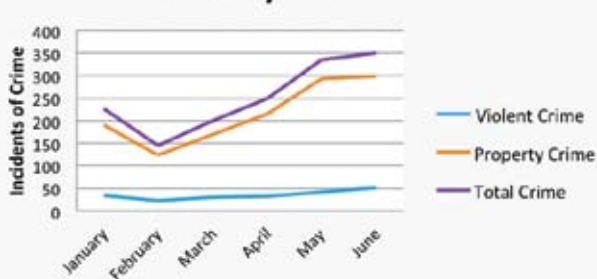


Robbery 2006-2010



This chart shows a comparison for Lakeview to the City of Chicago overall, in percentages of types of crime.

Crime in the 23rd District January-June 2011

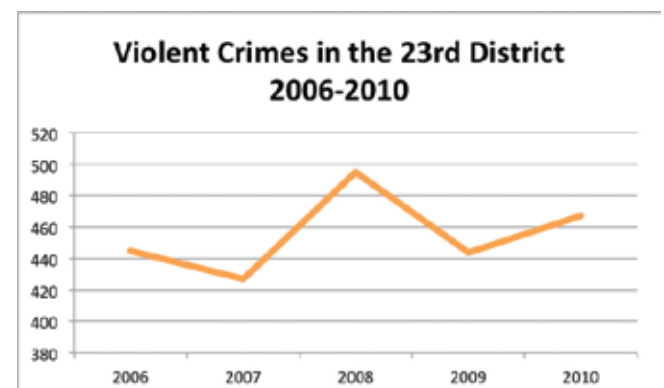
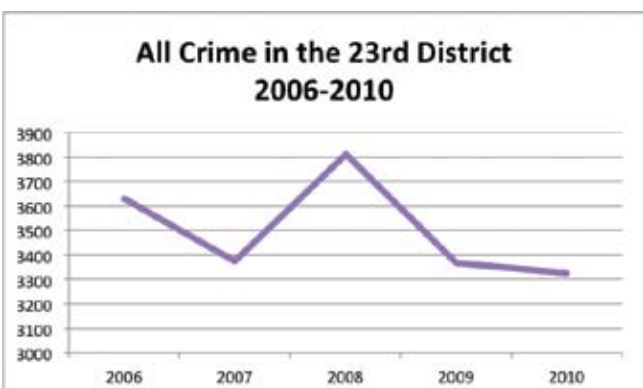
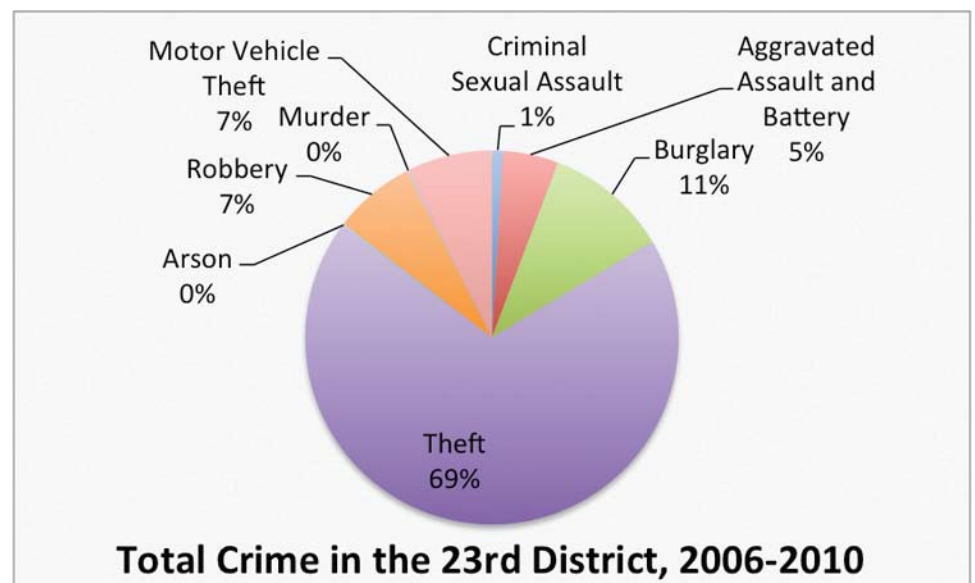
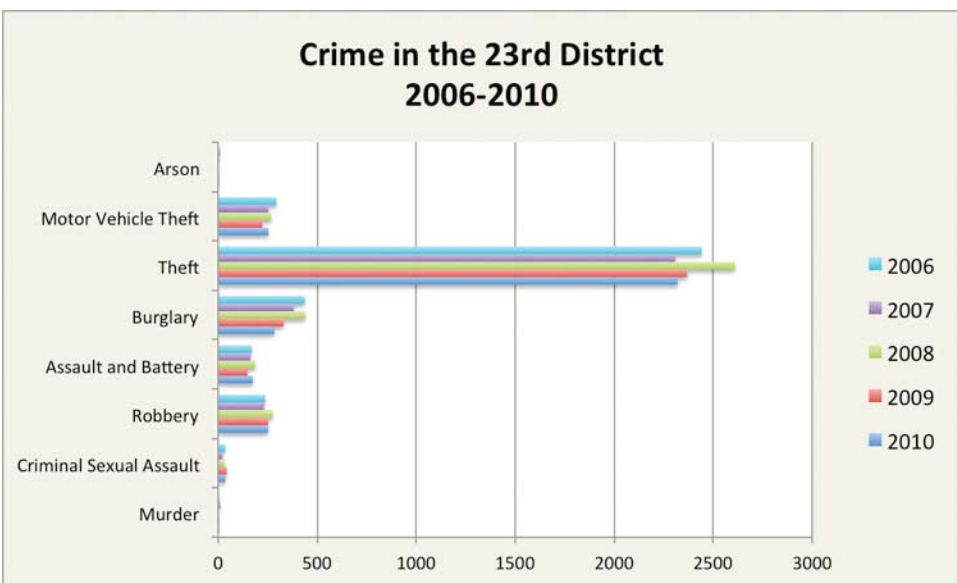
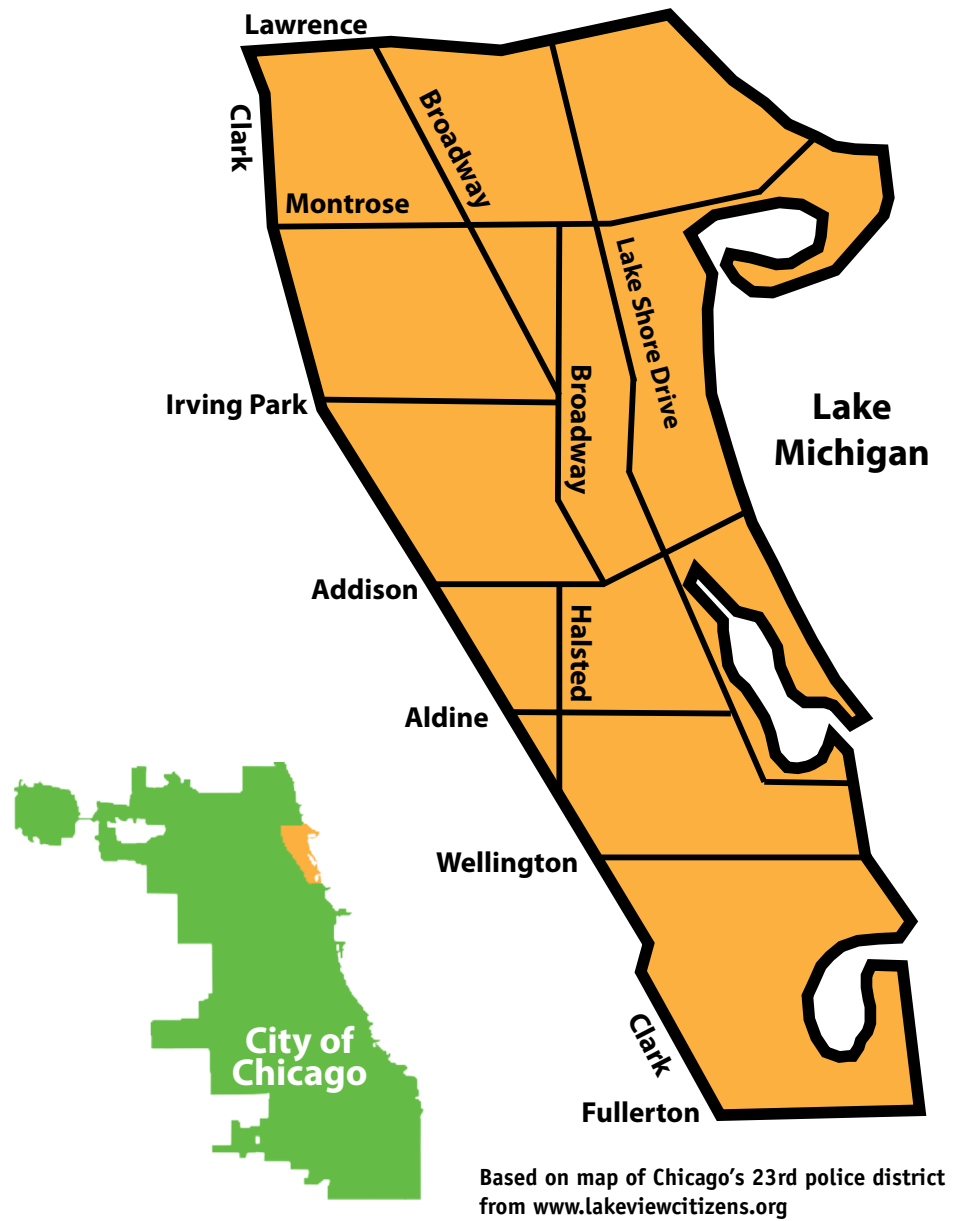


Crime in the 23rd District 2011						
	January	February	March	April	May	June
Murder	1	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal Sexual Assault	4	1	2	2	7	4
Robbery	21	10	19	17	20	30
Aggravated Assault & Battery	9	11	10	14	15	17
Burglary	22	12	15	12	38	44
Theft	147	99	136	168	222	234
Motor Vehicle Theft	21	12	18	36	34	21
Arson	1	0	0	0	0	0
Totals						
	January	February	March	April	May	June
Violent Crime	35	22	31	33	42	51
Property Crime	191	123	169	216	294	299
Total Crime	226	145	200	249	336	350

Crime in the 23rd District January-June			
	2010	2011	Percent Change
Murder	1	1	0.0%
Criminal Sexual Assault	20	20	0.0%
Robbery	114	117	2.6%
Aggravated Assault & Battery	75	76	4.2%
Burglary	128	143	11.7%
Theft	1051	1006	-4.3%
Motor Vehicle Theft	119	142	19.3%
Arson	0	1	---
Totals			
	2010	2011	Percent Change
Violent	210	214	1.9%
Property	1298	1292	-0.5%
Total	1508	1506	-0.1%

Crime in the 23rd District 2006-2010					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Murder	3	11	2	1	5
Criminal Sexual Assault	35	21	31	43	35
Robbery	237	232	275	252	252
Aggravated Assault & Battery	170	163	187	148	175
Burglary	437	381	440	330	284
Theft	2442	2308	2610	2368	2320
Motor Vehicle Theft	294	252	267	223	254
Arson	11	6	2	2	1
Totals					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Violent	445	427	495	444	467
Property	3184	2947	3319	2923	2859
Total	3629	3374	3814	3367	3326

23rd Police District City of Chicago



Lakeview residents, LGBT leaders start brainstorming solutions to crime

BY KATE SOSIN

In the midst of a heat wave so intense that public officials recommended people stay home, more than 65 LGBT leaders and Lakeview residents packed into the 23 District police community room July 20 to brainstorm solutions to neighborhood crime.

The event was the first amicable gathering in recent weeks attended by residents in the community, many of whom had expressed concern that anti-crime efforts were targeting already marginalized queer youth. While previous conversations between youth and residents had unraveled into screaming matches on Facebook and at community meetings, most seemed to walk away July 20 not just pleased, but ready with solutions.

Alicia Ozier, executive director of HIV advocacy organization at Taskforce Prevention and Community Services, and Keith Green, director of federal affairs at AIDS Foundation Chicago, steered the meeting.

"My main goal for this meeting is to be happy in the success of finding two solutions," said Ozier at the start of the meeting.

Ozier promised those solutions at a July 6 CAPS (Community Alternative Policing Strategy) meeting, after fears of an influx of crime turned relations between residents and queer youth of color hostile. Ozier said her organization, which serves queer youth of color, was prepared to help



Keith Green helped lead the meeting. Photo by Tim Carroll

residents and youth work together on solutions.

The meeting drew representatives from community groups citywide, including Affinity Community Services, the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, Amigas Latinas, ALMA (Association of Latino Men for Action) Chicago, Center on Halsted, the LGBTQ Host Home Program, Equality Illinois, Project VIDA, the Chicago Department of Public Health, Broadway Youth Center, Vida/SIDA, The Civil Rights Agenda, Haymarket Center and the Chicago Gay Officers Action League. Representatives on behalf of 44th Ward Ald. Tom Tunney, Cook County Board President Toni Preck-

winkle and 10th Dist. Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer also attended.

Ozier and Green helped attendees write rules for the evening, which included mutual respect and not making generalizations. Green facilitated discussions on what residents felt the problems were, while Ozier helped the room map out neighborhood crime hot spots.

"I think the one thing we can agree on is that we're all concerned citizens," Green said, seemingly guiding the room away from divides that have been growing in the community for weeks.

"There are people who are not LGBT youth who are preying on this community," Ozier said. "They're taking advantage of the situation."

A few residents said that they felt that large groups of loiterers were part of the problem. John Cunningham, a Lakeview resident who has been active in organizing residents around crime issues, said that he was worried that loiterers easily hid illegal activity by standing in large groups.

Several attendees also expressed the need for safe places for young people to go at night, while one person suggested that assault survivors needed more support in healing.

In the end, the group decided on two immediate undertakings. Youth-service providers decid-

ed to meet to create a new space for youth to go at night. The Guardian Angels, an organization of unarmed citizen patrols, offered to train community members. Citizens committed to working with merchants and gay police officers on providing a foot patrol in the neighborhood every night between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Attendees also agreed to create a new Facebook page. The "Take Back Boystown" page, which galvanized the community to response to crime, has drawn heat from some who say that conversations on it are racist. Residents have also complained that the page became a place for people to vent without actually contributing solutions.

The new page, named "Boystown Community Collaboration," will be created to spread information on community events and resources.

Spirits seemed high as the meeting wrapped up. Several participants commented on the diversity of organizations and people sitting at the table.

"I cannot imagine being in a better place than this right now," Ozier said. "This is amazing."

A follow-up meeting is tentatively scheduled for Aug. 17. Windy City Times will update when details become available.



Attendees at the July 23 vigil. Photo by Andrew Davis

Churches hold anti-violence vigil on Halsted strip

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In light of recent events that have occurred in Lakeview (specifically, Boystown), a coalition of religious and other community leaders as well as local residents for the "Faith Response for Peace," an anti-violence vigil that took place the evening of July 23 in the 7-Eleven parking lot at the corner of Roscoe and Halsted.

In the midst of bar-hoppers walking down the North Halsted strip (the event started at 10:30 p.m.), dozens of people held candles or lilies while various individuals spoke, sang, prayed or offered meditations.

"We found it necessary to come together in a visible and communal way to pray for peace and reconciliation amongst all in this community and on all sides of the issue," said the Rev. Fran Holliday of All Saints Episcopal Church to the gathering. "This event is not about pointing fingers or placing blame; it is not about name-calling. It's about health, peace and reconciliation."

Rev. Rudra Vilius Dundzila was the event's prayer leader. "Coming from different religious traditions, the faith communities of Lakeview all share a common belief in what the Rev. Martin Luther King called the beloved community," he told the crowd. "It is a world of love. His was a vision of an integrated society—all races; rich and poor; young and old. To this, we add queer and bi and straight and all genders."

Among others who spoke were TJ Williams of New York City's Riverside Church and Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ, who passionately called for unity. The Rev. Rodney Reinhart, rector of St. Clement's Episcopal

Church in Harvey, said, "You all have come here tonight because deep in your heart [and] deep in your soul, you are proud to be gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender. You are proud to love one another. You are proud because you have stood up over and over again to say, 'I am who I am. I will be who I will be. I will make a difference. ... We will not accept violence against those we love.'"

Another person who attended was 46th Ward Ald. James Cappleman, one of two openly gay members of Chicago's city council. "I'm just so honored to be among this crowd of peaceful people," he said. "The city council is committed to peace and we want to do everything we can to work with you. I'm here to stand here with you and honor all those people who were victims of hate. As a former Franciscan friar, I stand up against hate in all forms."

Attendees also sang songs such as "We Shall Overcome" (led by Alicia Ozier of Taskforce Prevention & Community Services) and recited the Lord's Prayer as they touched the shoulders of those next to them.

Brent Holman-Gomez, who attends Berry United Methodist Church, told Windy City Times that "people of various faith backgrounds decided to come together to do something about the violence in Boystown."

When asked about the timing of the event (occurring a few weeks after a stabbing incident that galvanized the community), Gomez said, "We just felt that it would be an ongoing need because it's a behavioral issue. There needs to be healing and we're here to provide a space for that healing."

As for the possibility of future vigils/rallies, Gomez told WCT. "We've talked about it. We've talked about the fact that there's an ongoing need. One gathering is not to solve anything."

More photos are can be seen at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>.

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Gay activist Ifti Nasim dies

BY ERICA DEMAREST

Iftikhar "Ifti" Nasim, a Pakistani-born poet, radio host and gay activist, died July 22 at the age of 64 following a sudden illness.

Best known for his award-winning poetry and over-the-top style, Nasim maintained a vivid presence in Chicago's LGBT scene for the past 35 years. He founded Sangat Chicago, a South Asian LGBT organization, and was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 1996.

"In a world where race, racial identity, sexual identity and immigration status all matter," said Kareem Khubchandani, 28, who considered Nasim a friend, mentor and role model, "[Nasim] would always talk about the changes he had made, and then make me really aware of the fact that things aren't perfect, things have to be done, things don't happen on their own."

Nasim, who identified as gay and Muslim, began his career as an LGBT activist in the United States in 1974, the year he moved to Chicago. In addition to working on behalf of immigrants, Muslims, South Asians and eventually AIDS victims, he frequently wrote and performed poetry. Nasim saw two collections published in his lifetime: *Narman* (1994) and *Myrmecophile* (2010).

His work is considered the only poetry to express gay longings and desires in the Urdu language; it has garnered both enthusiastic praise and hateful criticism, and even earned Nasim several death threats through the years. Despite any controversy surrounding the books, many young Pakistanis considered them inspirational; *Narman* was responsible for inspiring the *narmani*, or honest poetry, movement in the country.

The son of a journalist, Nasim was born in Lyallpu (now Faisalabad), Pakistan, Sept. 15, 1946. He grew up poor and often worked odd jobs to help support the family. When he was 21 years old, Nasim's parents pushed him toward an

arranged marriage—a common practice in the predominantly Muslim country.

"I did not want to live a double life," Nasim told the Chicago Tribune in 2001. He had known he was gay since he was a teenager and had already had several sexual experiences with other men—always under a pseudonym. "I did not want to leave a wife at home and go out and pick up guys. I thought that was a dishonest way of living."

Hoping to escape the marriage, Nasim—who had recently earned a law degree from Punjab University in Lahore—convinced his father to fund a three-month trip to the United States to further his law studies. "I read an article in Life magazine, which said that the United States was the place for gays to be in," Nasim told the *Thaindian News* in 2008.

He soon relocated to Detroit and enrolled at Wayne State University. The months turned into years and, in 1974, Nasim moved to Chicago. He instantly fell in love with the city and its thriving disco scene.

"At first I was afraid to go into a gay bar," he told the Chicago Tribune, "but I went in. They were the nicest people on the planet Earth. I said, 'What the heck? Why haven't I been here before?' It was a non-stop party. I loved it."

It wasn't all fun and games, though. Nasim said he witnessed hate crimes and robberies at the hands of homophobic people. "I couldn't believe my ears and eyes," he said. "What had happened to the Life magazine story? But the gay liberation movement was on, and I joined."

When he wasn't working full-time selling cars at Loeber Motors (Nasim was known for driving a gold Mercedes) or writing poetry in English, Urdu and Punjabi, Nasim worked assiduously as an activist. He focused his energy primarily on Muslim, immigrant and South Asian queer communities, and worked to help those who were persecuted in other countries gain asylum in America.

In 1986, he founded Sangat Chicago, a South Asian LGBT organization that takes its name from the Sanskrit word for togetherness. "If you are a Muslim and a gay, you are a minority within a minority," Nasim said. He frequently spoke out against war, homophobia and social injustice in Pakistan and other Muslim countries.

With a penchant for ostentatious jewelry, fur coats and drag get-ups, Nasim was anything but a wallflower. The combination of his dramatic ensembles and uninhibited honesty drew attention everywhere he went, and it wasn't always positive. While eating in a Rogers Park restaurant in March 2001, Nasim was reportedly attacked by a Muslim man who called Nasim an "abomination" and threatened him with a knife.

"[Nasim] would show up to an event or a meeting—to anything—wearing a fur coat and a sequined beret," Khubchandani said. "He'd make an impression before he'd even speak up. And I think that was part of his way of making an impact, of getting people to see him and pay attention to him, by making a spectacle and being glamorous and being amazing well before he even spoke up."

Once the AIDS epidemic began in the 1980s, Nasim used his considerable flair to educate people about HIV/AIDS prevention. In addition, he regularly hosted a weekly radio show called Radio Sargam, and his books of poetry have become part of the curriculum at Santa Clara University and Truman College.

"The LGBT community in Chicago—not just the South Asian and Muslim communities—has greatly benefited from his activism," Khubchandani said.

Nasim is survived by his partner of 28 years. Nasim was buried July 23 in the Rosehill Cemetery, 5800 N. Ravenswood Ave., following Muslim traditions.

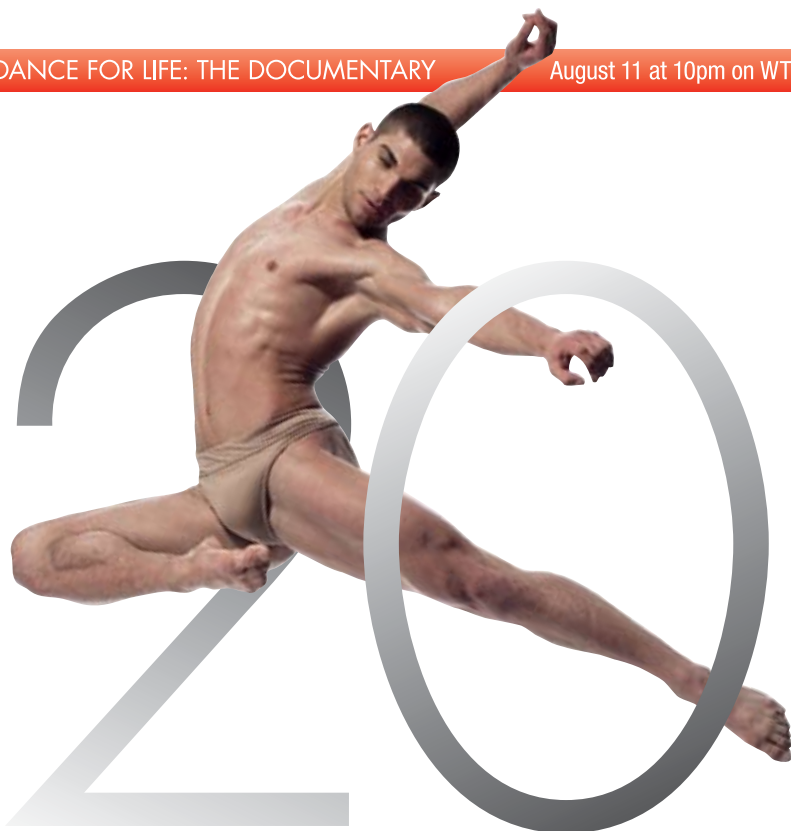
See more about Nasim on the Chicago Gay History website at <http://www.chicagogayhistory.com/biography.html?id=714>.



Ifti Nasim. Photo by Hal Baim

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Building a family through surrogacy: One couple's story

Third part of a series on LGBT surrogacy
BY CHARLSIE DEWEY

Ashley Hemphill has always known that she would have a family that included children. Once she realized she was not going to be in a heterosexual relationship, she said it never occurred to her that children might not be a part of that future.

Today, Hemphill and her partner Pam Netzky, who live in Chicago, have experienced two successful in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedures with the help of Fertility Centers of Illinois (FCI) and aParent IVF.

"We had a couple of straight friends who had used Dr. Brian Kaplan [physician at FCI] when they were having some fertility issues and highly recommended him," Ashley said. "From the moment we met him, it was truly love. He makes you feel comfortable and he is just the sweetest man. I can't say enough good things about him, truthfully."

Hemphill and Netzky decided that they would use Netzky's eggs, but that Hemphill would carry the baby.

"I guess I felt, having been adopted, I am very clear on the reality that it doesn't matter that you are biologically related to have this feeling of family and this is your parent, and love, but Netzky wasn't adopted. I felt like it would allow her to feel closer to the baby, because even though she wasn't giving birth, she would know that it was her's. I knew that for me that

wouldn't be an issue."

Once they had made the decision to have a baby through IVF and had met with Kaplan, the couple had to face the issues of legal documents and insurance coverage.

"The first thing we needed to do, because we are not married, is we had to get our own lawyers and have legal documents drawn up to ensure that all of the parameters of how we were going to raise this child and allowing the child to be adopted would be handled as soon as the baby was born. This would ensure that if anything happened between Netzky and I, that because we did this together, the original intent would be there so we would both be able to raise the child. In Illinois, the birth mother is actually the legal parent. So even though biologically they were Netzky's children I was legally the mother so I had to let Netzky adopt her own children."

Hemphill also worked with her insurance company to get the approval for the procedures.

Kaplan explained that insurance can be a trickier issue for a same-sex couple, having to prove that they have been trying unsuccessfully to get pregnant for a certain period of time. Still, he said that his organization works with the couples to help them make their case for special approval from their insurance.

Just like any other IVF couple that might be using someone else's eggs or a carrier, Hemphill and Netzky also had to go through a list of required screenings, including medical history and psychological testing, to qualify for the procedure.



From left: Landon, age 2, Ashley Hemphill, Pam Netzky and Brody, age 4. Photo courtesy of Hemphill

Several shots were necessary to prepare for the pregnancy, but the first cycle was a success. Hemphill found out that she was pregnant after the first IVF cycle. She then said she had another series of shots, 72 shots to be exact, for more than two months. The couple had their son Brody in 2006.

After a year had gone by Hemphill and Netzky began the process for a second pregnancy. During the initial IVF cycle they had chosen to freeze Netzky's eggs for a future pregnancy.

Hemphill said that after the first time had been so easy, getting pregnant so quickly, the couple hadn't really considered that the second time might not go as smoothly.

"They actually did testing at the lab for a number of genetic issues, and we are really happy that they did because with this second

round there were a number that looked good on the surface, but after getting the genetic testing back would not have made it through the full pregnancy."

In the end, Hemphill did get pregnant during the following cycle and delivered the pair's second baby boy, Landon, in 2009.

Even with the challenges, Hemphill recommends IVF to other couples struggling to have a baby.

She noted, "When you think about all the people who are at FCI not for the reasons that we are, because we are a same-sex couple, but because they truly have tried for years to get pregnant and just haven't been able to and they've tried cycle after cycle. For us, you have to keep it in perspective, which is, we've been so lucky."

Storms affect HBHC, Center

BY ERICA DEMAREST

The Center on Halsted and the Howard Brown Health Center were among dozens of buildings to incur storm damage July 23, but neither organization foresees lasting service cuts, officials say.

Severe thunderstorms whipped through Chicago shortly after midnight July 23, dumping as much as seven inches of rain in some of the areas of the city. The National Weather Service issued flash-flood warnings, and as many as 74,000 ComEd customers were without power at some point.

The Center on Halsted experienced roof flooding that damaged third floor storage rooms, said CEO Tico Valle, who was called in at 4:30 a.m. to assess damage. Although the Center's theater was dotted with puddles, nothing there was ruined.

"We were able to deal with it on our own," Valle said. "We actually had to mop up a lot of

water, and we had scrub machines that took out the rest."

Unlike neighboring Whole Foods, which experienced more severe flood damage on its main floor and was forced to open two hours late, the Center on Halsted opened on time and conducted its services as normal on Saturday.

Although Howard Brown Health Center managed to escape flooding, it was forced to remain closed July 23 due to power outages. No medication or vaccines were lost, as refrigeration temperatures remained within acceptable ranges, said Magda Houlberg, vice president and chief clinical officer.

"We've added appointments this week to accommodate our patients that could not be seen over the weekend and are personally following up to ensure they get the care and attention they need," Houlberg said.

Barring more severe weather, neither organization anticipates any further closures or delays.

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PASSAGES

Raymond Hudd

Raymond Hudd (nee Huddleston), a well-known millinery designer known as "The Mad-hatter of the Midwest" passed away peacefully July 20, 2011, in Muskegon, Mich., at the age of 86.

Hudd attended the School of the Art Institute and worked as a window designer for Wieboldt's before finding his true calling as a millinery designer. Over his 50-year career, he designed more than 500 hats for Phyllis Diller. In 2002, the Chicago History Museum held a retrospective of Hudd's career and work; the museum retains more than 100 of his creations.

He is survived by one brother, Ivan Huddleston of Moreno Valley, Calif.; many nieces, nephews, and dear friends.

A memorial service is being planned.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Art In-

stitute of Chicago Raymond Hudd Millinery Award, c/o School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Office of Development, 37 South Wabash Ave., Suite 818, Chicago, Ill., 60603.



Undated photo of Raymond Hudd.

a
GAY *in the*
LIFE

TEXT AND PHOTOS
BY ROSS FORMAN



Special events manager
Shaun J. Rajah



Shaun J. Rajah moved to Chicago in 2005 from his native Malaysia because he wanted a hospitality-industry job and didn't want the fact he lived overseas to impact his hiring.

He told his mom that he was leaving and heading to the United States. She was upset, to put it mildly. She even asked if he thought he was Eddie Murphy from the actor's popular role in Coming To America.

Rajah was immediately hired at The Drake Hotel, where he still works, overseeing what was recently voted the third-best tea room in the world.

"I love my team and the guests I've met," Rajah said. "My main focus is tea and pairing tea with food."

Rajah also coordinates the on-site entertainment, including the harpists. In addition, he organizes major events at the hotel, such as Burgers, Bourbon & Beats, which is scheduled for Aug. 11.

In 2007, he coordinated a Real Men Drink Tea program, the "Jackets Required" event in 2008 to benefit the Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN), and he recently hosted the Royal Wedding Tea Party, which landed him appearances on The Today Show and the BBC.

Rajah handles the planning and organization of the seasonal events, such as Valentine's Serendipi-TEA, Spring Catwalk Fashion Shows, Halloween Masquerade Ball, New Year's Eve Ball, and more throughout the year. He also handles the management of fundraising activities for local, regional, and national causes and charities through the services provided by the Palm Court.

Rajah participated this spring in Gay Idol for the second time, and he finished second. He said this was the last time he will participate.

"I feel like I'm living the American dream, and it's nice to come to work and be accepted for who you are," Rajah said. "The American dream is an ideal held by many in that, through hard work, courage and determination, one can achieve prosperity and freedom. These were values held by many early European settlers, and have been passed on to subsequent generations, including my own. I have always seen the U.S. as a country filled with opportunity to succeed and prosper. While many may view this ideal as cliché, as I embark on my life journey, I realize that opportunity, indeed, is one of many things that makes the U.S. a world leader and dream for many around the world.

"During my time in the U.S., I have come to realize how fortunate I am to be living the American Dream. It has shaken and humbled me. As a child, my mother always told me that I could be whatever I wanted to be, and that America would give me the chance to achieve all of my goals.

My mother's words set deeply into my mind and influenced every decision I made. I am hopeful that I can continue to live this American Dream and be a contributor to society."

Rajah's busiest time is during December, when the Palm Court has about 500 customers each day, starting at about 11 a.m. The room holds 175.

Tea for two will cost about \$90. For reservation or inquiries, email Shaun.Rajah@hilton.com.



the stats

Name
Shaun J. Rajah

Age
31

Relationship status
Single

Neighborhood
Lakeview

Hobbies
Singing, dining and traveling, although he hates flying

Favorite Chicago restaurant
RL

Favorite Chicago bar
Wilde

Lookalike
He's often told he looks like Prince. "I don't see the resemblance, but everyone else does."

It's a fact
He has his suits handmade in Bangkok, and has his shoes and hats custom-made.



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I Haven't Given Up, I've Taken Charge

One man's story of taking HIV meds for prevention

BY NICK LITERSKI

The following column is reprinted courtesy of *Positively Aware Magazine*.

Recently, I was surprised to learn that I had allegedly "given up on gay men." According to Michael Weinstein, president and founder of the so-called "AIDS Healthcare Foundation," I now consider the lives of gay men, including my own, "disposable." What great crime have I committed to deserve Mr. Weinstein's condemnation? I take Truvada once a day, as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), in order to protect myself from HIV infection.

My partner and I have a mutually open relationship. In reaching that point, we did the responsible things that a new couple should do to protect themselves. We used condoms until we'd been together long enough to rely on HIV testing. We then chose to be fluid bonded, while always playing "safe" with other sexual partners. Every six months, we were both dutifully tested for the HIV virus, usually going to the local testing facility together. We were screened on a regular basis for other sexually transmitted infections. If we made a mistake with regard to our agreed precautions (and yes, I did so on at least one occasion) we were honest with each other.

About two years into our relationship, we were surprised to hear that my partner's HIV test was "inconclusive," and that the testing facility would be submitting it for further testing. A week later, we called back for the final report, and were relieved when an obviously hurried staffer told my partner he was "just fine." We continued our very active sex life, which almost always involved me being the receptive partner in anal intercourse.

During the next few months, however, my normally robust partner had an unusual number of illnesses, particularly skin infections. He became suspicious, and since we were nearly due for our six-month testing anyway, he scheduled another test. As I sat in the waiting area, I received a two-word text from my partner: "I'm positive." To make matters worse, the staffer had pulled my partner's chart, and found that his last "inconclusive" test had actually been positive. Due to the mistake of a careless (former) staffer, we had received an incorrect report.

As traumatizing as it was for my partner to find out that he was HIV-positive, and as angry as he was about the earlier false report, he was truly terrified that he had exposed me to the virus innumerable times over the past several months. I was promptly tested, and we were relieved to learn that both my rapid testing and RNA results were negative. Even so, my partner continued to experience tremendous anxiety over the possibility of infecting someone he loved. His worry extended to all sorts of seemingly mundane possibilities, even to the point of not wanting me to share the same handle on our interchangeable-head electric toothbrush.

While it's normal for newly seroconverted men to experience high levels of anxiety regarding sex, the impact on our intimate life was profound. My partner had experienced enough broken condom incidents over the years that his concerns weren't alleviated by using them. At the same time, it was difficult for me to adapt to continuous condom use, due to both physical discomfort and my own emotional response to a

physical barrier. Sex became much less frequent, and was burdened by worry and frustration.

In time, and with the help of an outstanding physician, my partner's viral load became undetectable. In the meantime, both of us had educated ourselves on HIV. We knew that a Swiss study indicated that the risk of my being infected by my partner was now extremely low, even to the point that some physicians in Switzerland believed protection was unnecessary. My partner was able to relax more, and we began to settle into the "new normal" of being a serodiscordant couple.

Even at this stage, however, there were emotional challenges. I still hated using condoms, and I still wanted to feel my partner inside me. I felt the risk was low enough to be acceptable, and a selfish part of me wanted to be the one making the decision on whether or not to use protection. Another part of me knew, deep down, that by encouraging unprotected sex with my partner, I wasn't giving my partner's emotional well-being the importance he deserved. All too often, I placed my partner in the difficult position of wanting to protect me from infection, while at the same time wanting to satisfy my desire for sex without physical barriers. When my partner gave in to my preference, he generally pulled out before ejaculating, but afterward he dealt with understandable worry. The combination of anxiety and infrequency continued to wear on our relationship.

Somewhere in the midst of all this, I reached a state of mind that seems almost universal among



Nick Literski.

We gradually settled into a "serodiscordant detente," in which my partner reluctantly agreed that it was up to me whether I wanted to take the risks inherent in unprotected sex, but he almost always pulled out before ejaculation. At

"As I sat in the waiting area, I received a two-word text from my partner: 'I'm positive.' To make matters worse, the staffer had pulled my partner's chart, and found that his last 'inconclusive' test had actually been positive. Due to the mistake of a careless (former) staffer, we had received an incorrect report."

HIV-negative partners of HIV-positive men. As low as the risk of infection seemed to be, I still had a nagging worry that I might become positive. I hated using condoms. I hated seeing my partner constantly worry about infecting me. I worried that my partner would grow so tired of that worry that he might choose to leave the relationship in pursuit of an HIV-positive partner. I resented that, at times, my partner seemed more comfortable having sex with another HIV-positive man than with me. None of these feelings were particularly rational, but they existed. In keeping with that irrationality, in a very real sense, part of me wished that I would become infected, just so the whole issue would "go away." What seemed like a "manageable condition" with new medications seemed preferable to the ongoing stress and frustration. In time, and with seeing the physical problems my partner suffered as a result of his HIV infection, I got past that stage.

Unfortunately, many HIV-negative men seem to go through that stage, and some don't come to their senses before permanently affecting their health.

times, I selfishly prevented the latter from happening, not considering the stress I was causing him. There was no simple solution, so while we could still have great sex, it was always accompanied by some level of anxiety and guilt. We were handling it imperfectly, but perhaps as best we could at the time.

Then came November of 2010, and the New England Journal of Medicine's publication of a study showing the effectiveness of PrEP for men who have sex with men. Our physician, a true expert in the field of HIV prevention and treatment, was familiar with the study prior to its publication. Once results were published, he had a frank discussion with my partner about our sexual activities (something like "Don't lie to me, I have a really big needle that I can jab you with if you're lying"). Because we have a great deal of trust in our doctor, my partner was honest with him about our behaviors. Based on that discussion, our doctor asked me to visit him and discuss the possibility of taking PrEP. I made an appointment for a week later.

In the meantime, I agonized over the issue. I searched the Internet and read everything I could find on the subject, both for and against

PrEP. In particular, I carefully read the actual study report in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. I made notes of the questions raised in my mind, and brought them with me when I visited my doctor. We discussed my questions thoroughly, along with the fact that I already had a recent HIV test establishing that I was still negative. My doctor outlined the requirement that I would take the medication every day as directed, and that he would test me for kidney function and other potential side effects on a regular basis. In the end, I decided that the benefits outweighed the risks, and I chose to begin taking Truvada.

The cost of PrEP is naturally a major factor. My physician informed me that several insurance companies were actively considering coverage of PrEP, knowing that it was much less expensive than treatment of an HIV-positive patient. Fortunately, my health insurance company had already chosen to cover PrEP, and I've never had a problem obtaining Truvada with a reasonable co-pay.

Perhaps the second most common question I'm asked is whether I've had side effects from using PrEP. It's true that for some men, Truvada can cause nausea or diarrhea (usually only for the first month of use), or even kidney damage. I'm pleased to say that I haven't experienced such problems. The first morning after I began taking Truvada, I had some very minor diarrhea, but this has never recurred, so it may have been entirely coincidental. True to his word, my physician has insisted on regular tests to monitor my kidney function, HIV status, and other health measures. My test results have been entirely normal.

In fact, the only "side effect" I've experienced while using PrEP is frustration over the anti-PrEP propaganda efforts of Michael Weinstein and his AIDS Healthcare Foundation. I've read a great deal of the material issued by Mr. Weinstein, and I recently participated with him in a public forum on the use of PrEP, along with several committed advocates of HIV prevention. Where experts presented factual data regarding PrEP, Mr. Weinstein attempted to inspire fear of PrEP, and advocate against the makers of Truvada. Mr. Weinstein's fear-mongering should come as no surprise, given that he previously attempted to sue the makers of Viagra, claiming that the erectile dysfunction drug contributed to the spread of HIV.

Mr. Weinstein consistently misrepresents the study data. First, he claims that PrEP only proved to be 44% effective in preventing HIV infection. He avoids stating that closer examination of the study results shows that those in the study group who became infected with HIV were found to have no Truvada in their bloodstream, or only trace levels. In other words, the infected individuals failed to actually take Truvada daily as directed. None of the men who were found to actually be taking Truvada on a daily basis throughout the study became infected with HIV.

Second, Mr. Weinstein complains that the study wasn't "real world," because those enrolled received monthly prevention counseling and health monitoring. To Mr. Weinstein, it was really the counseling that prevented infection, rather than PrEP. What Mr. Weinstein fails to recognize is that all study participants, including those taking a placebo, were given the same counseling and monitoring. In other words, the

controlled study took this factor into account, so that the use of PrEP would truly be the only difference between the groups. When the study reports that PrEP was effective in reducing HIV infections, it reflects a situation in which all other factors were equal. For the men taking a placebo, counseling alone didn't protect them from HIV infection.

Perhaps knowing that consistent, daily use of PrEP really did prevent HIV infection, Mr. Weinstein insists that gay men cannot be relied upon to take Truvada daily. Mr. Weinstein doesn't explain why he believes that the same men who can't be trusted to take a pill every day can be expected to use a condom every time they have sex (the only prevention method he seems to approve). My own anecdotal experience contradicts Mr. Weinstein's theory. I take my Truvada every night before bed. In the five months I've been taking the drug, I've forgotten only once, and I took it the following morning, making it a "late" dose, rather than a "missed" dose. I'm not always the most responsible person on the planet, but I take my medication as directed because I realize that as part of a serodiscordant relationship, I have a comparatively high risk of infection. I take my medication as directed because I have an excellent physician who reminds me about how important that is. I take my medication as directed because I love my partner, and knowing that I take PrEP daily helps reduce his worry and stress.

Mr. Weinstein complains that the availability of PrEP will make men less likely to use condoms, thus making them less protected against HIV infection. While I can't deny that this may occur for some men, my own experience reflects quite differently. While my partner has an undetectable viral load, resulting in a less than 1% chance of him infecting me, that chance continues to exist. Before PrEP became available, I was taking a calculated risk with my partner, because even with counseling from my trusted physician, physical comfort and intimacy without barriers were ultimately more important to me than further reducing that tiny 1%. My physician, having directly asked about this, determined that I was a good candidate for a method that would overcome those objections. PrEP didn't make me stop using condoms. Instead PrEP provided me with protection that I would use consistently, rather than protection that I was already rejecting. With PrEP, that 1% risk of infection from my partner's undetectable viral load has been further reduced by my own level of personal protection (92% for those who use PrEP daily).

In the end, my belief that the benefits of PrEP would outweigh the risks has proven true for me. I'm carefully monitored to ensure that I don't develop harmful side effects. I comply with the treatment regimen faithfully. My insurance covers the medication. My overall level of protection against HIV infection has increased dramatically. Just as important, however, PrEP has made a real difference in my relationship with my partner. We're able to be intimate in a way both of us prefer, without the fears and conflicting feelings that were present even with condoms.

I haven't "given up on gay men," or deemed my life "disposable." Rather, I've made a responsible health choice that works for me, and I'm happy with it.

Nick Literski is a 44-year-old Seattle native, a former test subject with the HIV Vaccine Trials Unit, and a regular participant in the annual Seattle AIDS Walk. Nick has spoken at public forums in Seattle and Chicago, sharing his perspective as a PrEP user.

BOOK REVIEW

Delicate Courage – A Memoir by Jim Geary

BY SARAH TOCE

Not often does a memoir come along that envelops an entire community at one given point in time—all through the eyes of the author chronicling the core of his own life-altering experiences. *Delicate Courage—A Memoir* by Jim Geary does just that with love, compassion and apprehension.

To truly understand the scope of the HIV/AIDS virus in San Francisco at the time in which Geary began his community work, one must first learn a little bit about Geary.

As an inspired volunteer for the Catholic Peace Fellowship in Washington, D.C., then-18-year-old Geary found his voice and his gift for feeling, seeing and believing in the great unknown. The metaphysically inclined Geary would eventually serve as director at the fellowship before relocating to San Francisco in 1974. There, he began working closely with the dying as a nurse's aide in oncology. Operating with the insight that the last rite a dying patient craved was respect and care, Geary oftentimes spent hours at the bedsides of the ill and weak—helping them comfortably pass to the other side, even when their family members did not always agree in the letting go process.

While working in his chosen field and fine-tuning his grief counseling skills, Geary began to devote part of his life to political activism in San Francisco alongside Supervisor Harvey Milk and other gay-rights activists. The anti-gay Briggs Initiative, which sought to fire all gay and lesbian teachers in the state, as well as non-gay teachers who associated with them, was well underway at this time.

In 1978, Geary became involved with the Shanti Project in San Francisco offering emotional support for patients and family members who were facing life-threatening illnesses or were affected by them. Geary was promoted from volunteer to director of volunteer/client services. In 1981, Geary formed what was to be considered the first support group for individuals with AIDS in the world. The Shanti Project eventually lost funding in 1982, but Geary continued to work for no pay in order to keep the doors and services open and available for the community. He would serve as executive director for seven years.

Perhaps the most moving and relatable part of the entire memoir, for me, occurred by way of the personal letters printed on its pages. Geary not only opened up his heart for this passionate story, but also his personal journals. The reader is taken directly into the life of the subject and author as he navigates his way through failed relationships, the loss of friends and lovers, the AIDS epidemic gaining speed, and spiritual awakenings.

Here, we leave you with two excerpts from *Delicate Courage—A Memoir* by Jim Geary.

Excerpt: Why Not Me?

"An evening in January 1982 found me sitting alone in a San Francisco bar on Polk Street. As I listened to the piano music, I looked at the faces of the many men joined in song and talking to one another. I suddenly welled up with emotion and began to cry, as I wondered how many of these men would eventually be diagnosed with this damn disease. I asked myself, Why me God? Who am I to begin this task? There are certainly more qualified, capable people to

move this organization forward.

"Quickly, the inner voice responded, Why not you?"

"As I began to accept that truth, I began to see my life as a series of patterns and events that had prepared me to be exactly where I was: I was a gay man. I had worked with people with a life-threatening illness for ten years. I held a key position in a project that had already served as a model for many similar groups across the country. I began to realize that I had been guided all along to be exactly where I was in this moment.

"My tears of fear, grief, and despair gave way to tears of guidance, grace, and gratitude. I accepted the whole of myself more deeply that day than ever before. I walked out of that bar with an accepted mission and an increased awareness of my sacred link to my community and the awesome task that lay ahead."

Excerpt: Visual Experience

"Almost a year after Jess passed, I was watching a Cher special on HBO. Jess and I had seen Cher live and always enjoyed her as a unique personality and performer. The HBO special was recorded at the MGM hotel in Las Vegas. Just as Cher was about to begin her finale, I Believe, I saw Jess begin to materialize about fifteen feet away. I struggled to surrender to the brilliance emanating from his ascended state. It is hard to explain, but it was like suddenly coming face-to-face with a very spiritual being, such as Jesus or Buddha. How much of their magnificence could you let in?"

"Jess was radiant; he was not completely formed, but I could see his face and luminous smile. Effulgent white light encompassed him, almost giving the impression of angel wings! Tears of joy streamed down my cheeks as I opened myself to his transcendent beauty and consciousness. I became aware that perhaps part of the reason it is so difficult to communicate with our loved ones after they pass is that we are in such different states of awareness.



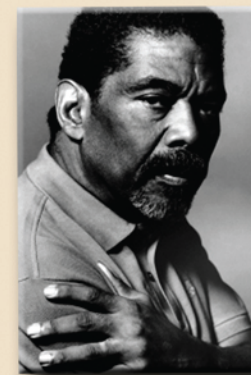
Jim Geary.

Perhaps our grief prevents us from perceiving the glory of their new life. I was full of gratitude that Jess had come to share himself with me in this manner. I was also very thankful that I had moved through enough of my pain to behold him in this light."

Geary shares his life with his lover, Jeff Allen, and their two Pomeranians Jasper and Benji. He is active in several spiritual groups including Quaker Worship, Course in Miracles, and The Way of Mastery. He has also been the recipient of numerous awards, including: Outstanding Community Service award presented by the Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights; San Francisco Chronicle's Hall Of Fame award; AIDS Atlanta Humanitarian award; and the prestigious UCSF Medal for extraordinary personal contribution to human health and well-being.

THE LEGACY PROJECT

AIDS at 30

**ALVIN AILEY**

(1931 - 1989)

Gay U.S.

Choreographer

Born in poverty in rural Texas in 1931, where racial segregation was still in full force, Alvin Ailey grew into a gifted choreographer who drew inspiration from African American culture and went on to become an American institution. In 1954 he gathered together a group of black dancers and formed what would become the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. In 1960 he debuted his choreographic masterpiece, *Revelations*. Inspired by his "blood memories" of Texas, the blues, spirituals and gospel, *Revelations* is believed to be one of the best-known and most often seen modern dance performances ever created.

Ailey combined elements from ballet, modern, jazz, African ritual and contemporary dances, and encouraged his dancers to infuse his choreography with a personal style—a paradigm shift that brought concert dance into harmony with other forms of African-American expression. "The cultural heritage of the American Negro is one of America's richest treasures," Ailey said. "Sometimes sorrowing, sometimes jubilant but always hopeful—[it] has touched, illuminated, and influenced the most remote preserves of world civilization. I and my dance theater celebrate this trembling beauty." Though Ailey quickly became a major force in modern dance—touring extensively and becoming popular with audiences worldwide—his own life suffered. Always secretive about his homosexuality, and under pressure from his public success, he turned increasingly to alcohol and drugs and suffered a mental breakdown in 1980. Despite some successes in the 80s, Alvin Ailey died from complications due to an AIDS-related illness in 1989. He was inducted into the National Museum of Dance and Hall of Fame in 1992.

The Legacy Project recognizes the many roles Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered people have played in the advancement of world history and culture. "THE LEGACY WALK" - the only outdoor International GLBT History Museum in the World - is coming to North Halsted Street in Chicago and will be dedicated on October 11, 2012. For information, to donate or to volunteer, go to www.legacyprojectchicago.org.



Dr. Maya Green. Photos by Hal Baim

Dr. Maya Green helps minorities with HIV/AIDS

BY STEPHANIE A. TAYLOR

Chicago's Dr. Maya Green, MD, MPH recently won a Minority Clinical Fellowship to help minorities with HIV or AIDS who lack care in their communities.

The fellowship was awarded by the HIV Medicine Association and has grants from Gilead Foundation, Genentech, and Tibotec.

"The first thing I recall was excitement," Dr. Green said about winning the fellowship. "I was shocked that I received it and I was really thankful."

Dr. Green grew up in what is formerly known as Chatam, now the Roseland community on Chicago's South Side. She went to Whitney Young High School, where she attended for three years but was let go due to her behavior and grades.

"After I saw the things in my community that were going on, it did have an effect on me where I didn't put forth a lot of effort in high school," she said. "I finished at a Christian high school called Liberty Temple. In addition to that, I had to do night school and summer school and make up for some of the things I lost in those first three years." Dr. Green went to Julian for summer school and Olive Harvey for night school for

that summer.

"I didn't want to stay where I was. My life's purpose guided me to help me change my life," she said. That's another thing, if anyone is at the point where they aren't enjoying their life, I want them to know that it is possible to change. It is possible not to live their life the same way."

By the time she got to college she was focused and she knew why she was there. Although Green didn't get the best grades, she graduated cum laude from Alabama A&M, in Huntsville, with a bachelor of science in biology. After college she originally became a teacher for fourth and fifth graders for four years.

"I always wanted to be a physician. I was initially nervous about going to medical school because on the inside I didn't think I could do it," Dr. Green said. "Something inside of me didn't think I could do it, so I was nervous about that. I didn't apply."

Green described children as "extremely honest." "So all the time when I was asking them what their dreams were they would ask me the same thing. And they were like 'well if you say we could do what we want to, how come you're not doing what you what to?'" she said. "And

that is what kind of sparked me to go to medical school and follow the path and I'm thankful for that."

Green received her medical degree and masters of public health degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

During medical school she worked at the University of Illinois at Chicago as a nursing assistant. She's also done work at Cook County, Illinois Masonic Medical Center and Great Lakes Naval Base—to name a few.

She said the favorite part of her career is the patient interaction. "You learn so much from them and through spending time with them," she said. "You learn in just sharing and helping other people to move on from wherever they are in their life, helping them get from there to the point to where they can help somebody else. That's how the world works." As much as she loves her career, there is a least favorite part which is the lack of time she has with the patients due to the healthcare system.

Dr. Green's interest in HIV/AIDS began after a very close family friend, "Uncle Bee Bob", died of AIDS in the late 1980s, during her early teens. "I remember not knowing what it exactly was," she said. "He had this thing, no one wanted to touch him, everybody was so scared to talk about it or deal with it and at the same time there was like this stigma that the community had. Some people felt strongly one way and wanted to have ideas about lifestyles and then the other part of our family gravitated to him and supported him."

According to the HIV Medicine Association, there are an estimated 50,000 new annual cases of HIV infection in this country. There are people who still don't have access to the HIV drugs they need. Some are told they are infected too late in the illness, meaning that they will not respond to treatment. Approximately half of HIV/AIDS patients in the United States who have knowledge of their illness are in need of medication and are not receiving them. More than 8,000 of the low-income and uninsured population are on waiting lists for HIV/AIDS medicine.

When asked about her goals after the fellowship, Dr. Green said she wanted to do some policy work in preventative education within Chicago's communities. "I know I want to continue to work with people who have been diagnosed



Dr. Maya Green (right) with her mentor, Dr. Kimberly Smith, associate professor of the medicine section of infectious disease at Rush University Medical Center.

with HIV/AIDS in a capacity that not only offers medical care but can offer assistance But I think a holistic approach to care [is needed] and it's not only medical it's healthcare overall. That holistic approach is what I hope to offer for the people in their communities on an individual level."

Dr. Green was in Miami, at Jackson Memorial Hospital at the time, when she first found out that the fellowship was hers. She didn't know how many residents were up for this achievement. "I tend not to ask that," Dr. Green said. "I just kind of go where I feel I'm supposed to go and do the things I'm supposed to do for my purpose." Dr. Green stated that other fellowships, concerning HIV/AIDS were available but wanted to do some work in her hometown.

Dr. Green's mentor in her fellowship process was Dr. Kimberly Smith. The fellowship includes a \$60,000 salary and fringe benefits of one year. It also pays for travel to conferences and community project funding. This particular fellowship helps minority doctors, who have finished their residency, to get experience in an HIV/AIDS environment. The program's objective is to increase the number of African-American and Latino HIV/AIDS doctors, and have more care for HIV-positive patients in minority neighborhoods.

Dr. Green has some words of wisdom for aspiring doctors: "It will never leave you. If it's your purpose it's always going to pop in the back of your mind, pursue it. If I can do it I'm sure anyone can do it. Be who you are and try not to let anything change that, unless it's for the better."

In terms of Dr. Green's greatest accomplishment, she said it was "deciding to choose my own life. The awards, the degrees are nice [but] being a doctor or having a master's in public health doesn't make me who I am. It enhances what my purpose is and gives me the avenue to reach people to accomplish my purpose, so I'm always going to be Maya."

For more information please go to www.hivma.org.

This story is part of the Local Reporting Initiative, supported in part by The Chicago Community Trust.



Dr. Maya Green and her secretary, Rosa Roman.

'Yes' means, 'Yes! Yes! Yes!': New Chicago organization, SHEER, clarifies consent, promotes pleasure



SHEER held an event downtown in June.

BY TAMMY MATTHEWS

Defining what is not consensual sex seems to be easier than defining what it is. Illinois law says a person can't give consent if he or she is under the age of 17, unable to understand the nature of the act, forced, under threat of force, coerced, persuaded or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Now that we are all thoroughly turned off, we can ask: "Then how and when can a person give consent?"

SHEER (Sexuality Health Education to End Rape), a Chicago-based collective founded in April 2010 by five anti-rape activists, is working to clarify consent and promote pleasure.

"SHEER comes from a real need of education and a real need of self-care for educators and service providers," said Emily Robison, 23, SHEER founding member. "SHEER's goal is to provide accessible education about all things sexual-health and rape-prevention related."

"We want to create safe spaces for dialogue about rape and sex to exist simultaneously, to discuss the intricacies of pleasure and consent, to help folks feel ownership over their own bodies and promote practicing consent in sex that is personal and fun for those involved," she continued.

Robison endorses the affirmative consent, also known as the enthusiastic consent, standard: "All parties involved in the act are engaged and enjoying what's happening and consent happens throughout all phases of the sexual encounter."

"If we help clarify what consent is, then we could clarify what rape is," Robison said. "We recognized a need for more of a clear description of what consent looks like for people. We teach that consent is different for everyone and looks like a lot of different things."

Each partnership should find clear, non-assuming and fun ways to give consent that are true to the dynamic and language of the relationship. Basic questions that are both clear and arguably sexy—"Can I touch you here? Does it feel good?"—are easy ways to stay in sync. More aggressive power play, found in the kink, BDSM and fetish communities, typically require different language.

"I am passionate about pleasure, and I am

passionate about ending sexual violence," Robison said. "I want to be part of the sex-positive feminist movement."

SHEER borrowed its internal structure from its fiscal sponsor, the Chicago Women's Health Center. SHEER's steering committee consists of six dedicated members, including Robison. The committee meets monthly. The non-hierarchical SHEER collective, a group of about 30 additional people, is divided into need-based work groups. The collective meets on the fourth Monday of every month in comfortable spaces, such as member's homes, workspaces and cafes. The SHEER email list contains close to 90 addresses. SHEER has received a lot of momentum, love and support from the community, survivors and activists. Partner organizations include the Broadway Youth Center, Center on Halsted, Chicago Women's AIDS Project, Chicago Taskforce on Violence Against Girls & Young Women, Chicago Women's Health Center, DePaul University, Heartland Alliance, Northwestern University, Rape Victim Advocates and YWCA Metro Chicago. Additional partners are welcome.

"We hope to facilitate workshops this summer, and we're developing our curriculum now," said Robison on the organization's upcoming plans. "By teaching people what not to do—commit rape and victim blame—and what to do—practice consent and embrace pleasure—we stop rape and create safe spaces for people to feel ownership over their bodies."

Members of SHEER have also applied to speak at workshops and conferences around the country, including the San Francisco Sex Conference and the Sistersong conference in Miami. Robison gave a sex-positive presentation and represented SHEER in the SlutWalk on Saturday, June 4.

Past events include a screening and conversation with Nancy Schwartzman about her sex-positive film *The Line* Feb. 10, a SHEER-benefited Chances Dances! at Subterranean March 21 and a SHEER Change Celebration that honored exceptional local activists at The Beauty Bar March 31.

Currently, SHEER is discussing how it can work to clarify consent and promote pleasure while not facilitating oppression.

"We're in a pretty crucial place because we know we need to be anti-oppressive," Robison

said. "All forms of oppression intersect, and rape is a form of oppression, and not providing space for all people to explore their sexuality is a form of oppression. By talking about rape and sex in the same spaces, we feel we can help combat those forms of oppression."

Robison said, therefore, that SHEER is striving to make the organization more inclusive for people of different cultures, races and religions so that they may address their varying ideas and experiences about rape, sex and consent. The white female and the queer communities are well represented. A diversity and accountability work group addresses this issue.

"We're proud of where we're at but we think we can be doing better," she continued. "We know different groups need different things, but we believe we can find common ground in dialogue around consent and pleasure. So, when we ask ourselves, 'What can people who aren't present gain from SHEER and the sex-positive movement?' One answer is simply, 'Dialogue to further clarify what consent and pleasure look like to them personally.'"

Robison said sex-positive conversation relieves the stress from constantly discussing traumatic sex and rape.

"Talking about rape 40 hours a week became really taxing on us, and we found that when we were able to integrate discussions around sex into something positive, we were able to do our jobs better," said Robison, who is also a Rape Victim Advocates sexual assault advocate.

"Doing this work requires an immense amount of self-care," she said. "It's not just lighting a candle and take a bath. It's so much more personal than that. For my own self-care, I talk clearly with my supervisor about my concerns, experiences, needs, basic life stuff; ride my bicycle; spend time with loved ones; make sure I get enough sleep; 'give the gender' I feel like giving on any given day."

If you want to get involved in the consent revolution, email sheeronline@gmail.com to subscribe to the email list and come to the collective meetings.

"Share your voice and listen," Robison said.

Visit www.sheeronline.org for more information.



SHEER buttons.



People at SHEER Change event.



Emily and Eva, founders of SHEER.

VIEWPOINTS

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Community Marketing, Inc.



REV. IRENE MONROE

Obama harkens back to slavery with 'states' rights' for marriage equality

Last month, LGBTQ individuals and their allies celebrated New York state becoming the sixth and largest state to allow same-sex marriage.

Of course, it sent an urgent message to Obama.

However, what does it signal to us LGBTQ citizens when the first African-American president wants to employ states' rights—which once federally mandated racial segregation and sanctioned slavery—to address the issue of same-sex marriage?

As a civil-rights attorney, Obama knows that employing states' rights violates our full constitutional rights as well as reinstitutionalizes the 1896 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*. As a result of that case, the "separate but equal" doctrine became the rule of law until it was struck down in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.

The fight for marriage equality in the United States is similar to my ancestors' fight for freedom. Before the Civil War in 1861, the U.S. consisted of 19 free states and 15 slave states. In fact, in the 2004 presidential race between John Kerry and George Bush—where marriage equality was a hot-button issue—the election map results between Kerry's blue states and Bush's red states corresponded to the pre-Civil War free states and slave states, respectively.

As LGBTQ Americans, we're not in slavery, but

we certainly will be in a civil war as each state battle this issue. Whereas President Lincoln acted on behalf of my ancestor's civil rights, we need to call on Obama to move on ours.

"The president has staked out a cynical political position aimed at not rocking the boat," said Richard Socarides, who advised President Bill Clinton on gay-rights issues. "This states' rights argument is a separate but equal argument. Would the president have thought it right to let the states decide on the issue of interracial marriage, or on whether or not women should be allowed to vote?"

In 2008, a blogger on Pam's House Blend saw the writing on the wall about Obama as a full-throated LGBTQ-rights advocate and wrote:

"Obama not only thinks that separate-but-equal is just ducky for LGBT couples. It was a gimmick from an era in which Obama could have aspired to no position in the White House higher than that of head janitor. ... Once he's in office, LGBT citizens will be forgotten. Obama is also in favor of the 'States Rights' approach to the whole marriage equality issue. This was a principle sacred to the White Citizens' Councils a half-century ago and is just as unconstitutional now..."

Obama needs to remember that an African-American woman named Mildred Loving not only set the precedent for same-sex marriage, but also allowed Obama's parents to marry by challenging states' rights.

Loving gained notoriety when the U.S. Supreme Court decided in her favor that anti-miscegenation laws executed by the state are unconstitutional. Married to a white man, Loving and her husband were indicted by a Virginia grand jury in October 1958 for violating the state's Racial Integrity Act of 1924. The trial judge suspended their sentences on the condition the Lovings leave Virginia and not return to the state together for 25 years. The Lovings initially agreed and left, but returned soon after and decided to fight their case.

In advocating that same-sex marriage should be left up to the states, ABC News reported that

Obama stated, "I think it's important for us to work through these issues because each community is going to be different, each state is going to be different."

Perhaps, after nearly one full term in office, Obama is still unaware of deleterious effects of how the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prevents the federal government from fully protecting same-sex nuptials. DOMA denies us a government-issued civil marriage license, and over 1100 federal rights and benefits, including social security benefits, the ability to file a joint federal tax return, and the right to petition for a spouse to immigrate, among other benefits and responsibilities conferred upon heterosexual married couples.

However, how many sides are there to the mouth of a politician eyeing 2012?

"If Obama were to come out for marriage equality today, nothing could happen tomorrow," said one Democratic strategist close to the administration who spoke on condition of anonymity to ABCNews.com. "The Defense of Marriage Act still needs to be repealed, and that won't happen soon with a Republican-controlled House in place."

"I was reminded that it is my obligation not only as an elected official in a pluralistic society, but also as a Christian, to remain open to the possibility that my unwillingness to support gay marriage is misguided," Obama wrote in his recent memoir, *The Audacity of Hope*.

While our president states his opinion is still "evolving" on this issue, he needs to know that we LGBTQ Americans and our families want to sample what he and Michelle and every heterosexual married couple take for granted—marriage, not marriage-lite.

Our democracy can only begin to work when those relegated to the fringes of society can begin to sample what those in society take for granted as their inalienable right. For that to happen, people, such as state lawmakers, have to step in to make the democratic process work for us all—and our president needs to step in as well!

LETTERS

Vigil and violence

Dear Editor:

It was a Saturday night (July 23) and the hustle and bustle of people going to and from gay bars having a good time was met with this reminder that even here in heart of the gay ghetto you are not safe.

A call for love, peace and nonviolence was heard at Halsted and Roscoe as people of faith gathered in the 7-Eleven parking lot. It was, for them, a time of prayer to ask God for an end to violence in Boystown. However, they realized that the violence is man-made, and rightly concluded the solution will be man-made.

The reminder may be bad for business for the late-night bars, but it has become painfully obvious that the patrons of these watering holes must be reminded to be safe as they journey to and from these nightspots.

After the anti-violence prayer service, at 3 a.m., a large group of 10 people was reportedly fighting near a Boystown intersection at Belmont and Sheffield, and a cab driver notified police after a man robbed and maced him at 6:19 a.m. in the 1000 block of West Belmont the morning of July 24.

We have called community meetings, now our religious communities are starting to speak out. The way forward is not seeking solutions in isolation from each other, but rather opening lines of communication with each other.

Violence in our community, whether it is a hate crime or same-sex violence, will disappear

only if it is deprived of the passive support by many in our community too afraid to speak out.

We all know about the silence that can be caused when it interferes with the fun we are having, or the effect it will have on businesses. Now is the time for the Northalsted Business Alliance to publically join in this call for an end to the violence. A violence-free Boystown will be very good for business, and that will be very good for the residents of the area.

Fear of ostracism for speaking truthfully about the current situation cannot, and should not, be part of our concern.

Let's come together as a community and seriously begin to deal with this critical situation by bringing all our creativity and good business sense to the table. Now is not the time to be politically correct, or pointing the finger at each other. We can no longer afford these petty divisions.

The solution cannot happen without serious involvement from all quarters of our community, and this includes the business community.

Our religious community, in my opinion, has done the right thing by sounding the alarm in the heart of the Boystown with this call to prayer.

Joe Murray
 Rainbow Sash Movement

iPrEx rebuttal

Dear Editor:

In the June 6 article, "Forum explores Truvada's use in fighting HIV" Dr. Robert Grant was reported as saying that AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) was "working to discredit the [iPrEx] trial results." This is patently false.

AHF is opposed to the granting of FDA approval of Truvada for prevention based on a single study among gay men, iPrEx, which showed only 44 percent effectiveness, not the 90 percent the article stated. The 90-percent figure eliminates half the men who got no benefit because they did not take the drug as instructed. Shooting the messenger—AHF—does not address the very serious concerns raised by, among others, the American Public Health Association.

As far as Dr. Grant referring to AHF as "a large corporation," AHF is the nation's largest provider of HIV care, which we have done—regardless of ability to pay—for 25 years.

Sincerely,
 Michael Weinstein
 President
 AIDS Healthcare Foundation

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo from Paramount Pictures

AT ONE'S PEC AND CALL

Chris Evans stars in the movie *Captain America: The First Avenger*. Read the review on page 26.

THEATER

'Sky' high.
Page 24.

Photo by Michael Brosilow



MUSIC

Koz and effect.
Page 29.

Photo by Greg Allen



AUTOS

On the road again.
Page 35.

Photo courtesy of Gaywheels.com



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Restaging Robbins' 'West Side Story'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

In the past decade, out director/choreographer Joey McKneely has been the go-to guy when it comes to mounting prominent overseas revivals of the landmark 1957 Broadway musical *West Side Story*.

McKneely not only directed and recreated Jerome Robbins' iconic *West Side Story* choreography for the show's 50th-anniversary international tour, but he also staged the musical's acclaimed 2000 debut at Italy's most prominent opera house, La Scala in Milan.

So when McKneely was asked to just recreate Robbins choreography for the 2009 Broadway revival of *West Side Story* directed by the original book writer Arthur Laurents, he admitted to feeling humbled by the demotion.

"Absolutely," McKneely said with a laugh during a telephone interview from an upstate country house in Patterson, N.Y. "But when you look back, the original librettist Arthur Laurents is directing, so how could I not be in the room with him? I took the opportunity to absorb all of his history with the show. I mean, he created these characters so that alone was just an opportunity I couldn't miss."

Chicago audiences get a chance to see McKneely's restaging of Robbins' choreography for *West Side Story* firsthand now that the national tour of the Broadway revival is playing at the Cadillac Palace Theatre through Aug. 14. Laurents' revival assistant David Saint is the official director for the tour, which launched last year in Detroit.

McKneely considers himself extremely privileged to have been able to work with Laurents

before he passed away in May this year at 93. However, McKneely has been able to work with a number of Broadway theater legends throughout his career as a performer, choreographer and director.

McKneely's first Broadway credit saw him on roller skates in 1987 in the ensemble of Andrew Lloyd Webber's fantasy train musical *Starlight Express* directed by Trevor Nunn. His next two Broadway credits were notorious flops: the musical *Roza* directed by Harold Prince and *Carrie* (a 1988 musical based upon Stephen King's novel).

"You really don't know that you're in a bomb," McKneely said about *Carrie*. "It wasn't until we got it in front of an audience and hearing the reaction—it was very bizarre because there were some riveting moments and some that were absolutely absurd. I think those kinds of experiences have taught me more about theater than actually the big hits. You don't always know why something is a hit, but you definitely know it when it's a flop."

Most crucial to McKneely's future path as a choreographer came when he was cast in the ensemble for the 1989 revue *Jerome Robbins' Broadway* in which Robbins recreated many of his legendary stage numbers from such shows as *On the Town*, *The King and I*, *West Side Story* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

"The most fascinating thing was just watching him. I was so young—I was just 21—I was like a sponge," McKneely said about working with Robbins. "I would watch him and process from the early stages of just throwing [the choreography] on anybody and picking dancers and why he chose his dancers and moved numbers around

Joey McKneely.
Photo by Ernie Sapiro

to understand the energy and arc of a production."

McKneely's first opportunity to do musical staging on Broadway came with the hit 1995 revue *Smokey Joe's Café*. But McKneely's choreographic breakthrough came with his Tony Award-nominated work on the 1997 Cy Coleman musical *The Life about Times Square* prostitutes circa 1980. Many a showtune reveler at Sidetrack in Chicago or Club Splash in New York has been amazed by McKneely's choreography for the defiant women's number "My Body" preserved on the broadcast of the 1997 Tony Awards.

"It's actually one of my proudest moments that it still lives on," McKneely said about "My Body" in "The Life." "People call that out and when they know that I've done that they go, 'Oh my God! I'm so happy about that.'"

McKneely also had brushes with Hollywood royalty on Broadway. He appeared in the 1994 Broadway revival of *She Loves Me* choreographed by future Academy Award-nominated director Rob Marshall (*Chicago*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*) and McKneely choreographed star Hugh Jackman in the 2003 musical *The Boy From Oz* about the life of Australian gay song and dance man Peter Allen.

"[Jackman] was wonderful to work with," McKneely said. "It was a joy just to teach Hugh to dance."

Currently McKneely has plans to direct and

choreograph a new original musical called *Josephine* based upon the life of 1920s Paris entertainer Josephine Baker. So far McKneely says pop star Deborah Cox is attached to the show, which he hopes to have on Broadway by next spring.

However, in the meantime, McKneely is happy to have audiences see his restaged work of Jerome Robbins' dances in *West Side Story* on tour.

McKneely said he would never attempt to create his own choreography for the show because "it would be like rewriting an author's book or a composer's score. The choreography is justly one of the four pillars of the show and should not be changed because it's iconic—it is the show. I don't think (anyone re-choreographing *West Side Story*) can live up to Jerome Robbins, so why do it?"

West Side Story continues at the Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph, through Aug. 14. Performances are 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays; and 2 p.m. Sundays and Wednesdays. Tickets are \$32-\$95; call 312-775-2000 or visit <http://www.broadway-inchicago.com>.

The "T" in LGBTQ

About Face Theatre, which recently extended its hit production of *The Homosexuals* to Aug. 14, is giving a preview of its developing 2012 Youth Theatre piece *What's the T?* this weekend.

Fundraising performances featuring scenes from the work-shopping show about transgender youth ages 14-24 include a 7 p.m. benefit Thursday, July 28, then at 8 p.m. Friday, July 29, and 2:30 p.m. Saturday, July 30, at Victory Gardens Richard C. Christiansen Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln. Tickets for the benefit are \$100-\$250, while general admission tickets for other performances of *What's the T?* are \$5 for youth and \$20-\$250 for adults. Call 773-784-8565 or visit <http://www.aboutface theatre.com> for more information.

THEATER REVIEW

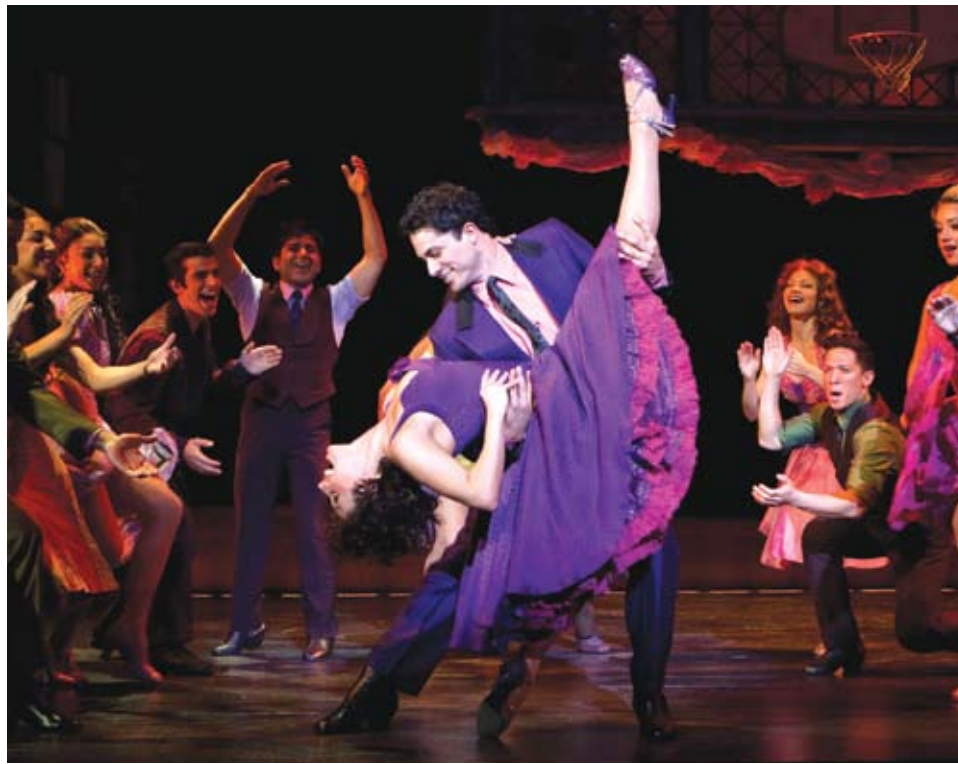
West Side Story

Playwright: Arthur Laurents (book),
Leonard Bernstein (music), Stephen
Sondheim (lyrics),
Jerome Robbins (concept)
At: Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph
Tickets: 800-775-2000;
<http://www.BroadwayInChicago.com>;
\$32-\$95
Runs through: Aug. 14

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Over the years, too many iconic Broadway musicals have suffered shabby revivals which diminish their originals with cheap sets, insipid staging, cut-down casts and thin orchestras. Sometimes these revivals have boasted the original star, now far too old for the role he/she is playing. To our good fortune, *West Side Story* makes none of these mistakes. This touring version of the 2009 Broadway revival is vibrant, moving and satisfying.

Corners have been cut, but not so much as to compromise the integrity of this seminal work of American musical theater. For example, the easy-to-tour scenic design is an old-hat wing-and-drop set. It won't win awards but serves its purpose. The 18-piece orchestra—large by touring standards today—is less than half the size of a show orchestra when *West Side Story* was new, in 1957. But it never sounds thin in delivering composer Leonard Bernstein's complex, colorful and emotionally-charged original orchestrations. The chromatics and jazzy, percussive contrapuntal rhythms of the instruments drive the music forward and build tension in number after number, while Bernstein's broad and melodious vocal



West Side Story. Photo by Joan Marcus

lines soar high above as light as air.

As for the staging, co-author Arthur Laurents directed this revival (replicated by David Saint for the tour), emphasizing the story's tight construction and compressed action, inspired by *Romeo and Juliet* (as everyone must know). Joey McKneely has reproduced Jerome Robbins's legendary choreography, and it still dazzles with its explosive balance of ballet and jazz dance. This

revival has the right cast, too, with a dancing-and-singing ensemble of 28 Jets and Sharks and their girls who more than fill the stage for the big production numbers.

Definitely easy on the eyes, the aggressively attractive cast is almost too handsome, pretty and athletic. In the principal roles, Kyle Harris (Tony) and Ali Ewoldt (Maria) will melt your heart, with feisty support from German Santiago (Bernardo) and Michelle Aravena (Anita). I quibble only with Tony (and Maria to a lesser extent) singing so much of his role sotto voce, in a whisper. Music director John O'Neill seems to have decided that loud is for aggression and soft is for love, but the exultation of love can be full-voiced as well, and that exultation is missing from the vocal interpretations.

The major difference with this revival is that Laurents and lyricist Stephen Sondheim agreed to have substantial spoken-word passages and song lyrics translated into Spanish, which would have been the first language of the Puerto Rican characters. It's a gimmick that fits, and maybe draws in Spanish-speaking ticket-buyers.

Despite its familiarity, *West Side Story* is fresh and exciting in this production. Bernstein's dying wishes notwithstanding, *West Side Story* lives on Broadway and not in an opera house.

CRITICS' PICKS

Bug, Redtwist Theatre, extended through Aug. 7. It's a scary world we live in, and never more so than in this tabloid-fueled early tale by Tracy Letts about humble lovers driven to suicide by their own terrors. Redtwist Theatre gives us a, well, bug's eye view of every last detail. MSB

The Homosexuals, About Face Theatre at the Biograph, extended through Aug. 14. It's a long way from Stonewall to Boystown, but Philip Dawkins rejects both cheap comedy and cheap melodrama for this chronicle of a young man learning how to be gay. MSB

The Women, Circle Theatre, through Aug. 14. Clare Boothe Luce's classic and very catty 1936 comedy featuring an all-women cast is essential Gay 101 cultural viewing. Circle Theatre provides a fine opportunity to see the unsanitized original play. SCM

Yellow Face (Silk Road Theatre Project) and **Chinglish** (Goodman), through July 31. Tasty dim sum from David Henry Hwang: His 2008 personal identity crisis play (*Yellow Face*) and his Broadway-bound new comedy are about politics, business and translation. JA

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

CULTURE CLUB

Gay poet's photos on display through July

The Stephen Daiter Gallery, 230 W. Superior, is running photos of the late gay poet/essayist/photographer/lecturer/publisher Jonathan Williams and his surviving life partner, Tom Meyer, through July 30 (Wednesdays through Saturdays, and by appointment).

The opening reception of "Eye/object: Photographs from the Collection of Jonathan Williams" will take place Friday, July 8, 5-8 p.m. A catalog will be available for purchase.

See <http://www.StephenDaiterGallery.com>.

SPOTLIGHT



Lesbian opera star Patricia Racette and Welsh bass-baritone Bryn Terfel both earned rave reviews together in a 2010 Metropolitan Opera revival of *Tosca*. (It was remarkable because director Luc Bondy's new production had previously opened to notably bad reviews with a different cast.) See if Racette and Terfel bring some of that same operatic tension and dynamism when they perform Puccini's classic 1900 operatic thriller in a concert staging under conductor James Conlon with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival. *Tosca* plays at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, July 30, at 418 Sheridan Road, Highland Park. Pavilion tickets are \$70-\$100, while lawn passes are \$15. Call 847-266-5100 or visit <http://www.ravinia.org>. Photo of Racette by Devon Cass

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El Stories: Brown Line. Photo by Tyler Core

THEATER REVIEW

El Stories: Brown Line

Playwright: adapted by the ensemble
At: Waltzing Mechanics at the
Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.
Phone: 773-404-7336; \$13
Runs through: Aug. 13

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Whether inspired by the current fashion for “staycations” or the influx of young artists from other parts of the country, Chicago has recently seen an abundance of regionally focused plays offering theatergoers a tour of our city’s neighborhoods from the comfort of their fold-down seats. The Waltzing Mechanics ensemble takes

a documentary approach to its creative process, collecting oral anecdotes gleaned from the members’ own experiences and those of strangers on the topic of the electric trains that make The City That Works—well, work.

Ethnographers can talk of courtrooms, hospitals and baseball games, but a community’s transit system is where you will find the widest cross-section of humanity, with every traveler’s journey—no matter how brief or habitual—encompassing an individual embarkation and arrival that contain infinite possibilities. Initially, the Brown Line (aka Ravenswood), originating on the predominantly Eurocentric Northwest Side and circling the Loop, may appear less fraught with adventure than the Red Line that provided material for the Mechanics’ debut, but this quickly proves to be an illusion.

In the 26 episodes—one for each stop on the route—composing this hour-long late-

night show, we meet teenagers smuggling beer and homebound revelers in need of bathrooms; self-absorbed commuters (who offer a lesson in theft prevention) and bulldozing backpackers; shy young men hoping to achieve allure through sartorial eccentricities or live-action interactive fantasy scenarios; and bold young women dressed for Halloween in full Marilyn drag. There are serious moments, too: A motorman explains the consequences of track-jumper suicides, and a bus driver’s widow confesses to switching allegiances in her choice of transportation. Then there are the truly bizarre incidents, like the prankster flashing passersby with bear-paw

mitten, or the self-styled evangelist who finds himself upstaged by a one-woman choir.

The Mechanics warm up for a full hour before every performance, pumping themselves into a high-energy alertness that keeps the action zipping along from platform to platform—but even after a spontaneous dance-party breaks out among a carload of exuberant passengers, the ride isn’t over. For the final episode, the ensemble solicits a CTA-related story from an audience member and proceeds to forge a mini-play from its events right there before our eyes. Come prepared with *your* tale of getting from there to here.



“★★★★ THIS INFECTIOUS NEW MUSICAL COULD GET BELLY LAUGHS FROM A CORPSE”
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THEATER REVIEW

Sky’s the Limit (Weather Permitting)

Created by the Ensemble
At: Second City e.t.c., 1608 N. Wells
Phone: 312-337-3992; \$22-\$27
Runs through: In an open run

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Sky’s the Limit (Weather Permitting), The Second City e.t.c.’s 35th new revue, has practically everything you could wish for. It’s funny through and through, it’s defiantly political when it wants to be and it even has a couple of touching moments that will prompt some to make that sitcom-audience “awww” sound.

It’s a credit to director Matt Hovde and his creative ensemble of writer/performers that Sky’s the Limit (Weather Permitting) is such a crackling success. And though plenty of humor is derived from current technology (one great bit features clips from YouTube.com), the comedy core of the show largely focuses on those old standbys of love, relationships and weather-related death.

On the political side of things, there’s a great pro-same sex marriage sketch where the three ensemble men portray gay guys planning a vendetta to steal away heterosexual guys’ wives until they get the legal right to marry. And though not quite as funny, a women’s reproductive rights sketch features the three ensemble women as pissed-off activists calling out all the political falsehoods being thrown at Planned Parenthood.

Another consistently funny strand of sketches involves the differences between then and now when it comes to technology and instant media. Though the sketch inspired by former Representative Anthony Weiner’s twittered bulge may seem dated, it’s that olden days twist that gets the big laugh.

One of the best bits involves Tim Baltz as a painfully shy systems analyst on a first date with a chatty woman played by Mary Sohn. What elevates the standard situation sketch is that all of Baltz’s responses are prepared on index cards (Michael Lehrer as a lascivious waiter also injects the sketch with lots of dry humor).

Baltz is also great when paired up with Brendan Jennings as two swaggering Chicago cops (complete with taped-on moustaches) who enlist the help of the audience to identify and apprehend a criminal contributing to the city’s highly publicized crime rate (the 1970s cop show soundtrack, constant gunfire sound effects and Lehrer’s wry appearance as Mayor Rahm Emanuel all help to make this extended sketch a constant delight).

Jessica Joy has a clever Act II song (accompanied by the talented and versatile musical director Jesse Case) where she questions life’s inconsistencies. Also giving very strong character support work throughout is Aidy Bryant (particularly in a sketch where she plays a woman who has captured a bird played by Baltz for emotional fulfillment).

With a title like Sky’s the Limit (Weather Permitting), Second City e.t.c. taps into America’s great optimism by also tempering it with realistic doom and gloom. It’s this dichotomy that grounds the show, but also allows the humor to take topical and hilarious flight.



Henry V. Photo courtesy of Kevin Theis

THEATER REVIEW

Henry V

Playwright: William Shakespeare
At: Oak Park Festival Theatre at Austin Gardens, 150 Forest Ave., Oak Park
Phone: 708-445-4440; \$25
Runs through: Aug. 20

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

In a season teeming with Shakespeare plays focusing on family conflicts, the Oak Park Festival Theatre has chosen for its 2011 outdoor slate dramas dealing almost wholly with questions of leadership in times of war. Henry IV, presented earlier this summer, traced the education of a young prince preparing to shoulder the respon-

sibilities of reigning over a kingdom. Henry V shows us the now fully-empowered monarch, his boyish pastimes abandoned, struggling to do the right thing by the nation he is destined to rule.

It's a lonely job. Corrupt religious officials lure Henry into waging war with France in order to distract him from domestic matters (notably, their own overdue taxes). The youth who once caroused in the taverns with thieves and con artists is not content to oversee his sanguine business from the safety of a fortified castle, however, instead observing his armies' progress on the very battlefields where they fight and die. This doesn't spare his former drinking buddy, caught looting an enemy church, from execution, nor does another ex-comrade-turned-mercenary escape punishment for his ransoming

of wealthy prisoners. Indeed, nearly every moment serves to remind us that the knotty moral problems generated by martial expediency tend to remain constant throughout history.

One of these paradoxical precepts is that the same soldier can emerge both heroic and ignoble as a result of his actions. Shakespeare's panoramic view of his subject, therefore, requires actors to play each character as *several* characters—in one scene, Henry is the inquiring CO infiltrating the ranks incognito to solicit the opinions of his subordinates. In another, he is the charismatic commander rallying the troops with his eloquence, and in a third, he is the clumsy suitor struggling with language barriers as he courts his intended bride in a marriage of

diplomacy. Other personae are likewise rife with the contradictions of mortals operating under stress.

Special praise, then, is due Dennis Grimes, continuing his portrayal of Henry, and a hard-working cast including Jack Hickey as the sturdy Fluellen, Aaron Christensen as the opportunistic Pistol and 11-year-old Miranda F. Theis as a bilingual aide-de-camp. Despite some GI humor—a running gag has a weary Fluellen repeatedly interrupted at his dinner—and several thrilling full-cast running charges, what we take away is a lesson in the proper way to conduct a war, insofar as international bloodshed can ever be accomplished in a seemly manner.



Christopher Jabin.
 Photo from Lyric Opera of Chicago

development of the John G. Shedd Aquarium, where he has worked since 2001. Previously, he served as director of development for the Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art.

'The Faggot Who Could Fly' at Center Aug. 8

The Faggot Who Could Fly—a "one-transwoman show" featuring KOKUMO—will take place Monday, Aug. 8, at 7 p.m. at the Hoover-Leppen Theatre at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted.

KOKUMO, 22, describes herself as a "22-year-old intersex/trans woman of color" who uses mediums such as poetry, theatre, film and music. The story of the show involves the realization of gender identity in relation to societal oppression and domestic violence.

The show (which also features an excerpt from "No Gender Left Behind," featuring Rebecca King) is free. To RSVP, email tflohr@centeronhalsted.org or call 773-472-6469, ext. 429.

Lyric Opera names Jabin to new position

Lyric Opera of Chicago has announced that Christopher Jabin has been appointed director of institutional giving. This is a new position, reporting to Mary L. Selander, director of development. He begins Sept. 7.

Jabin is currently executive vice president of

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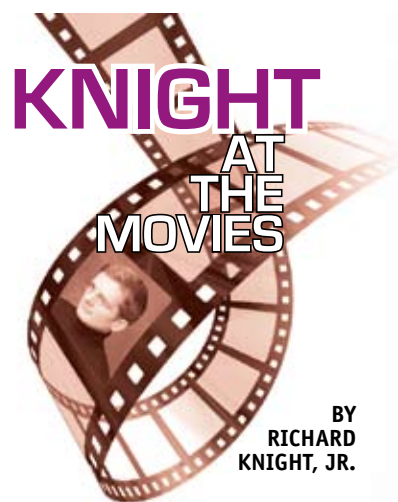
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BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

Captain America: The First Avenger; film notes

Is it me or has this been the summer of Imitation of Blockbusters rather than the cinematic thrill rides I'd been hoping for? The spectacular box office for this year's crop of summer tent-pole movies couldn't disagree with me more but, to my mind, none of them has offered anything remotely fresh or particularly invigorating to merit the large numbers. (Even Harry Potter 8, which I enjoyed, is really only for those familiar or in love with the series.) They haven't been bad pictures—just not particularly thrilling or inventive ones. (I am not including the X Men prequel here as I haven't seen it.)

I'd hoped that Super 8, the summer's one original entry, would break the mold and, as intended, it emulated the Spielberg look and feel to an almost embarrassing degree but it scrimped on heart, leaving one entertained but not particularly invested in its characters or its action set pieces. The same can be said for **Captain America: The First Avenger**, the summer's most



Hugo Weaving as the Red Skull in *Captain America: The First Avenger*. Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

promising big-budget action fest, which looks great and hits all the right notes but, again, never truly puts the pedal to the medal.

The movie is yet another adaptation from a Marvel comic-book series, the genre that has all but overtaken the high-end movie business. However, unlike many of these movies—which have begun to blur in my mind—the action is set in the WWII time period in which the comic first appeared. This logical idea proves to be inspired for multiple reasons. One, it immediately gives the picture a fantastic retro look and a sense of real adventure and fun and, two, it frees the writers from having to update the character and situations into a modern setting—avoiding the problems inherent in many of these other clunky editions. The vintage time period also gives our hero—Steve Rogers aka Captain America (played

by Chris Evans)—his compatriots and the audience easily discerned enemies (Nazis and their rogue offspring).

Rogers is a tough guy from Brooklyn whose innate courage keeps getting stymied by his 90-pound weaking frame. (The special effects department does an amazing job dialing down the hunky Evans' size.) It's 1943 and he can't get into the Army. By chance, a mysterious Dr. Erskine (Stanley Tucci) happens upon Rogers as he is making yet another attempt to sign up and he becomes the first and, it turns out, only candidate for Erskine's experimental "super soldier" program. (Not surprisingly, the sequence in which Erskine the mad scientist turns Rogers from the skinny Minnie into the spectacularly muscular Frankenstein-type creation will have gay men salivating.)

Rogers, now redubbed Captain America (complete with patriotic outfit and tights) wants to get into the action but is instead assigned a war-bond tour to boost morale. When he finally gets overseas the troops diss him with taunts of "Hey Tinkerbell" and other homophobic cracks. (The grizzled Tommy Lee Jones, as the commanding officer, dismisses him as a "chorus girl.") However, Rogers soon proves himself and catches the eye of the tart-talking British lady officer (Hayley Atwell, a variation on a role often played by Kate Beckinsale) and Dominic Cooper as Howard Stark, the father of Tony Stark, the eccentric inventor played by Robert Downey Jr. in the Iron Man film series; Cooper does an apt but not particularly memorable job.

Everyone lines up to help Rogers take on Red Skull (Hugo Weaving), the resident baddie (who gets a nifty underground lair) and his evil minions, and the movie ends with an abrupt set-up for a sequel. Evans, who has successfully spread his wings in a variety of movie genres before stepping into one of these gigantic franchise wannabes (though he has yet to play a gay character), is a great, solid choice for the earnest Rogers but the script doesn't give his character much shading.

Captain America: The First Avenger is a typical addition to director Joe Johnston's resume (Congo, Jurassic Park III, The Werewolf, etc.). He's a serviceable director whose movies are put together by the numbers—they are likeable but forgettable. Even with the incredibly hot beefcake Evans in the title role the movie doesn't sizzle nearly as much as its promising set-up suggests.

Film notes:

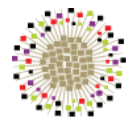
—Two queer-themed documentaries infused with fashion and art are back for encore screenings in Chicago. Both 2010's **Bill Cunningham New York** and *L'Amour Fou* are on the schedule at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State, beginning Friday, July 29. The former, from director

Richard Press, is a lively, entertaining portrait of the ubiquitous New York Times fashion photographer and society columnist of the title. The latter is Pierre Thoretton's fascinating but dour look at the late fashion icon Yves St. Laurent as his lover and business partner of 50 years, Pierre Berge, prepares to dispose of the couple's breathtaking art collection. <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org>

—Audience-participation screenings are one of my favorite cinema experiences. I'm talking about the type that encourage interaction for everyone in the audience—not regular screenings with the annoying schlub texting, talking or fidgeting, ruining the film for everyone in the jerk's vicinity. The historic Music Box, 3733 N. Southport, is hosting two such events in the next couple of weeks. **Grease Sing-A-Long**, back by popular demand, is the first. It screens this weekend (July 29-31) with a pre-show costume contest followed by the 1978 John Travolta-Olivia Newton John musical from gay director Randal Kleiser and flamboyant gay producer Allan Carr. The movie, a gigantic financial hit, is thin but lively, with its cast and some songs giving it a lift.

Then on Sunday, Aug. 7, at 2 p.m., **Camp Midnight** returns with a brand new edition of the film series that celebrates "the best of the worst"—this time featuring 1962's horror camp fest *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* My alter ego, Dick O'Day, will host along with Hell in a Handbag's David Cerda. The screening, which is in honor of National Sisters Day—yes, it's really a holiday—will feature a pre-show including a matching sisters outfit contest, a sing-a-long at the organ and more. There will then be an interactive screening with commentary by myself and Cerda (trying to outwit our audience). The event will partially benefit both the Queer Film Society and the HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges. Advance tickets for both special events are now on sale; see <http://www.musicboxtheatre.com>.

Check out my archived reviews at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com> or <http://www.knightatthemovies.com>. Readers can leave feedback at the latter website.



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Latina/o LGBTQ picnic July 30

Orgullo en Acción is hosting the Latina/o LGBTQ PRIDE Picnic Saturday, July 30th in Humboldt Park near the corner of Humboldt and Augusta, 12-9 p.m.

The Latina/o PRIDE Picnic is a grassroots initiative to create a space where LGBTQ Latina/os and allies of all ages can come together to celebrate our multiple identities with pride. Attendees can look forward to activities for children, participating in a community art project, grilling, enjoying main stage performances, dancing and community-building.

To learn more or volunteer in this year's Latina/o PRIDE Picnic, visit <http://www.facebook.com/orgulloenaccion>.

Soul Train exhibition in Loop through Sept. 5

The Soul Train celebration continues at the first-ever Soul Train Photo Exhibition, through Monday, Sept. 5, at Expo 72, 72 E. Randolph.

On July 23, the 15th annual Chicago SummerDance, the largest annual outdoor dance series in the United States, marked the 40th anniversary of the show Soul Train, which originated in the Windy City.

Beginning July 29, a free "Friday Night Groove" after work event will take place every Friday 4-6 p.m. at Expo 72 with a guest DJ through Sept. 2. For details, visit <http://www.ExploreChicago.org>.

Chicago Gay Men's Chorus takes gamble—and wins

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

The group sets a record for attendance at Millennium Park and Rosie O'Donnell attended the performance—you might say the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus is a big deal.

Okay, so maybe the chorus (CGMC) had a little help and a little luck to be part of Grant Park Music Festival's "Broadway Rocks!" concert July 13 (and to run into O'Donnell on the streets of Chicago), but the concert stands as a highpoint in the near-30-year history of the chorus, and on the heels of a groundbreaking season. In only months, the CGMC has begun to redefine itself without losing any of its renowned talent, theatricality and flare, and if it that continues, the stage at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion could be just the beginning of a whole new chapter.

The idea came first to Artistic Director Patrick Sinozich, but seemed to emerge as a collective epiphany: Cut the annual Pride Concert.

As with any proposal to eliminate a 27-year-old tradition, the decision was met with some skepticism, but logic prevailed: The Pride Concert has had the most trouble not only filling seats, but also filling the risers with singers. Chorus General Manager Arnie Cuarenta said

CGMC took a hit on the concert every year.

"This year we saw it as a way to not budget a loss, but make money if we put ourselves out there to do performances where we don't have to rent a venue," he said.

The board decided to push the spring concert, this year titled "Divas," to the middle of May and spend June getting out into the community, both in Chicago and elsewhere. After sold out performances of "Divas" in Oak Brook, the group traveled to Bloomington, Ill. and Milwaukee in addition to singing at Pride-related events, memorial services and civil-union celebrations.

"[These performances] really gave us a much larger breadth of connection to the community at large both from an LGBT standpoint as well as in our Chicago community," said Board President Quenten Schumacher. "We're not just the Lakeview community chorus; we are Chicago's gay men's chorus. We wanted to make ourselves present and available to that larger community."

The performances these past months have mostly consisted of tunes from the "Divas" show—such as a Donna Summer medley and songs by Diana Ross and Tina Turner—that the chorus has been able to reuse instead of having

to learn a whole new set of music for a poorly attended Pride concert.

Sinozich said it was challenging trying to coordinate various performances where no combination of songs or singers was the same, but he's seen much growth in the group's ability as the singers have become more comfortable with the "Divas" repertoire.

"I was surprised at how good they were becoming by getting a lot more mileage out of these songs," Sinozich said. "Once they appreciated and enjoyed that it became easier."

CGMC has also been able to take the additional rehearsal time to learn more permanent repertoire to sing at occasions such as the aforementioned memorial services and celebrations. Cuarenta said he hopes this will lead to more performances where others pay to bring the chorus in rather than the chorus having to pay to host itself.

"I'd like us to get small group of singers to count on to be ready whenever we're called," he said. "Some gigs come through word of mouth, but I would love to be able to market us, ... 'Hire us for your upcoming event.' We haven't gotten to that point yet."

Schumacher said that he would like to extend that reach in a more physical way by performing in more parts of the city and trying to appeal to different audiences.

"As we move forward, I think audience expansion is important for us," he said. "We are still Chicago's best-kept secret and I don't want that to be the case. We're trying to bring new people into our audience."

Yet in spite of all the realms where the chorus could continue to improve, the extensive outreach of the past few months has made one particularly tremendous stride, albeit one that perhaps only those who have been around CGMC long enough would notice: a renewed sense of purpose.

Danny Kopelson is one of two remaining founding members of CGMC. He joined the chorus when he moved to Chicago at 24 after searching for a means to stay creative while meeting those with similar interests who were also gay. At the time, he said, "there weren't that many gay things going on. Just being a gay chorus was enough."

The experiences of the last few months have reminded him of CGMC's role in the community beyond that of entertainment.

"We are emissaries of the LGBT community through art and music; we impact peoples lives," Kopelson said. "We're still relevant after 30 years. We're as relevant as we've ever been if not more than ever."

Although recent changes have been the cata-



Chicago Gay Men's Chorus Big Package Auction 2011. Photo by Rick Aiello

lyst, no group—especially one with more than 120 members—stays around this long without some core values that prove its vitality.

"I have always been very gratified that the chorus is one of the few places I see where you do have different generations of people, from their 20s to their 70s," Sinozich said. "There aren't many things [in the LGBT community] that offer diversity of ages."

Kopelson said that's held true for him these nearly 30 years.

"I had friendships with guys who were in their 50s that were not based on sex; now I'm 53 years old and I'm having friendships with guys in their 20s not based on sex," he said. "The reversal is interesting, but kind of wonderful."

One of the group's newest young members, Michael Marino, 25, recently moved to the city and joined CGMC in January. Since then, he's become involved in not just the singing but the fundraising and the socializing.

"I love the sense of community," Marino said. "Everyone in chorus is connected by a passion for arts. ... It's easy to develop friendships and ties within the chorus."

One gets the sense that back in the early '80s, a young Kopelson would've said the exact same thing.

For more information on the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus, visit <http://www.cgmc.org>. For more photos, see <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>.



Francis Feeley with Rosie O'Donnell at Chicago Gay Men's Chorus' Broadway Rocks! show earlier this month. Photo courtesy of Perry Simmons

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the **DISH** WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN | WINDY CITY TIMES



PARIS CLUB

BY MEGHAN STREIT

I finally made it to Paris Club—a little late, but just in time for the opening of the restaurant's much-anticipated, ahem, "rooftop deck," Studio Paris. I'll go ahead and spare you the suspense: Studio Paris is not a rooftop deck. It is the second floor of the restaurant and will offer you a view of essentially nothing, unless you've been dying for a glimpse of the outdated Marriott hotel next door.

For all of the hype (and the long lines and red velvet ropes), I had high hopes for Studio Paris, but was sorely disappointed. There is a very large skylight that reveals the night sky and the corners of a few high rises. If the people had billed it as "our upstairs lounge with a bunch

of windows," I probably would have been pleasantly surprised. However, when you advertise a space as "one of the best views in the city" and "one of the hottest new nightclubs," and then deliver neither, you can probably plan on putting the red velvet ropes into storage pretty soon.

That said, the main event—the food at Paris Club—is excellent. Restaurateurs RJ and Jerrod Melman closed down Brasserie JO, updated the menu and transformed the space. And voila, Paris Club was born. The interior is strikingly authentic. Classic white tile, large mirrors adorning walls and warm yellow lighting make you feel like you may have just stepped off of Hubbard Street and right into a bustling café in the heart of Paris.



Pais Club's Escargot Bourguignonne.

The Melmans have said their goal with Paris Club is to make French food accessible—and I believe their menu accomplishes that goal. You'll find all of the French classics like escargot, foie gras and steak frites, but with a few twists. The escargot comes in a puff pastry and can be ordered individually for just \$1.95 a pop. Modest prices (the most expensive item is lobster frites for about \$28) and small portions encourage diners to order a few dishes to share.

Don't miss the macaroni gratinee, an impossibly rich and creamy baked macaroni studded

with French ham. The French onion fondue is a nice reinterpretation of French onion soup. It's a lot cheesier and the bread comes on the side for dipping. If this is the new French, I like it. For something on the lighter side, start with the tuna tartare Francaise. It strikes the perfect balance of fresh tuna, creamy avocado and tangy citrus.

Of course, you'll want to pair your French meal with a glass (or four) of wine, and Paris Club has plenty to choose from. The ample wine list is appropriately heavy on French wines, with several

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bottles for less than \$40.

The main dishes offer a full lineup of perfectly executed French classics from coq au vin to salmon with mustard sauce to an exquisite Roquefort crusted filet mignon. The lobster frites include generous portions of tender lobster and crispy frites. The dish is my top pick and worth every penny of that \$28.

You'll also want to order a couple of side dishes for your table to share. The truffle corn is far and away your best bet—if you can get your hands on it. This stuff apparently sells out, and I got the last decadent creamy crock of it the night I visited.

What could be more French than dessert? Cigarettes and skinniness, perhaps. But those aren't on the dessert menu, so order the raspberry and almond tart and the pistachio pot du crème, which is a tiny jar of heaven.

Paris Club is located at 59 W. Hubbard St.; call 312-595-0800 or visit <http://www.parisclubchicago.com>.

Do you need some more Sugar & Spice in your life? Follow me on Twitter: @SugarAndSpiceMS for inside scoop and commentary on Chicago's dining scene.



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NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

Dave Koz shows his sax appeal



BY JERRY NUNN

Dave Koz has been playing the saxophone since high school. He went professional afterwards playing for Richard Marx's band in the '80s and in the '90s as a solo artist.

He came out publicly as a gay man and didn't need to toot his own horn after receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Koz talked to Windy City Times before his upcoming appearance at The Venue in Hammond.

Windy City Times: Hi, Dave. How are you today?

Dave Koz: I am well and going from interview to interview. It is a bit crazy but I am happy to talk with you.

WCT: Great. So you are playing at The Venue in Indiana.

DK: I am very excited about coming back there. It is one of my favorite places to play. We have had some good shows there.

WCT: How many times?

DK: We have played the last two summers if

recently. She's been on the road with Prince. She has a CD with her family. She is a Latin music icon, also a wonderful and fun person. She is completely electric onstage by the way.

WCT: She still sings?

DK: Yeah, of course. She still sings her you know what off!

WCT: I talked to singer Billie Myers about the march on Washington for your appearance together in the National Equality March.

DK: That was a year or two ago. I was asked to do that last minute. I was very honored. I was blown away by how many thousands of people were there. It was interesting to see how young people were there. It was a passing of the torch of LGBT movement from the elder statesmen to this youth movement that will be taking the reins from this point on moving forward.

WCT: How important is it to be an out and proud musician since you came out years ago?

DK: It is a hard question to answer but it just felt right for me at the time. I wouldn't say that it is a necessity for every musician who is gay to come out. You have to do it in the time that feels right for you. But I can tell you from me that it was the best decision that I ever made. My career blossomed as a result from it. It was blip on the screen. It was the biggest non-news story of my career.

I thought this thing was going to be so huge and people just said, "Great, what else is new?" I think if the more people, whatever walk of life if they are an artist, painter or accountant, can be authentic in their life realize that it will not only go on but will flourish they will be happier. There is a beautiful power that comes with showing up by who you are in your lives. This



Dave Koz. Photo by Greg Allen

I am correct in my memory. I can't remember much these days.

WCT: You are a busy guy and have a lot going on.

DK: I like it that way. I am ADD. I am actually ADD. I have an extra D.

WCT: What is the extra one for? I am scared to ask...

DK: It could be for David. I am not sure exactly what it is for but I like to keep it interesting. I am always all over the place.

WCT: You are bringing Sheila E. with you.

DK: Sheila E. will be there and a man by the name of Bobby Caldwell, who I credit along with Jeff Lorber for giving me my start in the music business. He is a wonderful guy, of course—known for his big hits. Sheila has been all over the place. She is on fire, that woman. She is like my other sister. I think it is going to be a slamming show.

WCT: Sheila is on your album, Hello Tomorrow, also.

DK: She does make an appearance on a couple of songs. She was on the American Idol finale

will have reverberations around the world.

WCT: Well said.

DK: I just did this thing the other day on tour called a love mob, which is a variation on a flash mob. We shot a music video for "This Guys in Love With You" from my latest album. We just used viral means of getting the word out. We invited people along with their partners or best friends to come and support marriage equality, the right to love who you want to love and be recognized for it.

I had no idea what was going to happen. We showed up at 9 o'clock in the morning in a plaza in California. There were 200 people there in bright colors! There were homeless people, drag queens, gay couples that had been together for 40 years, lesbians with children that were straight, young, older and everything in between. Everybody was on the same page. Herb Alpert, who created the original song, came; he was there with his wife. I am not a very political person but I saw it plain as day—the equality train has left the building. Everything is moving forward and it is only a matter of time now.

WCT: It must have been amazing to get your star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

DK: "Surreal" is probably a better word for it. I still can't believe that I happened. The last time I checked it was still there. I thought somebody was playing a cruel joke. They would put it in the sidewalk and the next day they would pick it up. It is right out in front of Capitol Records. It is there with The Beatles, Bonnie Raitt, Garth Brooks, Frank Sinatra—all of these iconic stars. Then there is me in the middle of nowhere. It cracked me up but [it was] a very proud moment.

WCT: You did a guest spot on Desperate Housewives. How was that?

DK: It was this past October. They focused on a song called "Start All Over Again." It was written and performed by this woman named Dana Glover. She is a good friend of mine. It was picked up by Desperate Housewives. We were both on the show to perform it. It was fantastic. Even though they only played a minute of it, it got a lot of people exposed to the song. It is perfect for the crazy strange times that we are living in.

WCT: On the new album there are a lot of guest stars. Did you get to pick anyone you would like?

DK: I worked with my producers, Marcus Miller and John Burk. When you do a new project there are bumps in the road and the coordination is overwhelming. The universe conspired with me to make it happen for us. We came up with ideas like "Wouldn't it be great for Lee Ritenour would play this guitar solo?" Next thing I knew he was in the studio playing the guitar. It just sort of happened that way over and over with these wonderful guest artists. It all fell into the right place. That does not happen every time. So while it was happening this time I said a lot of prayers and thanks.

Koz arrives at the Venue, 777 Casino Center Drive, on Friday, Aug. 5. Visit <http://www.horseshoe-indiana.com> for tickets and details. Keep up with Dave at <http://www.davekoz.com> or JustKoz on Twitter.

Amy Winehouse dead at 27

Singer Amy Winehouse, 27, was found dead at her London home July 23, according to the BBC News.

A Metropolitan Police spokesman confirmed that a 27-year-old woman had died in Camden and that the cause of death was unexplained.

Winehouse had a long battle with drugs and alcohol that overshadowed her recent musical career. She pulled out of a comeback tour last month after she was jeered at the first gig in Serbia for appearing too drunk to perform.

Her 2003 album, Frank, brought her acclaim. However, it was 2006's Back to Black (including the songs "Rehab" and "Tears Dry on My Own") that brought her global stardom, winning five Grammy Awards.

Woodstock Mozart Festival July 30-Aug. 14

A diverse array of composers and award-winning artists will take part in the Woodstock Mozart Festival's Silver Anniversary July 30-Aug. 14, at the Woodstock Opera House, 121 Van Buren, Woodstock. There will be three concert programs, a piano recital and two master classes.

Echo Klassik (European Grammy Award) award-winning cellist Peter Hörr and Hungarian conductor Istvan Jaray will be among those participating.

See <http://mozartfest.org>.

NUNN ON ONE

Rita Moreno: Icon talks accents, Chicago and more

BY JERRY NUNN

Rita Moreno is the second Puerto Rican to win an Academy Award—but then she followed that win by snagging a Tony, an Emmy and a Grammy. The talented performer shows no sign of stopping, currently playing the mother of Fran Drescher on TV Land's *Happily Divorced* and staging a new one-woman show, *Rita Moreno: Life Without Makeup*.

Windy City Times: Hello, Ms. Moreno. I am so excited to talk to you because the *West Side Story* touring show just opened in Chicago.

Rita Moreno: No kidding! Are you going to see it?

WCT: Yes, and I'm talking to the cast member playing Bernardo right after you.

RM: Well, give him my best wishes and whoever is playing Anita the same as well. [Editor's note: Moreno played Anita in the 1961 movie *West Side Story*, earning an Oscar for best supporting actress.]

WCT: I will. Let's talk about your show.

RM: Which one? I am turning into the Latina Betty White!

WCT: [Laughs] Life is good, then. I talked to Fran Drescher recently about *Happily Divorced* on TV Land.

RM: You did? Isn't she a doll?

WCT: Yes, and she said great thing about you.

RM: She did? Well, I gotta hear that. You never hear that from the people themselves. What did she say?

WCT: She said you are "fantastic." What is it like to play this part?

RM: I love playing Dori. I love that accent and that attitude. Fran called those kitchen scenes the "jewels" because they are like little jewels. I don't think we have done one that wasn't wonderful and fun. It is like a little teeny one act play. It is so marvelously written. The writers have really caught Dori's voice. The things they put in my mouth are absolutely delicious.

WCT: Was the Jewish accent difficult?

RM: Oh God, no! I am a New Yorker. That's number one. Number two, all of my life some of my best friends used clichés and my husband was a Jew as well. I am very familiar with that "koynd" of accent. You know what I "toyking" about? When I auditioned for the role I auditioned with Fran playing herself and I think they were delighted that I had that accent. I love using it. I like accents anyway, and I do have a



Rita Moreno. Photos by Mike Lamonica

very good ear—so good, in fact, that recently one day when we were rehearsing our kitchen scene with Fran, she stopped the rehearsal and said, [in *Drescher's* voice] "Have you ever played a Jewish woman before?" I said, "No, I have always wanted to because it is so rich." She just said, "Amazing."

WCT: She is such a character.

RM: She is. The show is doing very well. We want this show to run. We do our last show next week. I have two days in which to prepare for the beginning of my play. I am starting rehearsals at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

WCT: It's called *Life Without Makeup*.

RM: Yes, it is about my life. From the very beginning, from the day our boat arrived at New York City harbor.

WCT: You need to make that into a movie.

RM: [Laughs] We will see. It has been so wonderfully done and is written by the man that runs the Berkeley Repertory Theatre. They have sent some amazing things to Broadway.

They sent *American Idiot* and *Bridge & Tunnel* with Sarah Jones. It is not a tryout house but that is what has happened. We are hoping that my show will end up in New York also but in the meantime you have to put that aside because if our series is going to go into a second season, I don't know about that yet, we would have to

postpone any ideas that we've had. I wanted to take it on a short tour to do refinements but I have to find the time to do it. It depends on if *Happily Divorced* runs and I sure hope it does.

WCT: Well, go on tour and bring it to Chicago.

RM: Actually, Chicago would be one of my cities of choice. I don't want to do a real big tour. Hey, by December I will be 80! I ain't no spring chicken. I love Chicago.

WCT: You have a long history with the city.

RM: Oh, I know. I have been around forever. I got [theatrical honors] the Joseph Jefferson Award and the Sarah Siddons Award there. I got to know the city well because my husband went to Chicago Med and he went every year to the reunions. That city is a very exciting place to be. The food and theatre scene is spectacular there. What could be bad? Well, I could tell you what could be bad, the winters!

WCT: It's really hot here now. Were you named after Rita Hayworth?

RM: No. They were trying to rename me. My true name is Rosa Dolores, which is beautiful. I am so sorry now but I was young and naïve. I didn't dare say no. They told me that I needed a new name. Moreno is my stepfather's last name. They said, "What about Tino Marino?" I remember thinking I would be saddled with a name like that! For the first time in my life I actually said no. They said, "What about Rita? Think Rita Hayworth." So I thought that sounded like a star name and said okay.

WCT: I have been watching you since I was kid, seeing you on *The Electric Company*.

RM: Oh, was that a great show or what?

Pitchfork brings music—and controversy

ANALYSIS BY BRENDA SCHUMACHER

Despite brutal temperatures reaching into the 90s, more than 58,000 fans turned out to a dusty Union Park July 15-17 for the Pitchfork Music Festival, the annual indie mecca that draws fans and bands from around the world.

This year's fest featured 45 acts, a vintage poster festival, a renegade-style art fair, local cuisine and a bounty of free sponsored goodies such as oxygen bar with chair massages, air-conditioned lounges, bike valet service, iced bandanas and 16,000 bottles of water to keep attendees hydrated and amused.

Pitchfork prides itself on being Chicago's "fan-friendly" festival, offering a mind-blowing "best of Indie" line-up, fair ticket prices, green practices, and an inclusive environment. So it was a great shock to fans and music critics alike that the festival booked Odd Future Wolf Gang Kill Them All (OFWGKTA), the L.A. hip-hop collective infamous for homophobic taunts and horrific riffs about beating, raping and murdering women. Spewing rants against "faggots," and gruesome lyrics such as "rape a pregnant bitch and tell friends I had a three-way," OFWGKTA's assaultive live show would seem to be the antithesis of the idyllic community that Pitchfork has built over the past six years.

Adding further insult to injury, the influential Pitchfork is seen as a launch pad to fame for emerging indie wunderkinds, and many were concerned about this veritable endorsement of the hate-frothing collective.

Immediate outrage and condemnation followed the May line-up announcement. Music critic Jim Derogatis offered scathing criticism in his article, "Endorsing Rape or Showcasing Art," and critic Greg Kot challenged Pitchfork's motivation. Chicago-based Rape Victim Advocates led the outcry, and originally planned a protest outside the gates. But after meetings with Pitchfork, the group was invited into the festival, where they partnered with Howard

WCT: Perfect for the '70s. I liked it better than *Sesame Street*.

RM: It was so hip. It was meant as a follow up to *Sesame Street*. It was aimed at the children who were ready for some serious reading. There are two box sets of the best of and I do the commentary for them.

WCT: Morgan Freeman came out of that show.

RM: I was one of the people that honored Morgan Freeman at the AFI Awards recently.

WCT: Where did the expression "Hey, you guys!" come from?

RM: It came from me, in a sense. They had this one skit with Millie the Helper and, as a result of the success, became a regular on that show—she and Bill Cosby, who was the milkman. She was supposed to let people know about things happening. I thought of Abbott and Costello. Costello used to yell "Hey, Abbott" and applied that delivery to the scene with the milkman and the kids went wild. I was told the schools and yards were resounding with "Hey, you guys!" It drove the teachers and principals crazy that year but became the call to the show.

WCT: I remember you as a librarian screaming it.

RM: They always put her in a situation where she had to whisper.

"Hey, you guys!" Don't tell Rita but Happily Divorced has just been renewed for a second season to air in the spring. Visit <http://www.tvland.com> for listings and details.

Also, the 50th anniversary of the movie *West Side Story* will be available on Blu-ray Nov. 15.



Deerhunter was among this year's acts. Photo by Brenda Schumacher

Brown Health Center, Between Friends, Center on Halsted and other advocacy groups to distribute thousands of fans, partially paid for by Pitchfork, that said, "Cool it! Don't be a fan of violence." One has to wonder however, why Pitchfork didn't simply rescind its invite to OFWGKTA. Which message are they truly promoting?

The gentle anti-violence protest was in odd contrast to the barrage of hateful, violent rhymes that filled the Pitchfork bowl during Odd Future's set. While some photographers refused to shoot pictures, and many attendees went to other stages, hundreds of fans, reveling in the lyrics "fuck the police," collectively waived middle fingers in the air and gleefully chanted along with Odd Future. In informal interviews, many youthful fans said that they didn't care about the lyrics, but "loved the flow," or that music "has no meaning." A few said that Odd Future had no place at Pitchfork, but the majority in the audience were in support of the band's appearance.

Lesbian couple Amanda Ives and Meredith McCall said they almost sold their tickets when they heard about OFWGKTA, but decided to attend, and steer clear of the band. Both agreed Pitchfork was generally a gay-friendly festival, but they will be watching the line-up very carefully before buying tickets next year.

Read more about Pitchfork online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>.

—Additional reporting by Jeremy Dedic and Julie Chiron

Rita Moreno (center) with Fran Drescher and Robert Walden in *Happily Divorced*.



lead singer for **INXS**. The material would include the hits like "Devil Inside" and "Disappear," but would focus mainly on material from 1992's underappreciated *Welcome to Wherever You Are* like "Beautiful Girl" and "Taste It." It's too bad I cannot sing.

The members of **INXS** sporadically worked with different frontmen after lead singer Michael Hutchence died in 1997. In 2005, J.D. Fortune won the reality competition *Rock Star: INXS* and provided lead vocals on the comeback album *Switch*.

In memory of Hutchence, the Australian band has released *Original Sin*, which features guests tackling the group's hits such as Rob Thomas on the title cut and Tricky on "Meditate." Berlin will open for **INXS** at The Venue, 777 Casino Center, Hammond, Ind., on Friday, July 29.

Hutchence is pegged to be the topic of a



Sade.

Broadway musical, documentary and feature film. He famously dated Kylie Minogue and supermodel Helena Christensen. It still is debated whether his death was a suicide or a mishap with autoerotic asphyxiation.

Also coming to The Venue at The Horseshoe

Casino is **Dave Koz**. On Friday, Aug. 5, the out saxophonist will be accompanied by percussionist Sheila E. and singer and multi-instrumentalist Bobby Caldwell. Koz just came out with the video for his version of "This Guy's in Love with You." The clip is like a Benetton ad, as couples harmoniously swoon over Koz performing in a town square. "This Guy's in Love with You" is from his 2010 album *Hello Tomorrow*. Expect for Koz to return to town with a holiday themed show later this year.

Another video to keep an eye out for is **Logan Lynn's** "Quickly As We Pass." Imagine forward-thinking Imogen Heap mentoring a DIY artist with the hipster sound stemming from Brooklyn. The end product would be "Quickly As We Pass." The track's video is very cleverly done with stills looking like cutouts then being turned into 3-D objects, as they are filmed from different angles. Also, there is footage of neighborhoods in the Windy City with many of the spots being instantly recognizable. Not only is the video well crafted, but the song itself is very catchy. Lynn is based in Chicago and is openly gay. "Quickly As We Pass" can be found on the album *I Killed Tomorrow Yesterday*.

I was very impressed to see openly gay contestants on the NBC's breakout talent-based competition **The Voice**. The more established counterpart *American Idol* has yet to see such a feat.

The LGBT hopefuls on *The Voice* are fiery Vicci Martinez, the seasoned Beverly McClellan, the bluesy Nakia and Tyler Robinson, who probably will be best known as the gay Mormon. The cast of *The Voice* will have a concert at The Rosemont Theatre, 5400 N. River, Rosemont, on Tuesday, Aug. 2.

This year I am underwhelmed with the lineup at **Lollapalooza**. There are only a couple of bands that interest me, like Deluka, The Cars, The Kills, Grace Potter & the Nocturnals and Fitz & the Tantrums. There are no openly LGBT-identifying acts on the card, as far as I know. Buzzworthy bands like The Hurts, Friend Slash Lover and Oh Land would be included if I had any say. Lollapalooza is taking place in Grant Park from Friday, Aug. 5-7. For tickets, schedules and details on the after-shows, please visit <http://www.lollapalooza.com>.

Need an alternative to Lollapalooza? **Sade** will be at the United Center, 1901 W. Madison, for the same three consecutive nights, starting Friday, Aug. 5. Soul sensation John Legend will be opening.

Sade's R&B music is timeless, as heard on favorites "Smooth Operator," "Pearls" and "No Ordinary Love"; however, tours are seldom. Sade recently released the two-disc *The Ultimate Collection*. This retrospective boasts remixes of "Moon And the Sky" and "By Your Side," plus material from 2000's *Lovers Rock* and 2010's *Soldier of Love*, which are not on the previous hits package *The Best of Sade*. One of the prerequisite new songs, "Love Is Found," finds our seductress taking on an edgier role, as she did with the title track from *Soldier of Love*.

Recently I tried naming some songs that would fit nicely into the sleaze genre. The British DJ outfit **Horse Meat Disco's** third installment of its self-titled series favors sleaze with slow burning dance numbers from the '70s and '80s. However, also included here is one this summer's hottest club cuts, "Sweet Suburban Disco" by Billie Ray Martin. There are beloved divas on this double-disc compilation, as Martha Wash appears on Two Tons of Fun's "Just Us" and Sylvester's "Give It Up." The late Loleatta Holloway joins Salsoul Orchestra for "Seconds." The set's standouts are Rose Lauren's "American Love" and Yam Who?'s take on Shah-Lor's "I'm in Love." First Class's "Let No Man Put Asunder" should ring a bell, as it was sampled by many and can be heard on Moby's "Thousand," Kym Syms' crossover "Too Blind to See It" and "The Man Who Has Everything" by Pet Shop Boys. The refrain "it's not over" might be familiar, as Mary J. Blige covered this jam on her 1999 outing, *Mary*. These singers have soul, attitude and talent—three things sorely lacking from today's Auto-Tuned-dependent personalities. *Horse Meat Disco III* is out now via Strut.

While daydreaming, I would come up with a concert's worth of songs should I be the new

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Bijou marks 40 years of controversy, entertainment

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Bijou Theatre has been a constant in Chicago's LGBT community, now ready to celebrate a merry milestone: 40 years.

The multi-story facility in Old Town is celebrating an anniversary that few in the LGBT community can boast—and it is even more rewarding considering the Bijou's early years, which were filled with protests, police raids, the AIDS epidemic and more.

"I feel honored that people are still coming to the Bijou," said Steven Tushin, 64, the Bijou's president. "A sex place open 40 years, I feel that it is quite an accomplishment [to still be open]. I feel proud that we have given pleasure to so many men over the years and still do. I feel proud that [the] Bijou has been part of Chicago's gay community and sexual underground. In no other city could a Bijou have survived this long, [with] the police, the politics, the changing neighborhood, AIDS, etc., Chicago is quite unique. Chicago's gay community is unique. There isn't any other city like it in the country."

Tushin, 64, who also lives in Old Town, is now divorced (from a woman) and living with a female partner. He has two children, a son and a married daughter. His daughter lives down the street from him with her husband and child—and Tushin's grandson spends three or four days per week in his office. There is even a small nursery for the youngster at the Tushin's office, located a few doors away from the actual theatre.

"I have never thought about promoting a birthday, let alone an anniversary," for the Bijou, Tushin said. "We're going to have some sexual street theater; strippers; we're making a short film history of the Bijou; blow up a few newspaper articles; bring in Bruno, hopefully, [who was] a 1970s porn icon; have food and drink; serve a large cock cake that will have an orgasmic erupt; have giveaways, etc."

Of course, nothing is mild when talking about the Bijou, a magnet for controversy since, well, the day it opened.

"I worked [the Bijou] like it was going to be around forever, or until I didn't exist," Tushin said. "In truth, I had no idea [how long it would survive]. It all depended on my being around, which was very questionable at times. But the Bijou is still here, all because people keep coming through our doors."

"In those [early] years it was drugs, sex, rock and roll, and more sex. Police raids, local obscenity arrests, federal obscenity arrests, more courts, lawyers and more trials. Then there was harassment from the building department, [and] a few bomb threats. I would have to say life was fairly interesting."

The Bijou remains a theatre, with seating for about 50—and, naturally, gay porn showing 24 hours a day.

"I also enjoyed dealing with many wonderful, crazy filmmakers back [in the day]. Those men were very proud of the films they made," Tushin said. "In those [early] years, gay films [appearing in] theaters were an event. Widely popular with international known stars, most of the films had story lines, and the few studios that existed along with filmmakers also enjoyed international notoriety. Those early years produced strong positive gay images, sexual images that were presented on the movie screens. The gay men that were out in those years created the radical gay community that fought for equality which was reflected in film."

Truly, gay life in Chicago has changed dramati-

cally since the Bijou's doors first opened.

In the 1970s, for instance, films presented at the Bijou were an event, which brought with it cruising for sex.

Near the end of the 1970s, the Bijou expanded its sexual areas to accommodate the demand by adding a second floor.

In the 1980s, a third floor was added, though it has since closed.

The disco bar Carol's Speakeasy was located next door, while The Gloryhole bar with its stripper boys was next door. There also were two adult bookstores, and the office for Gay Chicago was down the street at the time.

"When Carols let out at 4 a.m., the Bijou had new sexual energy till about 9 a.m.," Tushin said.

Also during the 1980s, the Bijou had parties in conjunction with Touche, where people would be travel by bus from the bar to the Bijou. And there always was a keg of cold beer on the bus.

"I have no idea how people got home when they left the Bijou [and] there always was leather and toys left behind from the Touche crowd, as well as shirts, jockstraps and jeans from the Carols crowd."

Tushin started selling videos in 1978 and, by 1980, he was selling videos to customers across the United States.

In the 1990s, the Bijou added strippers, mainly the men who were in the movies produced with Toby Ross, Michael Donner, etc. The stripper shows were presented four days a week, in the afternoons and evenings.

Also, in 1991, the Bijou had its last obscenity bust—and that was the same year convicted murderer Jeffery Dahmer killed one of the Bijou's employees, Jeremy Weinberger.

The Bijou had its last police raid in 1996, and six patrons were arrested, Tushin said.

In 2000, Bijou's Erotic Cabaret was launched—a sexual theater made up of sexual themed vignettes with original music, but that ended several years later as business slowed.

In 2008, strippers returned once a month, and Tushin installed new seats, sound system, computerized projection system, and more.

"The 1970s was the decade that followed Stonewall, [so] everything was an experiment, pushing boundaries, challenging society, new freedoms were demanded, nothing was given, everything was fought for," Tushin said. "The 1980s was the decade that you demanded rights, and demanded answers; the gay community wanted results. The 1980s was the era of life and death; you can't get anymore dramatic than that."

"As far as the Bijou, this was the period that, if you wanted to meet someone, you went out to cruise, it was all about face, what you saw was what you got. The Bijou was never for kids. The Bijou was serious sexual business. Chicago was the sexual mecca of the Midwest and the Bijou was its jewel."

But not without controversy. Plenty of police problems.

"It got tiresome being arrested for [running] a house of prostitution, or indecent exposure," Tushin said. "It is when a man goes to the bathroom to take a piss he could be arrested for taking his dick out of his pants to piss, according to the police he was exposing himself. Yet they never caught the zillions of men having sex in the bathrooms only the ones pissing in the urinals. Then there was being charged with resisting arrest, or interfering in a police investigation, the list goes on and on and on. It's good that those days are long gone."



Bijou owner Steven Tushin. Photo by Ross Forman

The Bijou also endured the early years of HIV/AIDS—and, no doubt, contributed to its spread, as many had unprotected sex at the Bijou.

Today, there are safe-sex posters inside the Bijou, along with safe-sex movie trailers.

"I made a few safe-sex trailers for the [Howard] Brown Clinic years ago that ran on MTV for a few years. I'm going to digitize and run them at the Bijou," Tushin said. "I [now] only present current films that have condom use. The only films that I show that condoms are not used are the classic films from the pre-condom era. I make a distinction about this issue in my bare-back policy."

So what's the biggest misconception about the Bijou?

That's easy to answer, Tushin said.

"To the younger generation, if they heard of the Bijou, which many have not, the Bijou is a porn theater and nothing else," he said.

The biggest constant over 40 years is "people having sex at the Bijou, morning noon and night," Tushin said.

Tushin estimated that 5.5 million people have been serviced at the Bijou over 40 years.

And for many, especially in the early years, the Bijou was their coming out—or where they found their first loves or the loves of their lives.

"Bijou had a great 35-year run, [yet] the last five years life at the Bijou has changed," said Tushin, who knows his business has been negatively affected by the Internet, the economy and even the reduced number of major, national conventions now being held in Chicago, among other factors.

"The party is still here ... it's just a little quieter," he said.

Tushin added, "The Bijou customer, since the first day I opened the theater, has never been young, the 18-to-25 year-old crowd. The Bijou is too intimidating; young men have to get to know themselves better. We're always getting in new people from Chicago who have heard of us, [or] seen our ads. People are still coming out at the Bijou, we have a lot of return customers, regulars, married men, tourists who come to the big city to experience what they would never do back home, people who want to see porn in a sexual environment with other men, people what want anonymous sex."

"There is nothing in the world like the Bijou. It is what sex was in the 1970s and '80s. The Bijou has never been pretty; it has always been deliciously nasty and I'll keep it that way till I done, then I'll turn off the lights and go home."

More Bijou:

—**The name:** Tushin said, "Bijou means little jewel in French. Many of the movie theaters in the early part of the century were named Bijou,

so somewhere along the line the name Bijou was used to reference a movie theater."

—**Busiest day of the year:** "I have no idea, but the busiest seasons are spring through fall," Tushin said. "Winter business is regulated by weather and depressing gray sky."

—**Most popular part/aspect of the Bijou:** Tushin said, "That depends on your sexual fantasies, fetish, and desires. Once you pass through the theater door, you can do anything [and go anywhere] your sexual fantasies take you."

—**Top 5 porn stars who have visited the Bijou:** Al Parker, Peter Berlin, Casey Donovan, Jim Cassidy and Richard Lock

—**Most popular porn movies that have been shown at the Bijou:** Centurians of Rome, Night at the Adonis, The Gage Brothers Trilogy (El Paso Wrecking Company, L.A. Tool and Die, Kansas City Trucking Company), Wanted and The Idol

—**Award-winning:** Tushin was in prison in 1989 when he was awarded the Reuben Sturman Award, honoring him for legal battles on behalf of the adult film industry. In 2007, at the GayVN award show in San Francisco, Tushin was awarded the "Life Time Achievement Award" from the Gay Adult Industry, and was the third person to ever receive the honor. In 2008, AVN (Adult Video News) acknowledged Tushin as one of the 25 pioneers who developed the gay/bi adult film industry. And in 2009, at the AVN award show in Las Vegas, Tushin was inducted into the prestigious Founders Branch.

"The only reason why I won awards is, because from day one, nobody was foolish enough to do the things I've done," according to Tushin. "I have always been proud of my business; it was never part-time; sex to me is full-time. I have never been in it just for the money, though I enjoy presenting the place for people to sexually party."

—**The future:** Expand the Bijou's gay classic film line, and creating a website containing all the early film reviews, plus current reviews, and continued writing on gay sexual history. "I have five years worth of writings interspersed with photos created by Bijou researchers ready to go on Bijou's sexual history website," Tushin said. "In this life, what is old can become new again, you just have to adapt, work at it. So, what I see is a new sexual experience to a new generation of gay men in future years."

—**A straight man founded, and still runs, the Bijou:** "Personally I don't find it strange at all," Tushin said. "I like the world I created sexuality; you just have to leave your fears and hang-ups at the door and party."

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Point honors scholars at Field Museum

BY CONSTANCE RUHOLL

In the company of elephants, dinosaurs and a giant inflatable whale, the Point Foundation celebrated 10 years of LGBT scholarship at The Field Museum July 22. The event was the first-ever Point Foundation fundraiser at which all of the current Point Scholars and many of the alumni were able to attend. During the event, the Point alumni presented the foundation with a donation check of \$25,001.

Scholar Relations and Selections Program Director Vince Garcia said, "We have over 130 scholars and alumni here. The scholars and alumni come back and mentor, they serve on the board of regents and the board of directors. They also read applications; they really are making a difference."

The foundation selected 34 individuals to receive scholarships this year, including Tommy Craven who said, "I am ecstatic. I was originally going to attend Indiana University but because of the Point Foundation and the scholarship I am able to go to my dream school, which is NYU. It's life-changing."

Jonathan Doucette, one of the alumni who attended, said, "I became a Point Scholar in 2008 and, due to the generous funds of the Point Foundation, I was able to transfer from an incredibly homophobic institution my first year of college to an incredibly progressive liberal queer community at Oberlin College. Without their support that would not have been possible, and I am eternally grateful for that."

After enjoying drinks on the upper floor of the museum, guests were treated to a three-course meal on the main level. Thomas Roberts hosted the event, with Bruce Cohen presenting celebrated actress and keynote speaker Judith Light.

Several individuals spoke during dinner, including Point Foundation Executive Director and CEO Jorge Valencia. Valencia said, "When I hear how much this means to the scholars where they can be themselves and not be judged in any way. When they can gain the support from each other then you know you are doing your job."

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com)



Equality Illinois pie toss July 23

The Equality Illinois Third Annual Celebrity Pie Toss took place July 23 at Sidetrack.

Among the celebrities were WGN-TV meteorologist Tom Skilling; Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov; Ald. James Cappleman; state Rep. Kelly Cassidy; Howard Brown CEO/President Jamal Edwards; Congressman Mike Quigley; filmmaker Ky Dickens; longtime activist Lori Cannon; and personality Saucy Firewater.

Photos by Anthony Meade





2011 Volvo XC60 road-trip adventure

BY JASON APPLEBY, GAYWHEELS.COM

The XC adventure began with a flight to L.A. on a Sunday where I was promptly shipped to the Weston hotel and forced to eat delicious food almost immediately. I mention food because the only thing I love more than playing around in new cars is stuffing my face. Really, it's a horrible habit; a horrible, tasty habit. Here I would meet all of my fellow adventurers and get to know each other before the following day when we became competitors. At this point, I really didn't have an idea of what Volvo had in store for us, or just how much fun I was going to have getting to know these people and drive the stunningly beautiful 2011 Volvo XC60 half way across the country. I teamed up with my editor-in-chief, Joe Tralongo, who lazily made his way to the car port just in time to catch the last available XC60. He's 48, I'm 24. I think it's going to be a long, long drive.

Team Gaywheels departed from the Weston early Monday morning. Our picture taking extravaganza began when I noticed the New Jersey license plate affixed to our test car. I felt compelled to do my best Jersey Shore pose while kneeling for a photo because I'm an adult and that's what adults do. I told Joe the Situation had nothing on me, at which point he responded, "Huh?"

After a quick rundown of our supplies (cameras, music and directions), we set to work. First things first, I was assigned the task of configuring the navigation system and figuring out our path for the trip ahead. The XC60's navigation was slightly difficult at first using rotary knobs and pretty, but illogical, graphics to do what a simple touch screen (think Garmin) could do only about 10 times quicker. However, in the following few hours I found that, with some simple fumbling through screens and allowing myself time to get the feel of the speed and rotation of things, I was able to quickly and efficiently

get to the screens I was looking for and set the destination. The split screen navigation allowed for a closer, more detailed shot of where we were driving in one screen while another gave a bird's eye view showing what was to come further down the road.

Once I had the destination set, I began to play with the XC60's sound system. I can't go anywhere without my music so I was thrilled to learn our vehicle was equipped with Volvo's best Premium audio system that drives 650-watts through 12 speakers and a separate powered subwoofer. The sound was crisp and filled the car with everything from progressive electronic (for when we felt like "driving aggressively") to Sia (when we were discussing life on life's terms). The same screen is used for both the navigation and the iPod commands, but the convenient part was that the screen kept the immediate directions on top in case the driver found themselves toggling through screens and needed to remember what street they were looking for had they disabled the command voice as we immediately did (authority issues).

The XC60 is loaded with other technological



Jason Appleby with the Volvo on his road trip. Photo from Gaywheels.com

wonders all aimed at making you and me better (and safer) drivers. The car did everything but drive itself, and one could even say that it bordered on actually turning a driving experience into one of simply steering. When the old man, err, Joe was at the wheel, the XC60 constantly alerted via a series of rapid fire audible beeps that the vehicle was wandering out of its lane (Volvo calls this the Lane Departure Warning system.) Joe explained he was not wandering from his lane but simply changing lanes without using his turn signal. Since the system works by monitoring the painted white lane markers, any attempt to cross said markers will trigger the system's response. After a short while we stopped for a driver change and I climbed behind the wheel. It wasn't long before I got to experience another XC60 assist: Adaptive Cruise Control. Unlike normal cruise control, the Volvo system uses sonar to detect vehicles ahead and keeps the car at a safe distance, regulating the vehicle's speed and even applying the brakes to avoid a collision.

Learning the system takes a bit of research. Of course, I could have just read the owners manual, but who does that? I was a bit frustrated by the preset speeds, which are staggered at five mile intervals. After playing around a bit more, I discovered a separate button on the steering wheel would let me move up or down at one mile increments. In all, the XC60's cockpit is clean and simple and logically arranged. The only real complaint on the driver's side of the car was that the stalk-mounted windshield wiper controls. Come nightfall the XC60's cabin is lit up by the subtle blue LED lights that littered the dash and both speedometer/odometer spheres.

For a 10-hour road trip, I can't think of a better vehicle in which to ride than the XC60.

The potent 300-horsepower 3.0-liter engine in our T6 R-Design never failed to impress, offering up gobs of power for passing and just flat out running, but still returning fuel economy in the mid 20 range. When we finally arrived at our destination, a lovely resort at the end of a secluded canyon in Gateway, Colo., I got a chance to ditch Joe and take another Volvo favorite, the XC70 wagon, out on the muddy roads of clay that surrounded the entire area.

The power in front of me was immediately apparent as I decided I wanted to press down firmly with my right foot once or twice. As with the XC60, the XC70 presented a sleek interior, only this time the navigation and rear view back-up screen raised itself from the dash board directly beneath the rearview mirror. This could get a little irritating when I was backing up a lot in the mud as the screen would be up and down repeatedly, but I'm sure I'd get over it eventually. I don't suppose the common driver finds themselves going back and forth in thick mud over and over as we were that day either, unless of course their cheating spouse is laid out in the road ahead. The car moved through the terrain easily, even with the traction control still on. It had plenty of power and control that made some of the more difficult places (mud, streams, rocky areas and climbs) easy as pie.

The appearance, intelligence and sheer power of the XC class is nothing short of impressive. I think drivers of all ages and backgrounds could easily find themselves falling in love with these brilliantly designed vehicles, which have all the bells and whistles of a luxury sedan combined with the abilities of a rugged SUV. My experience with them was enough to show me that they are remarkable moving machines.

See <http://www.gaywheels.com>.

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Celebrations

Share your special moments with the community in Windy City Times' new announcement section!



TJLP at Disability Pride Parade

The Transformative Justice Law Project showed solidarity, marching in Chicago's 8th annual Disability Pride Parade which started at 401 S. Plymouth and ended at the Daley Center. There were many other marchers that also donned rainbow flags reminding everyone that we have multiple identities.

Text and photo by Liz Thomson



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Celebrations

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calendar

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Wed., July 27

Tax Incentives and Business Owner Assistance Briefing Rep. Greg Harris to sponsor with state Senator Heather Steans (D-Chicago), 40th Ward Alderman Pat O'Connor and local chambers of commerce, Info at Coleman@gregharris.org; 8:30-11 a.m., 773-348-3434, Swedish Covenant Hospital, 2751 W. Winona St., <http://www.gregharris.org>.

Pros and Cons of Illinois Civil Unions By Robert W. Baird & Co.; lunch at noon, arrive early for a good seat; RSVP to Michael Collins at mcollins@rwbaird.com or by phone. 12 p.m.-1:30 p.m., 312-609-4967, Chicago Cut Steakhouse, 300 N. LaSalle, <http://www.rwbaird.com>

DIFFA Chef's Table CS magazine and luxury kitchen design company Jenn-Air will team for an event that will benefit Design Industry Fighting; 6-9 p.m., Penthouse, Reid Murdoch Building, 325 N. LaSalle, <http://www.diffachicago.org>

Chicago Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Networking Event Networking, food and drinks; 6-9 p.m., Abique Cafe, 1034 W. Belmont

Jim Flint's 70th Birthday A night of entertainment and music in celebration of Jim Flint's 70th birthday. Featuring Paul Marinaro, Rose Collella, Antonio King and many more. In lieu of gifts or door charge, Mr. Flint asks you to make a donation to your alderman. 8 p.m., Park West Theater, 322 W. Armitage Ave., <http://www.thebatonshowlounge.com>

Hydrag Revue: Happy Birthday Tajma Hall Its a very special Happy Birthday Tajma Hall show! Come join the cast of Hydrag Revue for the biggest party in Boystown!

IN LIKE FLINT Wed., July 27

Baton Show Lounge owner Jim Flint's 70th birthday celebration will take place at the Park West, 322 W. Armitage.

Photo by Samuel Worley

10 p.m., Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>

Thursday, July 28

Lynn Sage Cancer Research Foundation Summer Soiree Deejaed music by Platinum Events, ors d'oeuvres and open bar; benefits breast cancer research programs at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University; \$65 in advance, \$75 at the door; 6-9 p.m., Board Room, 343 W. Erie St., <http://www.lynsage.org>

Lawyers For Diversity Midsummer BBQ Laura Ricketts of Chicago Cubs Charities, keynote speaker; LAGBAC members attend free and guests may attend for \$25 at the door; Sidetrack rooftop deck; 6 p.m.-9 p.m., Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St

Small Business Advocacy Council Auxiliary Board's Young Professionals Mix and mingle with like-minded young professionals from throughout the Chicagoland area, with great food from Rub BBQ Com-

pany, open bar cocktails, and an amazing view, \$20 per person and attendees must be 21 or older. 6 p.m., Aqua Tower, 225 N. Columbus Dr., <http://www.smallbusinessadvocacycouncil.org/event/2011-07-28/sbac-auxiliary-board-young-professionals-cocktail-hour-downtown-chicago>

An Evening with About Face Youth Theater Benefit showcase of scenes developed during summer workshop including a sneak peak of next summer's Youth Theatre performance of What's the T? Examining the "T" in LGBTQ, an exploration and celebration of trans identity, cocktail reception and hors d'oeuvre, \$100; 7 p.m., Victory Gardens Richard Christiansen Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave

Battle of the Bars: Minute To Win It Come out and support your favorite Chicago bar staff as they compete in a variety of crazy challenges. For complete listing of all upcoming Battle of the Bars events, please visit <http://www.chicagoseries2011.com/> and select Upcoming Events Calendar under the events tab. 8 p.m.-11 p.m., Jackhammer, 6406 N Clark St., <http://www.chicagoseries2011.com>

Friday, July 29

Thunder From Down Under Through Oct. 29 on Fridays and Saturdays; 7 p.m.-9 p.m., 312-361-3613, LaSalle Power Company 500 N. LaSalle, <http://www.thunderinchicago.com>

Threads of Equality: A FashionEsque Show Join Human Rights Campaign and Hesperidian Productions for a night of fun, dance performances, burlesque, equality & fashion at SPIN. 8 p.m., Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave, <http://www.hrc.org/threads>

Christmas in July Featuring Amy and Freddy! It will look like and feel like Christmas all over again as the decorations come back out of the closet and go back on the walls for the night. Amy and Freddy will be performing their hilarious Christmas show at 9 p.m. Tickets are only \$15 for the show, and for just \$20 there will be a hosted bar from 8:00-9:00 benefitting Coat Angels, a not-for-profit organization that provides coats and winter wear for underprivileged kids in the Chicagoland area! 8 p.m.-11 p.m., Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>

Forever Plaid The Highland Park Players is proud to present FOREVER PLAID, a revue of the four-part, close-harmony "guy groups" that were popular in the 1950s. The production includes 11 performances to be held at the Highland Park Community House, beginning July 29 and running through August 14. 8 p.m.-10 p.m., 847-651-9470, Highland Park Community

House 1991 N. Sheridan Road, Highland Park, <http://www.highlandparkplayers.com>

Pop Goes the Gio at Club 3160 Pop Goes The Gio Show A Variety Dance Show Like No Other! All 6 Members will be covering the very best dance tunes spanning three decades from the '80s to today's current hits. 9:30 p.m., 3160, 3160 N. Clark St., <http://www.poggoesthegio.com>

Saturday, July 30

Meet Randy Roberts Potts, gay grandson of Oral Roberts Bishop Carlton Pearson hosts Randy Roberts Potts, grandson of Televangelist Oral Roberts, as he shares his Coming Out Story! 10am-1 p.m., 815-993-0844, Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, 301 E. North Water St., <http://voulez-vousandtigge?rttoo.blogspot.com/>

Randolph Street Market The Randolph Street Market Festival is home to the world-renowned Chicago Antique Market & Indie Designer Market. As seen in Travel & Leisure, the NY Times, Lucky Magazine and featured on TV news shows and web casts, the Randolph Street Market Festival is considered "a mecca of cool", "the best hot spot for antiques", "the best Chicago venue for people watching", and "the Barney's of Vintage". 10 a.m.-5 p.m., 312-666-1200. Through July 31. <http://www.randolphstreetmarket.com/randolphstreetmarket/index.html>

Chicago Sky, Making it Better The Sky play the Los Angeles Sparks and a portion of all tickets sold benefit Center on Halsted and other anti-bullying initiatives around Chicago, such as the Trevor Project, the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, and the Affinity Youth Project, and Howard Brown; tickets \$15-\$40, available online with promo code: center; 7 p.m.-9 p.m., Allstate Arena, 6920 N Mannheim Rd, <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/coh/calendar/newevents-details.cfm?id=1509>

Cowboy Eye For the Leather Guy A leather stud gets a cowboy makeover from Alcalá's Western Wear, wind a pair of Windy City Rodeo tickets and more. Contest begins at 11 p.m., meet the new cowboy at midnight. Pick up an application at the bar. 10 p.m., Touche, 6412 N Clark St., <http://www.touchechicago.com>

Sunday, July 31

Urban Village Church Worship is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. It's a place to receive God's grace and love and to give of ourselves, as well. 10:15am-11:30am, Urban Village Church, Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan, <http://www.newchicagochurch.com>

Urban Village Church Wicker Park Worship Services LGBT welcoming worship services at Urban Village Church are eclectic and experiential, practical and intelligent, relevant and, hopefully, inspiring. 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m., 1502 N. Hoyne (at LeMoine), <http://www.newchicagochurch.com>

Movies on the Patio Jack's Bar & Grill, 2856 N. Southport Ave., presents Movies on the Patio, a summer series of popular movies every Sunday evening; 6 p.m., 773-404-8400, Jack's Bar & Grill, 2856 N. Southport Ave., <http://www.jackschicago.com/>

Paul McCartney Tickets go on sale June 20. 8:15 p.m., Wrigley Field, 1060 W Addison St # 1, <http://www.tickets.com>.

The Ladies Night—Take Over Sexy Sundays Featuring music By DJ Dave. \$10 Cover; 9 p.m., 312-666-1695, Funky Buddha Lounge, 728 W Grand, <http://www.funkybuddha.com>

Monday, Aug. 1

United House: A Night of Unity in House Music Join Hydrate Nightclub, ChicagoPride.com, and host Cyon Flare for United House: A Night of Unity in House Music, featuring New Resident House DJ Semaj; 10 p.m., Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>



TO MARKET July 30-31

The Randolph Street Market will take place in the West Loop.

PR photo

www.hydratechicago.com

Live Band Karaoke with Amy Armstrong Every Monday night at 10PM in the Front Bar, hosted by the one and only Amy Armstrong; 10 p.m., 773-281-3355, Roscoe's, 3356 N Halsted, <http://www.roscoes.com>

Tuesday, Aug. 2

48 Hour Film Project—Public Screenings The 48 Hour Film Project is the world's largest timed filmmaking competition. Logan Theater located at 2646 N. Milwaukee Ave., 7 p.m.-11 p.m., 720.313.5404, Logan Theater 2646 N. Milwaukee Ave., <http://https://www.48hourfilm.com/chicago/>

"The Voice" final eight on tour The final eight contestants from the smash hit television competition will hit the road, including of special interest Vicci Martinez and Beverly McClellan, tickets \$39-\$70; 8 p.m., Rosemont Theatre, 5400 N River Rd, <http://www.livenation.com>

Wed., Aug. 3

Gay Liberation Network Organizing Meeting Organizing meeting for Chicago's LGBTI direct action group -- new participants welcome. Located just at the corner of Granville Street & Sheridan Road, a few blocks east of the; 7 p.m.-9 p.m., 773-209-1187, Berger Park Fieldhouse, 6205 N. Sheridan, <http://www.gayliberation.net>

Queer Social Club A no-attitude, casual evening for the Humboldt/Ukie Area LGBTQ and their friends to come in, have drinks, meet new friends, mingle, etc. Just a fun night beyond the traditional outlets in Boystown and dance parties in Wicker Park - Doing our own thing across the Western Ave divide! 8 p.m., Archie's Tavern 2600 W Iowa, 60622, <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=10150094929770492>

Battle of the Bars: \$25 Pyramid Come out and support your favorite Chicago bar staff as they compete in a variety of crazy challenges. A champion will be crowned at the finale event Aug. 16. For complete listing of all upcoming Battle of the Bars events, please visit <http://www.chicagoseries2011.com/> and select Upcoming Events Calendar under the events tab. 9 p.m., Crew Bar & Grill, 4804 N Broadway, <http://www.chicagoseries2011.com>

Monday, Aug. 8

The Faggot Who Could Fly and an excerpt from No Gender Left Behind The story of a sexually abused "boy" transitioning into a resilient "woman" and the story of Rebecca King, fired from a teaching position for being transgender, double matinee, free and open to the public. 7 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted



HOOP DREAMS

Saturday, July 30

The WNBA's Chicago Sky will play the Los Angeles Sparks, with a portion of tickets sold benefiting Center on Halsted and other anti-bullying initiatives around Chicago.

Photo of Dominique Canty from the Chicago Sky

BILLY MASTERS

Greetings from Italy. I'm writing this column while sitting in a well-known train, being whisked across the Italian countryside at the speed of light (or what passes for the speed of light in Italy). And I was just joined by a new seatmate—a nun!! We haven't spoken yet—because my Italian-English dictionary doesn't tell me how to say, "Excuse me, sister, but you need a shave." However, I have a funny feeling we're kindred spirits. Why? Because across from us are sitting three other nuns. Apparently, I'm in the liturgical car. (Why, oh why, couldn't they have been some hot young priests?) What I find fascinating is that there's an extra seat with the other sisters, but this nun chose to sit by the queen writing a nasty column. Well, maybe she'll learn some new words.

I'm not the only one touring—Cher is in the midst of planning one. As we told you months ago, she hoped that "Burlesque" would be a BIG hit, after which she would release a new CD that would also be a big hit, thus giving her a handful of new songs to trot around the globe. Never let it be said that Cher is ever deterred by a poor turnout at the box office. According to her tweets, she still plans on using the two "Burlesque" songs: "Putting in 'You Haven't Seen The Last of Me' and maybe recreating 'Welcome To Burlesque' as it was in film on stage. And if this CD has hits that would be fun for new show." Oh, that wacky Cher! As to that new CD, the only thing we know for sure is that she's recording a song written by Lady Gaga—but that's actually not what she hoped for: "I would love a duet with GaGa, but she gave me a GREAT song and I am beyond grateful!!!! It's called 'The Greatest Thing.'" I smell a hit (or maybe that's Sister Incommunicado!).

Gaga may have Cher on her side, but she's earned the wrath of another gay diva. Bette Midler's pissed off after hearing that for her Sydney concert, Gaga came onstage in a wheelchair dressed as a mermaid. Says Bette (again, via Twitter): "I'm not sure @LadyGaga knows that I've performed my mermaid in a wheelchair for millions of people—and many of them are still alive. I've been doing singing mermaid in a wheelchair since 1980. You can keep the meat dress and the firecracker tits—mermaid is mine."

Gaga then told Access Hollywood, "I had no idea that she did that, and I'm a huge Bette Midler fan." Which begs the question: Really? How big a Bette Midler fan can you possibly be and never heard of Dolores Del Lago, the toast of Chicago? Next she'll tell us that she never heard "Respect Yourself." Gaga added, "It was not a Midler tribute in the beginning because I didn't know that she'd done it, but I do now and I think it's great. Obviously, I feel connected to women in theater and women from the past. Maybe we're just cut from the same cloth. All I'll say is that I admire her and find her to be one of the most brilliant and incredible performers." Leave it to Bette (apparently a woman from the past) to take the high road—"Let's drink this over at the Emmys in September. Fabulous mermaids can co-exist!" But a word of warning to Gaga—this derivative stuff is getting old.

However, there was another big story you might have missed. Zach Braff came out of the closet ... or did he? Last week, his website featured an open letter addressed to "all my loyal fans"—so listen up, you dirty dozen. "I've been hiding a secret inside me for too long. The human mind can only bare [AN INTERESTING TYPO] so much before it explodes in emotions, and well...it is time to let the world know. I am excited and proud to announce that I am an open member of the homosexual community." Except, of course, it's not true (or is it?). Apparently, Zach's website has been long-dormant, much like his career, and a hacker got in and posted



Cher's theme song could be "On the Road Again." Photo from Screen Gems

the note. To think: Someone would go to all this trouble over Zach Braff!

Since Sister Nosy has taken an interest in my work, I'm gonna write a story that will make her rue the day she ever sat next to me (of course, when the photos I've been surreptitiously taking show up on BillyMasters.com, she'll be world famous). We haven't talked about Calvin Klein and Nick Gruber in months. You remember Nick—the former gay-for-pay pornstar who hooked up with Calvin after the designer paid for some massive reconstructive surgery. (You can see him in action on our website.) Well, we don't know the specifics but the couple appeared to have broken up at the end of June. Of course, Nick posted the news on his Facebook page: "CK and I broke up. HELLO SUICIDE!!!!!" That break-up was apparently short-lived, since the couple appeared to be thick as thieves after a lovely lunch last week at Bar Pitti in NYC. The two were even photographed kissing—and using tongues!! While you're looking at these photos on my website, just remember where Nick's tongue has likely been...

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Kendrick in Maine: "I'm totally in love with Colton Haynes from Teen Wolf. What can you tell me about him? And where has he been all my life?"

If you're as old as most of my readers, he wasn't around for at least half of your life! Little Colton was born in 1988—which I believe was when I bought my first jock strap. Be that as it may, the star of Teen Wolf has attracted quite a large gay fan base—and it's not the first time. What if I told you Colton is embroiled in a little gay scandal? Back in 2006 (do the math—he was 18), Haynes was featured in an "XY" pictorial entitled "Don't Mess With Texas." It showed him ... um, "frolicking" with another young lad in various forms of undress. (Yes, there are tongues involved here, too.) No one put two and two together until someone purporting to be Haynes' lawyer (and he very well may be) contacted a number of websites asking them to take down the images of his client "partially or possibly completely nude, engaging in or simulating sexual conduct, in most instances with other individuals." Until now, I had no interest in Colton. However, suffice it to say, he's now on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm getting nostalgic for a 23-year-old jock strap (which I may actually have in my suitcase), it's definitely time to end yet another column. Lemme just give you an update on Nunwatch 2011—all four of the nuns have just pulled their purses very close. Do they know something I don't? Is there about to be a hit? Or are they Mob Wives in disguise as Mob Sisters? I'm gonna try and take a few pics of them. If that doesn't drive traffic to www.BillyMasters.com, I dunno what will. Oh yeah—the nude male celebrities. If you've got a question for me on a gossip or religious matter, put it in the offering plate of Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I appear onstage with the Italian touring company of "Nunsense"—possibly in a wheelchair! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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Chicago Spirit Brigade cheers for a cause

BY ROSS FORMAN

Mickey Huang was 48 and getting bored with just going to the gym—he wanted to challenge himself physically.

"I guess it was a kind of mid-life crisis," he said this spring at age 50.

"I'm not a runner and couldn't muster the motivation for myself or my friends to take up tennis or ballroom dancing, two other [activities] that I considered.

"That summer, I was working really long hours and looking for ways to enrich my life apart from my job. I looked into volunteer opportunities at both Howard Brown Health Center and the Art Institute of Chicago. But before any of those things came together, I happened to meet three Chicago Spirit Brigade (CSB) cheerleaders at Sidetrack. It was a Sunday after one of their practices and I remember being absolutely mesmerized as they described what they did. This seemed like the perfect solution: A way to challenge myself physically and an opportunity to do some volunteer work, giving back to organizations which I felt served MY community."

Huang, who lives in the Buena Park neighborhood and is the marketing manager for General Tours World Traveler, is now in his third year on the Spirit Brigade. He is a performing member

Waveland in Lake View.

The Cheer squad practices from 1-5 p.m. The Dance & Drill squads practice anywhere from two to four hours during the same time-window. "We'll practice as individual squads, then gather together for an All-Brigade Circle—to share news, updates, encouragement, etc., and to practice our all-squad routine," Huang said. "For me, these practices are physically challenging and personally fulfilling. I came to the squad with no cheer experience and have been taught a lot over the past two and a half years. I can unequivocally state that I have a great deal of respect and affection for every single one of my teammates, and how often can one say that about a group. No matter how physically tough and occasionally frustrating a practice might be, this is a great group of people to hang out with for four hours every Sunday."

CSB has 23 cheerleaders, eight dancers and three members on its drill team. Huang said CSB is about 65 percent LGBT. CSB members range in age from 22 to 51, and there are 12 women and 22 men. Members live across the Chicago area, Huang said. CSB features a variety of ethnicities, including a couple members of Mexican heritage who just moved to Chicago from Texas this year; a German national on the squad; and a couple of Filipinos. Huang is Chinese, and the crew also



Chicago Spirit Brigade. Photo by Ross Forman

and the "flyer" on the cheer squad. Plus, he assists the CSB Board and managers as a liaison to the community, handling communications with current and potential beneficiaries, reviewing invitations for appearances, coordinating with event organizers prior to a performance, writing press releases and updates to the group's fans, etc.

"It's difficult to isolate a single favorite [CSB] memory," Huang said. "I guess I would have to say marching in [the] Pride [Parade in] 2009. The weather that year was near-perfect; it was my first time to ever march in the Chicago Pride Parade, and that was the first year that the Netelhorst School ever marched. Prior to hitting the parade route, we went over to meet with their group, did a bit of stunting for them and had a mini photo-session with the students and parents. It was a pretty inspiring experience. I also remember being overwhelmed by the crowd's generosity. Overall, 2009 was a record-breaking year for CSB, the first time we broke the \$10,000 mark in funds raised-and-given-away to our beneficiaries. Along the parade route, specifically, I recall being surprised by how generous some people were, dropping \$5s, \$10s and \$20s into our Spirit Buckets for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago."

CSB has three squads: cheer, dance and drill. The group practices every Sunday afternoon at the Fitness Formula Club at Pine Grove and

features several African Americans; a woman from the Ukraine; and a gay man who has two adopted kids with his partner.

"Our drill squad consists of two returning members and a new performer who has amazed us all with how quickly he's picked up drill flags," Huang said. "Our dancers all have such strong distinctive personalities and terrific stage presence; the audience is going to love them! On the Cheer side, we have some amazing new women on the squad who are able to both 'fly' and 'base'; we call them our 'Hybrids.' Even those who joined [the CSB] with no cheer experience have developed incredible skills over the past few months.

"There seems to be a greater diversity among our performing members this year in terms of prior performing experience, age-range and gender. Also, I'm really struck by the level of commitment and involvement, especially by some of our first-year members. Our 'All-Brigade Circle,' which we have at every practice, has become a wonderful forum, and I sense that everybody is quite comfortable speaking with a great deal of openness and honesty. This has made us, despite our very diverse personalities, a really cohesive performing unit and has generated a lot of good feedback which our managers have incorporated into their planning."

Huang said the 2011 routine is an all-brigade extravaganza much more than in past years,



Chicago Spirit Brigade member. Pic by Ross Forman

where Cheer, Dance and Drill each presented their own unique choreographed segments.

"For the first time ever, we have our drill team twirling their flags while [those members] are up in the air in cheer stunts. It's pretty impressive," Huang said.

The team's 2011 goal is to surpass \$10,000 to raise and donate to its beneficiaries. CSB's key fundraising beneficiaries this year include the Lesbian Community Care Project, Vital Bridges, A Special Wish Foundation, Lakeview Pantry, Families' & Children's AIDS Network, and Prevent Blindness America. In addition, CSB will be appearing at several charitable events, such as the American Cancer Society Walk & Roll, Girls on the Run, Ride for AIDS, and the Walk to End

Alzheimer's.

CSB introduced a "Plus 25%" matching program this year, drawing upon their Spread the Cheer fund. Thus, CSB now donates to their beneficiaries 125 percent of every dollar raised at performances.

"We're able to do this thanks to a successful event we hosted last September: the first-ever 'Starry Night' fundraiser, which generated nearly \$5,000 for the group's Spread the Cheer fund, enough of a cushion to guarantee the "Plus 25%" match for at least two years.

A second-annual Starry Night is scheduled for Aug. 27.

"Eventually, we would love to grow the Spread the Cheer fund to the point where we could guarantee 100 percent matching donations to our beneficiaries," Huang said.

CSB also established a community partnership with The Call in Andersonville, and its owners, Michael Hogan and Mike Ferrari, have invited the CSB to come in once a month to raise money on behalf of their beneficiaries. CSB members staff the door, perform on stage, chat with patrons and collect \$5 suggested donations. "This partnership has been very effective," Huang said.

CSB again will be performing at Chicago Force home football games, as well as Andersonville's MidSommarfest, PrideFest, Pride Parade, Market Days, Halloween on Halsted, Walk to End Alzheimer's, Ride for AIDS and more.

CSB performed in May at the opening of the Out in Chicago exhibit at the Chicago History Museum, and the group has been invited to participate in Columbus Pride in Ohio to raise money on behalf of Stonewall Columbus. "Although this takes us beyond our usual Chicago stomping grounds, it's an opportunity to continue our fundraising mission for non-profit organizations. In addition, we could be planting the seeds which might one day result in a similar cheer-based fundraising organization in Columbus," Huang said.

Gay Games IX lawsuit may be done

BY ROSS FORMAN

A settlement has been reached in dueling lawsuits over who has the rights to stage Gay Games IX in 2014, scheduled to be held in Cleveland and Akron, Ohio.

Kurt Dahl, co-president of the Federation of Gay Games (FGG), announced July 25 that—although all parties have not yet officially signed off on all of the paperwork nor has a judge signed the agreement—it has been settled. He said all paperwork should be signed by the end of the week.

"I cannot discuss the outcome [of the settlement]. The settlement is confidential; it cannot be discussed," Dahl said in a phone interview with Windy City Times. "Everything will be dismissed."

The Cleveland Synergy Foundation (CSF), in 2009, was awarded the right to host the quadrennial, multi-sport and cultural festival over bids from Boston and Washington, D.C.

The FGG terminated CSF's license in July 2010, citing the foundation's failure to submit required information in a timely fashion. In September, CSF sued the FGG, the city of Cleveland, the Greater Cleveland Sports Foundation and Valerie McCall of the mayor's office to retain the rights to stage the event.

FGG then named the Cleveland Special Events Corporation as the new host entity. Thomas Nobbe, a founder of the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland and an active swimmer and volleyball player, was named executive director of CSE in May.

The trial was scheduled to start this month amid allegations, raised by CSF, of homophobic behavior and comments by members of the Cleveland Special Events Corporation.

Dahl said discussions to settle the law-

suits have been ongoing for the past couple months. "I expected that we were going to come to some sort of agreement at some point; at least I was hopeful of that. Now we're focused on Cleveland Special Events; that's what we're focusing on now."

Next up for the 2014 Games is opening registration, which will begin in 2012, Dahl said.

"I am happy to hear legal issues have been resolved," said Chicagoan Kevin Boyer. "Cleveland has a lot of work to do to get ready for Gay Games IX and now they can focus on the key early challenges around fundraising and visibility."

There have been numerous reports and/or rumors throughout the year that the CSF was going to stage its own multi-sport LGBT event in the Cleveland area in 2014, but that will not happen. "I wouldn't even want to comment about that," Dahl said.

Dahl said representatives from the Cleveland Special Events Corporation likely will be in Chicago next month to attend the 35th annual Gay Softball World Series—to promote the 2014 Games, "because softball is a big part of the Gay Games."

Dahl will attend the Series.

"It's very important to say that the accusations of homophobia in the straight people that are taking up some of the leadership roles with the host organization are exaggerated and misguided," Robby Davis, the FGG officer of development who has helped oversee Cleveland operations, told the Bay Area Reporter. "I have not encountered any disrespect or disregard for LGBT people or blatant homophobia. I see the folks we are working here whether they are out or not to be the most incredible allies. They are so proud that Akron and Cleveland are going to be hosts of these Games."

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Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations. Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

Tel: 312.985.5938 | Fax: 312.985.5985
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