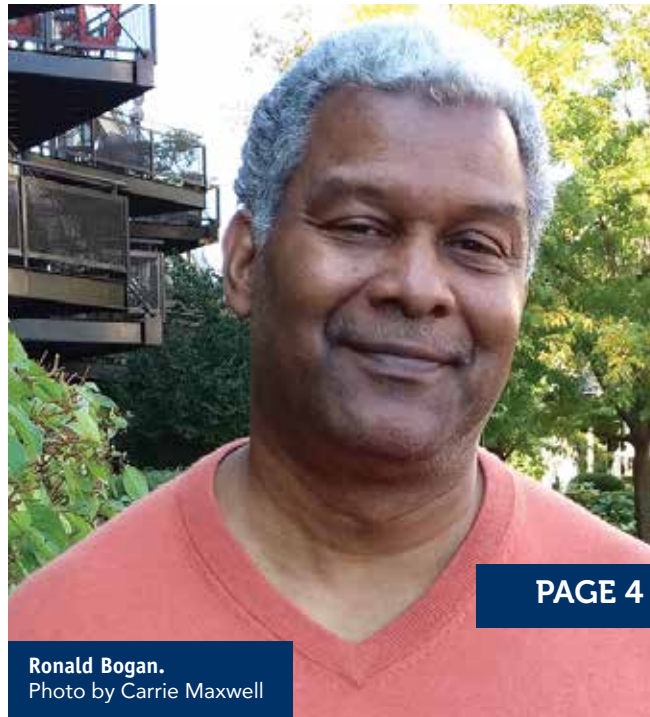


WINDY CITY TIMES

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

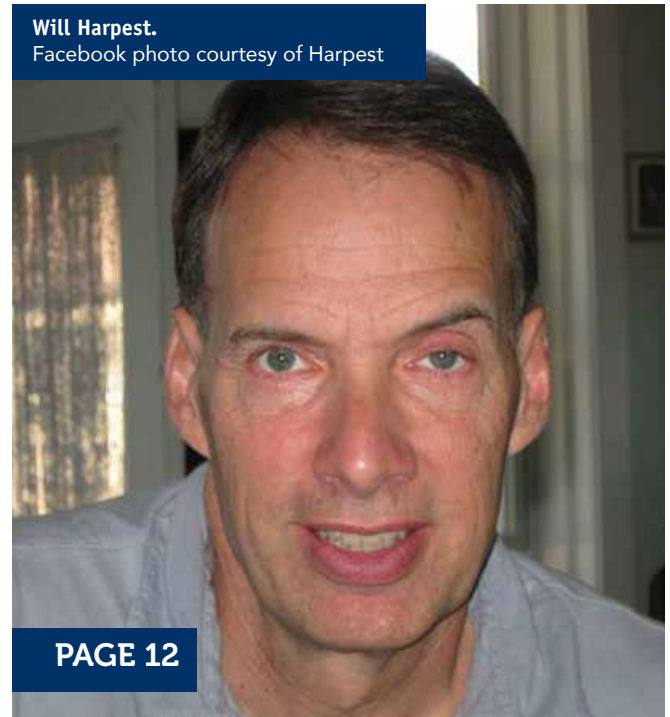
VOL 34, NO. 04 OCT. 17, 2018

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Ronald Bogan.
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

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Will Harpest.
Facebook photo courtesy of Harpest

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GAY BAR RESCUED
Jackhammer in Rogers Park finds new owners.
Photo by Kirk Williamson

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DARCY LESLIE
Ex-Force player gets taste of NFL.
Photo courtesy of Leslie

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WINDY CITY TIMES ARTS & THEATER WEEKLY

THE GOLDEN GIRLS: BEA AFRAID!
PART OF OUR HALLOWEEN THEATER WRAP-UP

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EXPANDED ARTS COVERAGE EVERY WEEK

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LAW & ORDER

The first out gay male Chicago cop and a gay man who was a juror in the Jason Van Dyke trial

Jill Soloway talks with WCT about new book

SEE JILL WRITE



Jill Soloway.
Photo by Jesse Chamberlin Marble

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A CRADLE SONG

A SPECIAL TEN-PART SERIES FROM AUTHOR MARK ZUBRO
SEE PAGE 24






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A SHIRE LOVE

WCT talks with Kyle Shire (left), a gay comedian who moved from Chicago to L.A. to hit it big.

Photo courtesy of Shire

GLITTER ON THE AIR



Glitterbomb is the first national queer Latinx talk show with a gay Latino cast.

Photo of Glitterbomb's Alexander Rodriguez courtesy of LATV

HISTORY LESSONS

WCT continues its series on selections for LGBT History Month.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about BD Wong, Todrick Hall and Emma Roberts.

plus
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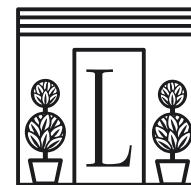
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First out gay male Chicago police officer on family, career, volunteering

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Retired Chicago Police Department (CPD) officer Ronald Bogan saw it all during his three decades on the force.

This includes a suspect who hid in the axel of a truck so he could not be found by the police but when the driver started the truck and tried to drive away the person's body parts went flying all over the place.

Another time, Bogan was chasing a suspect who ended up jumping from the second story of a building and impaling himself on the spears on top of a wrought iron gate.

Bogan said the most bizarre incident occurred when he had to guard a person's head that had been severed from his body when a truck hit him.

These are just a few of the many stories Bogan told Windy City Times about his time as a beat patrol officer and district evidence technician.

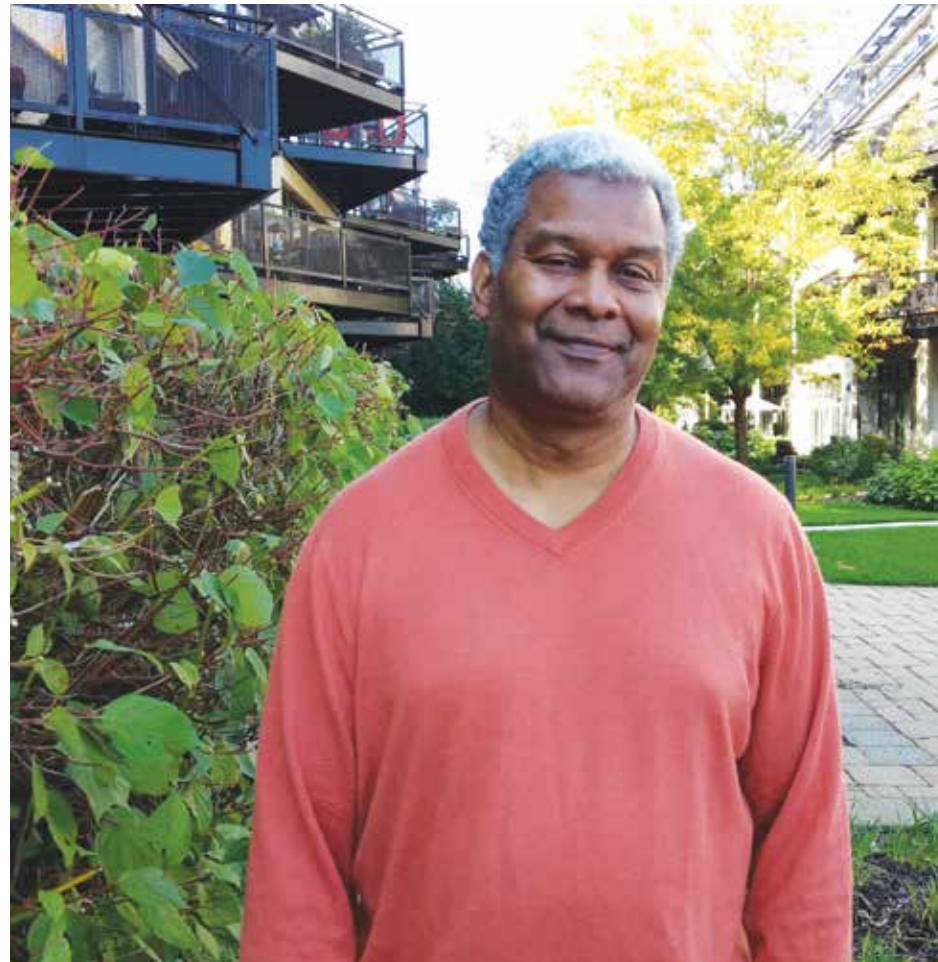
It was when Bogan moved on to the Civil Rights Division to work on hate crimes cases in

1992 that his life changed forever. That was the moment he came out to the world as a gay man in a Chicago Tribune article. Bogan holds the distinction of being the first out gay police man in Chicago. Mary Boyle was the first out police officer.

Bogan said he knew he was gay when he was a little boy and so did his great grandmother but, like many families at the time, it was not talked about, just understood. His great grandmother helped raise him and his sister Francine (who is lesbian) alongside their mother. He said his first boyfriend Joshua was embraced by his family when he would come to their holiday dinners.

"It was a requirement to come out publicly before I joined the hate crimes unit," said Bogan. "One of the reasons why I was recruited into the Civil Rights Divisions was so I could help recruit other gay and lesbian people into the police force."

Bogan said the largest number of hate crimes were LGBT related, then anti-Semitic and finally racially motivated.



Ronald Bogan.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell



Ronald Bogan.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

"When I first got into the unit, hate crimes against LGBT people were a misdemeanor but later it became a class four felony," said Bogan. "With that classification, detectives and the state's attorney were able to get involved in these cases."

Bogan's desire to be a police officer began while he was attending Dunbar High School but he had to put those thoughts aside since at the time then Mayor Richard J. Daley was fighting the desegregation of the police department.

"When I went to Eastern Illinois University I decided to get a degree that would result in a job after I graduated until I could become a police officer," said Bogan. "My sister and I were the only people from our South Side Ida B. Wells project building to go to college. I ended up on the dean's list, was the first sophomore ever picked to be an resident assistant and was the president of our fraternity—Phi Beta Sigma. I graduated with a BA in speech communication and radio/TV production with a teacher certification."

For three years, Bogan taught fifth, sixth and seventh grades as a cadre substitute at the grammar school he attended as a child. When Bogan was 25 years old he moved on to Controlled Data Corporation and all its subsidiaries as the Midwest Regional Personnel Administrator.

"This was at a time when a Black man in corporate management was rare," said Bogan, "I held that job for two and a half years."

During that time, Bogan applied to be a police officer but it was not until Daley died and his successor Michael Bilandic said he would not fight the desegregation of the police force that his dream was realized. This was in December 1978 and at the same time women were also finally able to join the police force. Bogan said he had a couple of women partners over the years.

After Bogan retired from the CPD in 2007, he became the Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner for the Chicago Department of Human Services. Bogan and his team would provide food boxes for needy people, respond to domestic fires, help people during heat waves and cold snaps find shelter locations and get homeless

people into shelters.

To reduce his blood pressure, Bogan left that job and became a security officer at Roosevelt University from 2010 to 2015.

"While I was a police officer, I got my master's degree in community counseling from Roosevelt and that helped me interact with the students there when I was a security guard," said Bogan.

Bogan and husband Curtis Lawrence (a Columbia College journalism professor) have been together for 26 years. They got married in spring 2014, a few months after Illinois legalized same-sex marriage.

In 2016, Bogan was inducted into Chicago's LGBT Hall of Fame.

"The ceremony was great because Curtis was there and so was my sister Francine [St. Clair] and her partner, my foster son Antione [Green] flew in from Atlanta and my best friend and his wife and daughter were also there," said Bogan.

Over the years, Bogan has volunteered for a variety of organizations including Open Hand Chicago, TPAN, Center on Halsted (when it was known as Horizon's Community Center) and Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Chicago where he mentored two young men. At Open Hand, Bogan helped deliver meals to South Side residents. His buddy role at TPAN involved assisting newly diagnosed HIV-positive people navigate their lives.

"At Horizon's, I was the gay youth advisor and one of the kids whom I mentored eventually became a police officer," said Bogan. "One day I was at police headquarters and the elevator door opened and he was standing there. He was a Deputy Superintendent at the time and then left the police department and became Mayor Richard Daley's Chief of Staff which meant he was my boss when I was working in the Department of Human Services."

Bogan told Windy City Times he is worried about the current state of politics today because it is so divisive.

"I think there is going to have to be another massive, intersectional civil rights movement to combat the hate coming from Trump and his supporters," said Bogan.



Tamale Sepp.
Photo by Greg Inda

Tamale Sepp starts a new chapter

BY EMAGIN TANASCHUK

Internationally renowned comedian and interdisciplinary performer Tamale Sepp has relocated to the East Coast after serving up 16 years of comedy, performance art, burlesque and much more in Chicago.

For more than a decade and a half, Sepp entertained Chicagoans with her creative and original performances which included sketch comedy, belly dancing, burlesque and fire dancing. However, after moving on from her job and an amicable breakup, she fiercely decided to pick up and travel, starting in New York City to embark on a

new adventure of self-exploration and bring her comedy and performances to the next level.

After about two months of traveling, Sepp said in a phone interview that moving is disorienting and hectic, but she wouldn't have it any other way; she is extremely hopeful and excited about what the future holds for her, both career-wise and personally.

"I just want to continue being the best version of myself as possible, prioritize fitness, take care of my body, and experiment with my skill sets in comedy and performing," she added.

Sepp is doing just that, working with a friend to get fit and participating in a eight-week-long workout program in hopes of challenging herself physically and mentally, as she thinks that her performances will be better if her body is stronger.

When asked to look back on her time in Chicago, Sepp could not recall a single moment when she had the privilege to get up on stage and make people laugh that stood out more than others. She described how comedy is at the very least entertainment but can also serve as a tool to shift societal norms.

"Comedy can be a harbinger of harmony—it gets people in their soft spots, where their guard is down. That is magic," she said.

She explained how comedy as an art form brings people together and can be an excellent opportunity for groups of people to see another group's perspective. Therefore, it is pivotal that comedy include marginalized people's voices.

"Comedy should not be censored; it is a commentary on social constructs that are unfolding

all the time," she said. "Minorities' perspectives are more likely to be heard and spark change at a comedy show with an array of audience members than via a venting post on social media to their friends and family who will more likely be supportive but act more like an echo chamber. Therefore more marginalized opinions need to be included in comedy."

As someone who is always listening to marginalized voices, Sepp also spoke on how proud she is of how women who have fiercely carved out their own space in the comedy world have given themselves microphones to make their voices louder rather than waiting for others to help them. Having directed an entire show herself previously, Sepp mentioned several women in comedy who have inspired her, such as Kelsie Huff, a standup teacher who empowers women to take on more leadership roles, and Meredith Kachel, who has rated comedy troupes in Chicago by the frequency they cast women in their shows.

"No one bats an eye when there are all men shows, but when there is an effort to diversify, people get confused because it isn't as normalized," Sepp said.

She explained that even though she has witnessed tremendous growth in women's involvement in the industry, inequality persists. However, she remained positive and inspired, saying that watching others do courageous and impactful work such as her fellow female colleagues is what drives her to do more too.

For Sepp, the future is bright with new adventures, new fitness goals—and certainly more jokes and laughter.

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Awareness of trans community focus of multi-agency event

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives, Howard Brown Health, Lakeview Presbyterian Church and The Village Chicago hosted an event, "Putting the T First: Honoring the Role of the Transgender Community in the LGBT Rights Movement," Oct. 9 at Howard Brown Health and Gerber/Hart Library and Archives in Rogers Park. This was the first of a two-part program highlighting this issue.

Community activist Don Bell, who organized

on they called "female impersonators" performing in South Side clubs, as well as the story of Jackie Ross, who got a job at a defense factory in Chicago during World War II and, when the community found out he was transgender, he was arrested and tried. D'Emilio said Ross proclaimed in court that he wished he was a boy.

Other examples centered around the Transvestite Information Service, a national newsletter, and the Transvestite Legal Committee. Both of these organizations began in the early '70s.



From left: John D'Emilio, Kate Palmer and Milo Vieland.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

the event, said he saw a need for this programming for people both within and outside the LGBT community, since transgender people and their issues are so often overlooked by society.

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives Board President John D'Emilio spoke about the history of the library. D'Emilio, a historian who is also a professor emeritus at University of Illinois at Chicago, said that when the library was formed in 1981 it was hard to get LGBT books in other venues. The dual purpose of Gerber/Hart eventually became serving as both a place for LGBT-focused books and as an archive location for a variety of collections from individuals and organizations.

D'Emilio said that, beginning in the 1880s, LGBT people in the U.S. were called "inverts," further explaining that, in the 1920s and 1930s, transgender people were described as "drag queens," "butch" or "bull dykes." In the late '60s, "LGBT" started to be used. D'Emilio questioned what the terminology will be in the future.

In terms of documenting transgender history, D'Emilio highlighted some books in the library—Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.; Suits Me: The Double Life of Billy Tipton; Arresting Dress: Cross-Dressing, Law and Fascination in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco and Transgender History.

D'Emilio spoke about several moments in Chicago transgender history, among them when, in the '30s, the Chicago Defender reported about what

Following D'Emilio's presentation, Howard Brown Health Sexual and Reproductive Health Walk-in Services Manager Kate Palmer and Howard Brown Health Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Health Navigator Milo Vieland spoke about language and protocols that recognize and respect transgender people and their identities, and the history of transgender people and the medical community.

Palmer said Howard Brown Health has taken on an initiative around gender appropriate language because they recognized about three years ago that there was a need to address issues of misgendering patients at their facilities. She asked the audience if they knew what misgendering was; not many people raised their hands.

The main takeaway from the Howard Brown Health's focus groups preceding the initiative, said Palmer, was that people did not realize when they misgendered a person that it was causing harm. The organization subsequently created a "Trans 101" roll-out within all of their clinics. The class covered basic terminology, the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity as well as case studies and roll-playing exercises.

Vieland spoke about the history of transgender people's access to medical care. He used the late Christine Jorgensen's story as the example of the first famous person to undergo gender affirmation surgery and how her story was covered in the media.

At a time when there were very few doctors who did gender affirmation surgeries, one who did do them was German-American Dr. Harry Benjamin, who was Jorgensen's physician. Vieland spoke about the World Professional Association for Transgender Health, which was originally named after Benjamin and how that organization defined those who are considered transgender.

The first hospital in the U.S. to have a gender-identity clinic was Johns Hopkins Hospital in

1956. Vieland explained that this number grew to over 30 by the mid-'60s, and further spoke about the different classifications the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual has used to categorize transgender people.

Q&A sessions took place after both D'Emilio's presentation and Palmer and Vieland's talks. D'Emilio said that, beginning Nov. 10, the Gerber/Hart Library and Archives will host an exhibit on the history of drag performance in Chicago.

Attorneys talk legal challenges facing transgender people

BY JAKE WITTICH

A panel of attorneys addressed the employment and education legal issues impacting transgen-

Sohn said another legal challenge has come from businesses denying services to LGBTQ people by claiming doing so is in conflict with their religious beliefs.

Still, local governments can enact statewide protections for LGBTQ people against discrimination, Sohn said, noting that California passed a bill in 2017 requiring employers to provide training and policies prohibiting harassment based on gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.

According to Ricks, local governments can also help by making it easier for transgender people to change their gender markers on legal documents, as many states still require surgeries for transgender people to change their gender markers.

"It's a big problem because it does immediately 'out' you if you aren't able to change your gender marker," Ricks said. "I had a client who recently wasn't allowed to purchase a pizza because she paid for it with her credit card over the phone, but she hadn't changed her ID yet, so the delivery person wouldn't let her sign for it."

Ricks said there are many reasons why a transgender person might

not have surgery, including whether they want the surgery in general, whether it's medically appropriate due to other health conditions, or if surgery is cost prohibitive.

Broek, who was appointed deputy general counsel of Waukegan Public Schools in August, said the biggest challenge in making schools safe for transgender students can be other parents.

"It's not usually the students who have issues with other transgender students," Broek said. "It's the parents who have issues with the transgender students when they're seeking access to the locker rooms and restrooms they identify with."

According to Broek, other common issues impacting transgender students in school include use of pronouns, access to restrooms and locker rooms, access to feminine hygiene products and overnight field trips.

Broek stressed the importance of schools developing plans and procedures for supporting transgender students in advance, rather than figuring them out as issues arise.

"When we wait until the issue is in front of us, it makes it that much harder for the transgender individual, who is just trying to assert their rights," Broek said.



From left: Elizabeth Ricks, Kathryn Vander Broek and Sunghee Sohn.

Photo by Jake Wittich

der people in a discussion Oct. 11 at Hinshaw & Culbertson law offices.

The panel, "Trans 101: Laws and Policies Affecting the Transgender Community," included Kathryn Vander Broek, deputy general counsel at Waukegan Public Schools; Elizabeth Ricks, legal director and staff attorney of the Trans-Legal Program for Chicago House and Social Service Agency; and Sunghee W. Sohn, an associate at Hinshaw, 151 N. Franklin.

Sohn said a large issue is that there is no federal statute protecting LGBTQ people from discrimination.

"We had a bright light under President Obama, whose executive order 11246 prohibited federal contractors from discrimination, including gender identity, but this was effectively gutted under President Trump in 2017," Sohn said.

However, Sohn said courts in some cases have interpreted existing protections to include sexual orientation and gender identity, as seen in March of this year when the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that RG & GR Harris Funeral Homes violated Title VII by firing Aimee Stephens when she told her employer she's transgender and would be presenting as a woman.



Activists at the Oct. 13 Women's March to the Polls.
Photos by Windy City Times staff



Left: Reyna Ortiz at the Project VIDA event. Right: Alexis Martinez, Megan Mia and Jerome Montgomery.

Photos by Vern Hester



Project VIDA celebrates National Coming Out Day

BY VERN HESTER

On Oct. 11, Project VIDA, in partnership with the Chicago Department of Public Health, presented an event marking National Coming Out Day at the Logan Theater. The event featured several curated speakers who shared their coming-out stories, and there was an open-floor segment during which guests could share their experiences.

Chicago Board of Public Health LGBTQ liaison Antonio King started the evening by commenting on the success of 2017's Coming Out Day event Affinity Community Services co-sponsored at 2850 S. Wabash St. King said that he wanted to come to the Northwest Side of town and meet with an entirely different part of the LGBTQ community because "we're all over—we're multicultural and multidimensional, and our cultures [on the North and South sides of Chicago] are different." Project VIDA CEO Jerome Montgomery thanked everyone in attendance and reminded guests that the group has been serving the African-American and Latinx communities for 26 years.

For the curated segment, host Karari Olvera Orozco introduced activist Alexis Martinez, who spoke about coming out in the '70s while a member of a street gang. When asked, "What would you tell your younger self now?," Martinez said, "Never let anyone tell you to wait. Be who you are now. ... There's always going to be someone who has a problem with you, whether your cis-gendered, straight, gay, Black or white." Cruz Rodriguez spoke about the difficulty he faced in not only coming out to his mother, but in navigating his Muslim faith and gaining acceptance. Model Megan Mia spoke about overcoming her biggest hurdle: herself.

Later, activist/author Reyna Ortiz told a humorous story about her coming out to her mother. When asked what advice she would give her younger self, she said, "I had to face the biggest problem for trans people: We are living in a social construct that is not made for us."

Project VIDA's Debby Rijos closed the evening by sharing her own coming-out, which was spurred by her Uncle Johnny, who came home to Chicago to be with family during the last months of his life in the '80s. She decided to come out at the time of his death (from AIDS)—as well as support the LGBTQ community and become active in it.

Activists energize women's march

Tens of thousands attended the Women's March to the Polls that took place Oct. 13 in Grant Park and downtown Chicago.

The event was a follow-up to the march held in January. According to a press release that Women's March Chicago issued before the event, "This rally and march is a critical next step in voter engagement, as women deliver on the promise that they are changing outcomes at the ballot box to protect a fragile democracy. This rally will reflect the power of the women's movement as we march and head to the polls in greater numbers than ever before."

The rally and subsequent march honored first-time voters, while energizing more people as they head to the polls.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 6.

Windy City Times staff photos



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Lori Lightfoot.
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

ELECTIONS 2018

Mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot unveils LGBTQ policy framework

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

On Oct. 11, which was National Coming Out Day, Chicago mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot unveiled her LGBTQ policy framework at a roundtable discussion at Center on Halsted (the Center).

Lightfoot, who identifies as a lesbian, is the first LGBTQ candidate for mayor of Chicago. Speaking about how she decided to approach her campaign, Lightfoot said one of the discussions she had with her wife, who is white, was if they would involve their daughter in any publicity. They ultimately decided she would indeed be a part of it. Lightfoot explained that it was important for all three of them to be visible in this historic moment, especially to show young LGBTQ people they could live an authentic life themselves. A number of young people and parents have approached Lightfoot on the campaign trail and thanked her for helping them visualize a positive future for themselves or their LGBTQ family members.

"I wanted to send a message that there was a light at the end of what seems like, at times, a very dark [coming out] tunnel," said Lightfoot. "We have made a lot of progress [to protect LGBTQ people's rights] in this city and state, but we cannot forget that there is still a lot of work to be done. [For example], a huge percentage of the homeless youth in our city are LGBTQ."

Lightfoot spoke about a recent visit to a drop-in center, and being struck by the number of Black youth who travel outside their own communities to the North Side so they can feel safe as a member of the LGBTQ community. She explained that it is vital to talk about and address the bigotry that exists in some Chicago communities toward LGBTQ people, so they do not feel like they have to leave those areas to find a sense of belonging. Lightfoot said that no matter if she wins the election or not, she will be working on creating safe

spaces for LGBTQ youth across the city.

Lightfoot highlighted the main points of her LGBTQ policy plan, including "guaranteeing visibility and participation in city government by actively recruiting LGBTQ+ staff and appointees, bolstering safety and justice for the trans community, protecting and supporting LGBTQ+ youth, promoting wellness and health, addressing the needs of LGBTQ+ seniors and ensuring LGBTQ+ veterans get a fair deal."

Lightfoot said she will appoint three LGBTQ liaisons—one each from the North, South and West Sides—to be "the eyes and ears for me and our larger team for what is happening on the ground, to make sure we are as responsive as we can be of their needs."

She also spoke about the about the two transgender Chicago women who have been murdered since 2018 began, adding that protecting transgender people from violence is a key priority for her. Regarding health and wellness, Lightfoot said that she wants the city to get to zero new HIV transmissions, and that LGBTQ elders should be able to grow older with dignity wherever they live.

Among the audience members' concerns were barriers coming from the anti-LGBTQ Republican-controlled federal government.

Lightfoot said Chicago has to be a "bulwark against the daily hostility we see coming from Washington, D.C., because we stand for a different set of values."

Other questions centered around making police more responsive to and accountable to the community, why the bars were closed early during Pride but not after sporting events, and how Lightfoot would address sex workers and mental health issues.

See <https://lightfootforchicago.com/> for more information.

Trans Israeli activist Ofer Erez on making IDF history, Open House role

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Ofer Erez, 25, made history when he became Israel's first openly trans Israel Defense Forces (IDF) officer in 2013. Erez has since retired from the military and is the CEO of Jerusalem Open House (JOH), the city's LGBTQ community organization.

A Wider Bridge (AWB) awarded JOH an impact grant this summer to help fund, alongside other funders, the annual Jerusalem March for Pride and Tolerance, which was attended by 30,000 people. Erez will be bringing his story to Chicago Oct. 22 at Temple Sholom, 3480 N. Lake Shore Dr.; the event, co-sponsored by AWB and Temple Sholom, begins at 6:30 p.m.

Erez served in the IDF for six and a half years, the first three years in the behavior analysis unit and the rest serving as a General Headquarters project officer. He explained that he could not be an out trans serviceperson when he entered the military because it was not yet even an option.

"Nobody in the IDF knew what it meant to be trans," said Erez. "I was also terrified I would face transphobia and be discriminated against."

Although Erez did not disclose his status as a trans person when he was drafted, he said he did tell his immediate commanders right away because he wanted to be honest with them about who he is. They immediately accepted him.

After Erez came out to the entire company, he explained that it became apparent to him that this was something the IDF should address on a systemic level.

"I approached IDF's Gender Affairs Office and explained the necessity of this policy," said Erez. "We analyzed my personal experience, including the obstacles and challenges that I had to face, and thought about how to change the system to make the IDF more trans friendly. From those conversations, we came up with a trans inclusive policy that the IDF now uses for every trans soldier."

Erez decided to leave the military because he wanted to serve the community in a different way. He described JOH as an amazing organization.

"I saw in JOH's work so many aspects that I can relate to and be a part of," said Erez. "The JOH is not only working to build a community or to create social change, it does both of these things together. It is a space where people from many diverse communities can be together under one roof. I love that the JOH is aiming for a more inclusive, open and tolerant Jerusalem. It makes the city better not just for LGBTQ people, but for all people."



Ofer Erez.
Photo by Elad Lifshitz

As for what the AWB Impact Grant has done for JOH, Erez said it allowed them to organize the largest-ever Jerusalem March for Pride and Tolerance, where people from all over Israel and elsewhere gathered to celebrate. Erez explained that among the attendees were secular and religious people, people of all ages, Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Erez's journey to this moment in his young life began in the northern part of Israel on a small kibbutz called Ein Dor. He later moved with his family to another kibbutz called Kfar Menahem.

A kibbutz is a small community usually located far away from the cities," said Erez. "It is like a small town, where everyone knows each other. If you are a kid, you grow up with a tight-knit group of friends. You feel like you are surrounded by a big family."

"Because I had supportive parents, I grew up feeling true to myself without having to explain it to others," said Erez. "My parents let me cut my hair and they did not make me wear girls' clothes. Coming out, to me, was not about coming out to myself, but about explaining to others how I felt. It was hard because there were no role models for trans people around me. There was no trans visibility. Not in the media. Not in my community."

Erez said he had no way of expressing himself openly until he was 16 years old and met another trans person named Eli who was dating a friend of his. After that, he was able to tell his friends privately and they were all supportive.

"The first time I actually came out publicly in front of a group was during my military service," said Erez.

Equality Illinois calls for more diversity from Rauner

On National Coming Out Day (Oct. 11), LGBTQ organization Equality Illinois called out Gov. Bruce Rauner for “the unbelievable lack of LGBTQ representation among the more than 400 appointments made ... to state boards and commissions during Fiscal Year 2018,” a press release noted.

The data is contained in a report quietly the governor’s office published.

Equality Illinois stated that, of the 431 appointments the governor made between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018, only one appointee publicly identifies as an LGB person. Furthermore, despite the new LGBTQ Public Service Law that took effect Jan. 1, 2018, transgender Illinoisans who apply or who are appointed aren’t even being counted.

Brian C. Johnson, CEO of Equality Illinois, said, “On behalf of the estimated 400,000 LGBTQ adults who live in Illinois, we call on the Governor’s Office to be more aggressive in recruiting top talent and do better to ensure that Illinoisans of all backgrounds are inspired to lend their strengths and talents to public service. We must live up to our shared value of inclusion in the Land of Lincoln.”

The report is at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/bac/Documents/2018-Board-And-Commission-Act-Report-10.01.2018.pdf>.

Jury awards Wis. trans women \$780K

In Madison, Wisconsin, a jury awarded \$780,000 to two transgender state employees who were denied insurance coverage of transition surgeries, The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported.

In September, a judge ordered that care is covered. The most recent trial was only to determine the damages due to the plaintiffs, identified as University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate student Alina Boyden, and University of Wisconsin School of Medicine research Shannon Andrews.

The American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU of Wisconsin and volunteer attorneys from the law firm Hawks Quindel filed the lawsuit.

Larry Dupuis, legal director for the ACLU of Wisconsin, said in a statement, “No one should be denied health care because of who they are. Depriving transgender people of access to transition-related care is discrimination and we are pleased the jury awarded Shannon and Alina the money they need to cover their care and for the harm they suffered. Discrimination comes with a cost, and for the State of Wisconsin the bill has come.”

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article is at <https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/2018/10/11/jury-awards-780-000-transgender-state-employee/1600250002/>.

Shepard to be interred in D.C.

Matthew Shepard—who was murdered at 21 years old in 1998 in an anti-gay hate crime—will be interred at Washington National Cathedral following a service of thanksgiving and remembrance on Friday, Oct. 26, at the request of the Shepard family.

Oct. 12 was the 20th anniversary of Shepard’s death. The service will celebrate and recall Shepard’s life and will be followed by a private interment in the Cathedral crypt. The service will be presided over by the Right Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, Episcopal bishop of Washington, and the Right Rev. V. Gene Robinson, the first openly gay priest to be consecrated a bishop in the Episcopal Church.

Shepard will be one of approximately 200 people to have been interred in the Cathedral over the last century. Others interred at the Cathedral include President Woodrow Wilson; Bishop Thomas Claggett, the first Episcopal bishop ordained on U.S. soil; Helen Keller and her teacher, Anne Sullivan; and U.S. Navy Admiral George Dewey.

Thorn stepping down from OutServe-SLDN

Matt Thorn has announced that he is stepping down as president/CEO of the LGBT military organization OutServe-SLDN.

In a press release, Thorn said, “A test of a lead-

er is to recognize when he or she has fulfilled their role. I believe I have done that.” Thorn became the organization’s leader in February 2016 after serving as interim executive director since February 2015.

Thorn added, in part, “I am proud of my tenure at OutServe-SLDN: from solidifying partnerships with over 40 organizations, creating a robust network of pro-bono partners resulting in the access and assistance to legal services for over 2,000 individuals and over \$4 million worth of legal services in the last four years.”

Also, he said that “OutServe-SLDN also assisted in the initial implementation of open transgender service and vigorously advocated for the confirmation of Eric Fanning to be Secretary of the Army.”

Andy Blevins will succeed Thorn; Thorn recommended him for the position.

HIV Care Connect releases health quiz

In an effort to assist Illinois residents living with HIV who are affected by social determinants of health, Illinois HIV Care Connect has introduced the “Good Health Is More Than Health Care” Quiz.

People living with HIV are encouraged to take the quiz, which is at <https://www.surveymz.com/s3/4562185/Good-Health-Is-More-Than-Health-Care-Quiz>. For more about Illinois HIV Care Connect, visit HIVCareConnect.com.



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 Howard Brown Health

ELECTIONS 2018

Candidate Kwame Raoul on attorney general's vital roles

BY MATT SIMONETTE

State Sen. Kwame Raoul—who, in 2004, took over the role that then-state Sen. Barack Obama vacated when he left for the U.S. Senate—has been locked in a challenging showdown with attorney Erika Harold to become Illinois' next attorney general.

Raoul spoke with Windy City Times about his views about the post, as well as the attorney general's responsibilities to the LGBT community.

Windy City Times: Were you to win, do you see your time in office as being any different from the time Attorney General Lisa Madigan has been in office?

Kwame Raoul: I certainly don't look to fix what's not broken within the attorney general's office. [Madigan] has been a tremendous consumer advocate and advocate for victims, and certainly I intend on continuing what Lisa Madigan has done, in a very strong manner, in the office. Are there things I intend to build upon or expand? Yes, most certainly. I worked with Lisa Madigan to create a public-access counselor within the attorney general's office. Neither she nor I could have anticipated that the public access counselor would be as overburdened as they are right now. So one of the things I would do ... is try to create better transparency, by way

of that public access counselor being more efficiently run. That would be by way of directing more resources to that public access counselor for processing claims.

Secondly, I think criminal justice reform is an area I have been very active in, in the legislature, and I think is one the attorney general's voice has been absent in. I would leverage the attorney general's bully pulpit to be able to have the voice of advocacy, both from a policy-making standpoint as well as with the public at large, to make sure that we exercise additional reforms.

WCT: Where does the attorney general fit in, with respect to municipal issues, such as police corruption, or national issues?

KR: That's my third prong. I was recently at a democratic attorney general's association policy conference. Lisa Madigan introduced me. What she said is that I've "wanted her job for a while," which is true. ... I had expected her to run for governor about five years ago, and prepared then to run for attorney general. That role that I prepared for then is vastly different than what it is today, because of the role attorneys general have played both individually and collectively, given the challenges presented by the federal government, and the Trump administration in particular. I would look to play more of a leadership role in the efforts to fight back against what we anticipate and what we have experienced already from the administration.

WCT: What do you see as the most pertinent issues for the LGBT community? What responsibilities does the attorney general have towards the LGBT community?

KR: One of the most important parts they have to play is with respect to discrimination, particularly within the workplace, where potentially [after Justice Brett Kavanaugh's Supreme Court appointment] the perspective on what is allowable could shift. ... Given the potential shift in the court, what we may need to see in Illinois is protections implanted into our state constitutions to give us protection against how the courts might interpret the U.S. Constitution.

WCT: Why do you think voters should choose you over Erika Harold?

KR: I think the choices are clearly distinguishable. I applaud Erika Harold for lending herself to the journey of running for office. You put yourself under a magnifying glass. It's absolutely okay for her to have different opinions on critical issues than I do. One of the things that she has said is that her personal views do not matter. I think they do. She said that in the context of saying that her sole job is to enforce the law. I know, from policy-making, that the attorney general weighs in both on behalf of and against policy changes on a week-to-week basis. The notion that those personal views don't matter is inac-



Attorney general candidate Kwame Raoul.

Photo courtesy of campaign team

curate. When my opponent says what her views might be on sexual orientation, or a woman's right to decide what's right for her body ... [I think] our views may be different, but they mat-

ter. For her to say that they don't matter shows a lack of appreciation for the full scope of the duties.

See KwameRaoul.com.

ELECTIONS 2018

Early voting info; election judges needed

Early voting for the Nov. 6 general election has started.

Currently, early voting is taking place at 69 W. Washington St. on the fifth floor and on the pedway for suburban Cook County voters. For Chicago residents, early voting is available at the Loop Super Site at 175 W. Washington St.; at the 50 ward sites, it is available Oct. 22-Nov. 5.

Voters do not need a reason or excuse to use early voting; however, voters may need to present government-issued photo identification.

Ballots cast in early voting are final. After

casting ballots in early voting, voters may not return to amend, change or undo a ballot for any reason. It is a felony to vote more than once—or to attempt to vote more than once—in the same election.

To view a list of sites, visit ChicagoElections.com/en/early-voting.html and <https://www.cookcountyclerk.com/service/early-voting-locations> (for Chicago and suburban residents, respectively).

Also, election judges are needed. Qualifications include being a registered voter in Cook County; not being a committeeman, precinct captain or candidate; and agreeing that by law, the name, address and party affiliation are subject to public disclosure; among other criteria.

The pay is \$200 each for those who complete training and then serve on Election Day; visit <https://chicagoelections.com/en/serving-as-a-judge-of-election.html>.



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New Boystown Legacy Walk plaques unveiled

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Dozens of community members gathered along Halsted Street the afternoon of Oct. 13 for the unveiling of two new Legacy Walk plaques celebrating the lives of activist Marsha P. Johnson and composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

The afternoon was a somewhat bittersweet one for Legacy Walk Executive Director Victor Salvo, as the new installations now occupy the final two spots along the Legacy Walk, essentially completing the initial goal of an open-air museum along Halsted Street celebrating the LGBT community.

The first plaques were unveiled in 2012.

"This is the fulfillment of a dream that began 31 years ago," said Salvo. He said that he was struck by the contrasting lives of Johnson and Tchaikovsky, noting that Johnson, a prominent figure in the 1969 Stonewall riots, "did much to be buoyant and joyful," while Tchaikovsky's days were marked by solemnity.

Brave Space Alliance Executive Director LaSaia Wade helped Salvo to unveil Johnson's plaque; community organizer Xavier MaatRa also delivered remarks on Johnson.

Tchaikovsky's plaque was unveiled by Alexander Mars, a Russian gay man who sought asylum in the United States. In his remarks, he described the dire circumstances facing LGBT Russians: "The homophobic Russian government is trying to control information about LGBT people, and keep us in the dark."

Ravinia Festival Welz Kauffman, state Sen. Heather Steans and her twin sister, Ravinia Festival Board Chair Jennifer Steans, also spoke at the Tchaikovsky unveiling. Kauffman recalled that hearing about Tchaikovsky being gay inspired him to come out to his mother.

State Sen. Steans mentioned that the Legacy Walk spoke to the need for making LGBT history part of the history curriculum in the state. She introduced a bill which passed in the Illinois Senate that would do just that in 2018; the legislation has yet to come up for a vote in the Illinois House.



From left: Victor Salvo, LaSaia Wade and Gloria Allen in front of plaque for Marsha P. Johnson. Photo by Matt Simonette

Victory Fund brunch features local, national politicians

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The responsibilities of elected LGBT officials to their constituents was a central talking point in an Oct. 14 speech in downtown Chicago by transgender Virginia state legislator Danica Roem.

Roem emphasized the effectiveness of constituent services in her platform before her 2017 election. In her Chicago speech, delivered at the Victory Fund's 2018 Chicago Champagne Brunch, she added that the most important "constituent service" was ultimately ensuring the fair-and-equal treatment of all of one's constituents.

"We are resilient," Roem said. "LGBT politicians are resilient because they are members of the LGBT community."

Roem praised and encouraged openly gay Cook County Board candidate Kevin Morrison, who had spoken earlier. Morrison earlier in the week withdrew a blistering allegedly anti-LGBT attack ad from his opponent for the seat.

Roem said such attacks come about when politicians "know that they have lost the issues."

In Morrison's remarks, he spoke at length about his commitment to mental health services in Cook County, adding, "I want to make sure that the Cook County Jail is no longer the largest provider of mental health services in America."

Victory Fund, which is committed to training and otherwise giving support to openly LGBT candidates with strong chances of winning office in their races, endorsed 272 out of about 600 candidates across the country in the last year, according to organization President Annise Parker, the former mayor of Houston. She admitted that such a wide turnout of candidates was "daunting" for the organization, adding, "That is probably 100 more candidates than what we are used to endorsing in any single year."

Parker also emphasized that resources need to

be directed at good politicians into state government: "Bad legislation starts in statehouses."

State Rep. Kelly Cassidy presented U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky with Victory Fund's award named for Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) Commissioner Debra Shore, long an active local member for the organization.

In her remarks, Schakowsky praised Shore, noting that, prior to Shore's arrival, MWRD posts were often regarded in the political community as positions for "hacks." She added, however, that Shore "has totally transformed that into a great environmental organization."

Schakowsky further spoke about her grandson, who is transgender: "It's so wonderful how not only our family, but the entire community, has embraced him. I am a thrilled grandmother."

Among those local politicians also attending the event were Chicago mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot; Aids. Tom Tunney and James Cappelman; and state Rep. Sam Yingling.



Danica Roem.

Photo by Matt Simonette

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Gay juror recounts Van Dyke trial experience

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Early in September, Chicagoan Will Harpest was reading a New York Times article about Mayor Rahm Emanuel's decision not to run for re-election. That article mentioned that trial selection in the murder trial of Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke, who was charged with the murder of Laquan McDonald, was imminent.

It didn't take long for Harpest—who was scheduled for jury duty—to put two and two together, especially when he arrived at the Cook County Courthouse and saw the entrance teeming with protesters. He was indeed to be a possible juror for the high-profile Van Dyke trial, which would eventually find the officer guilty of second-degree murder and 16 counts of aggravated battery.

"When I arrived at jury duty, there were 250 other people there that first day," he recalled. "We each filled out a 20-page paper, and were given a time to come back the next week. When

I came back, there were only none of us, and we were sent into the jury room. We went in, and there sat the entire prosecution team and defense team, and Judge [Vincent] Gaughan. They each had a copy of the paper I'd filled out."

After some questions, Harpest was again sent away. "Then, about an hour later, about three of us were called back and we were sworn in as jurors."

Among the questions on that initial questionnaire was, "What bumper stickers do you have on your car?" Harpest answered that he had "an equality sticker" there, even adding a drawing of it.

Gaughan asked him during the interview, "What's an 'equality sticker'?"

Harpest replied, "I'm a gay man, and that's for an organization that supports equality for all LGBT people."

From that day on, Harpest and his fellow jurors were asked to avoid news about the trial, but word broke that a gay man was serving on the jury.

He said that his relationship with his fellow jurors was cordial, and that he came out to them during the course of a conversation about what their questionnaires looked like: "I said, 'I'm the gay one.' After that, it was fine; I got along with with them fine."

Harpest said jurors were "somewhat aware" of the possible repercussions of the decision in the trial, since larger questions of CPD accountability and its relationship with the city's Black and Brown communities were among the stakes.

"But remember that we were not reading newspapers, or watching TV or listening to the radio," he said. "So [the community] got a daily dose of, 'This is what the jury is doing now,' but we didn't get any of that hype. Most of Chicago was feeling that anxiety and we did not feel that."

Gaughan offered the jury the option of being sequestered in a hotel or going home for the duration of the trial. They chose the latter option,



Will Harpest.

Photo courtesy of Harpest

and were only sequestered one night as they deliberated. Harpest and his partner adhered to his instructions not to discuss the case.

"He followed the rules and said nothing to me about what was going on," Harpest said. "I could tell that he was tense. When I got home that Friday, when it was all done, we both cried. It was like he was in the closet—he couldn't tell anybody else what I was experiencing. He had to hold it inside. ... We were in such a bubble that we were not aware of the intensity of the feeling in the rest of the city."

Harpest said that the deliberations were thoughtful and cordial; jurors focused their discussion on whether the prosecution had met their burden of proof.

"A lot of the discussion was about understanding what the law said," he recalled. "Each [criminal charge] had attributes we had to agree on. The big job was making sure that all 12 of us understood those words in the same way. ... It was

understanding the language, and what it meant, that was the biggest challenge."

Indeed, Harpest said that the deliberations, though difficult, were also somewhat refreshing to him, in that they "reminded him of a time when political discussion and differences were understood and respected. ... It was a great bubble to be in. Once we understood the words, the puzzle-pieces came together fairly quickly."

Harpest also had high praise for Gaughan, whom he said repeatedly expressed his respect and appreciation for jurors.

"He sat down with us after it was over, and asked us if we had any questions," Harpest recalled. "He then made the comment that, 'Whoever put together this jury system that works this way should be in heaven. Because it works—you have 12 diverse people from all around Cook County coming to a decision like this. If society [outside the court] worked like that, you'd have a much healthier society.'"

that protects abortion rights; raises the minimum wage to \$15; strengthens firearm restrictions; protects the environment; expands access to quality, affordable healthcare; protects LG-BTQ rights in schools; and protects immigrant families.

Between now and election day (Nov. 6), the coalition will embark on this agenda through a campaign that includes phone banking, door-knocking, and a digital engagement strategy via text, email and social media.

See ForwardIllinois.org.

PFLAG conference Nov. 10 in suburb

The PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois is hosting a day-long PFLAG Conference on Saturday, Nov. 10, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., at Southminster Pres-

byterian Church, 916 E. Central Rd., Arlington Heights.

The event will feature nationally renowned speaker and The Gender Cool Project founder Gearah Goldstein, who will provide the keynote: "LGBTQIA+ Positivity: Moving Beyond the 'Surviving To Thriving' Narrative." In addition, Goldstein is providing a workshop on "Impactful Public Speaking."

Also, Equality Illinois Director of Policy Mike Ziri will speak on "Advocacy & Policy: How to Create Change;" a panel discussion will explore "Creating Inclusive Middle Schools;" and Jamie Curtis, director of chapter engagement from PFLAG National will headline the forum "Create Thriving Chapters."

Visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-power-of-positivity-time-to-thrive-tickets-50202326510>.

PASSAGES

Robert Klein Engler

Robert Klein Engler, of Chicago and Omaha, passed away Oct. 3 in Omaha. He was 75.

Robert was a well-known and brilliant writer, leaving thousands of poems, innumerable plays and books of short stories, and countless essays. He won two awards from the Illinois Arts Council for his poetry. He was also an artist who painted dozens of canvases which were widely displayed.



Robert Klein Engler.

Photo courtesy of Alan Gresham

Robert held degrees from The University of Illinois-Urbana, and the University of Chicago Divinity School. He was a professor at Daley College and Roosevelt University.

He belonged to various writing groups, including Tall Grass, and served for years as president of Newtown Writers. He founded several performance venues where actors performed the works of the group's authors. He help found the group's press and served at times as the editor of the group's literary anthology.

He loved New Orleans and many of his works took place there. He thought at one point he might move there but in fact spent his last years in Omaha, a city he ver much enjoyed.

He will be sorely missed by his friends around the world.

Forward Illinois coalition launches election agenda

On Oct. 9, a coalition of progressive organizations—including Sierra Club Illinois, SEIU, Planned Parenthood Illinois Action, Equality Illinois, Illinois Coalition Against Handgun Violence, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), UFCW 881, Chicago Votes and Citizen Action Illinois—came together ahead of the next gubernatorial debate to jointly outline an agenda and to announce a major mobilization program in the closing weeks of the election season.

The newly formed Forward Illinois coalition detailed how new polling data shows nearly 70 percent support (across party lines) an agenda

Jackhammer Complex purchased, saving LGBTQ bar from closure

BY JAKE WITTICH

Two prominent LGBT bar owners have purchased the Jackhammer Complex, saving the North Side bar from closure.

Mark Robertson and Mike Sullivan, owners of The SoFo Tap and Meeting House Tavern in Andersonville, announced their purchase of the Jackhammer business and its building, 6406 N. Clark St., on Oct. 9. Jackhammer will now be part of 2Bears Tavern Group, which runs Robertson and Sullivan's bars.

"Jackhammer is a safe, engaging environment for the LGBTQ community and fetish groups that are a part of it," Robertson said. "It's the epitome of what we want to be and the same model we have for The SoFo Tap and Meeting House Tavern. Our goal is to provide a second home for our communities."



Exterior of Jackhammer.

Photo by Kirk Williamson

Jimmy Keup—who opened Jackhammer with his late partner, Joe Maggio, in 2001—will remain general manager of Jackhammer, promising to maintain the bar's identity as a safe place where all types of people are welcome. Robertson and Sullivan will co-manage the bar with Keup beginning Oct. 14 and then assume ownership of Jackhammer after the business transaction's closing, expected in November. The real-estate transaction will likely wrap up in December, Sullivan said.

"We get to continue our legacy of providing a safe space for everyone, regardless of gender, to come and enjoy themselves and explore their fetish endeavors," Keup said. "We can now make that space bigger and better for our community and the people who come from all over the world to visit."

Keup announced in June that Jackhammer could face imminent closure because its building, which also houses the Leather64TEN store and several residential units, was foreclosed in 2016. According to a press release, Leather64TEN, which has spent 13 years at that location, could be easily relocated, but Jackhammer's eviction would mean the bar is gone forever because its 4 a.m. liquor license is tied to the address and non-transferable.

This prompted concerned community members to launch a widespread marketing campaign to

save the Jackhammer Complex. According to Sullivan, Tom Fencl, owner of the Davis Theater, played a key role in that effort.

Fencl belongs to a group that acquired the rights to the building, and was tasked with evicting Jackhammer, Leather64TEN and the building's residents when an out-of-town investment firm offered to buy it, according to the press release announcing Robertson and Sullivan's purchase.

"I was heartbroken to hear that such a long-standing institution was about to end," Fencl said in the press release. "I was able to convince the majority shareholders that given more time, I could save the Jackhammer."

This left Fencl with limited time to find a new owner for the building.

Sullivan said Fencl recruited power broker Laura Rahilly, of Rahilly & Associates with Coldwell Banker, to find a buyer committed to keeping Jackhammer in business.

"Tom is fantastic for recognizing this is more than just a business opportunity to sell the building," Rahilly said. "Instead he took the more challenging road to secure the right buyers who would keep the integrity of what Jackhammer is to Chicago and the community."

Rahilly said she was overwhelmed by the amount of inquiries she received about how to support the Jackhammer and prevent its closure.

"From a real estate business perspective, I have never been more bombarded with phone calls and emails inquiring about a property," Rahilly said. "This was a very complicated transaction, and we're fortunate Mark and Mike were able to save the Jackhammer given their success as bar owners in Andersonville and commitment to keeping Jimmy, who is the heart of Jackhammer."

Robertson and Sullivan purchased The SoFo Tap, 4923 N. Clark St., in July 2011 and rebranded it in October of that year, Sullivan said. The duo opened Meeting House Tavern, 5025 N. Clark St., on June 28 of this year, shortly after Keup announced the Jackhammer Complex's foreclosure.

"Although the timing happened in a busy point in our lives, we didn't want it to prevent us from



New Jackhammer purchasers Mark Robertson and Mike Sullivan.

Photo by Kyle Henderson, Nightspots archives

exploring this opportunity," Sullivan said. "The Jackhammer is a source of strength for people that emboldens people to be themselves not just within the walls of the bar, but in their lives. We don't want our community to lose that space, so everything people love about Jackhammer is what they'll continue to see."

Marc Moder, who DJs at both Jackhammer and the SoFo Tap as DJ Moose, said in the press release that he's excited to see Robertson and Sullivan's management skills partner with the "heart and soul" of Jackhammer.

"I've stayed active at both venues for years because both at their core have a feeling of family and love above all else, which, for me, is the key to not only working with an establishment but patronizing it. I see big things ahead," Moder said.

The sale also means that Leather64TEN will be able to remain in its home next to Jackhammer, Sullivan said.

"Leather64TEN could have relocated somewhere else, but there's no better place for them than right next door, where the two businesses have such a great synergistic relationship," Sullivan said.

Keup said he's relieved and excited to work with Robertson and Sullivan and keep the Jackhammer Complex open.

"It was wonderful seeing the outpouring of love and support from the community and hearing how the bar has changed peoples' lives," Keup said. "I'm proud that Jackhammer is known as a place that welcomes and encourages everyone to be themselves, and excited to keep that space open."

WCT founder at Oct. 18 forum

Out@COMCAST and Out@NBCUNIVERSAL, in conjunction with Out & Equal Chicagoland, will present "The LGBTQ Movement: Then and Now" Thursday, Oct. 18, at NBC Studios, 455 N. Cityfront Plaza Dr., 6:45-8 p.m.

NBC5's Chris Hush will moderate the panel, which is slated to include Chicago Reader Publisher and Windy City Times founder Tracy Baim; Equality Institute CEO and Out & Equal Chicagoland Co-Chair Bernadette Smith; and Walczak

Hernandez, P.C. attorney Daniel Hernandez.

The event is free; visit "Out@COMCAST and Out@NBCUNIVERSAL Present: The LGBTQ Movement: Then and Now" on Eventbrite.com to register.

HRC Chicago to honor Aurora group

Indivisible Aurora will receive the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Chicago Community Leadership Award at the 2018 HRC Chicago Gala and Auction on Saturday, Oct. 27, at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile,

starting at 6 p.m.

Founded fewer than two years ago by Executive Director Chuck Adams, Indivisible Aurora has swiftly become a progressive advocate for historically marginalized communities in the city of Aurora.

The night will begin with a VIP reception followed by the silent auction and main dinner event. The event has an array of speakers each year, with past appearances from former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, marriage-equality plaintiff Jim Obergefell and ex-NFL player Michael Sam.

Tickets are on sale now at HRCChicago.org/gala.

viewpoints



Matthew Shepard's murder revisited

With October being LGBTQ History Month it allows the LGBTQ community to look back at historical events. And Matthew Shepard's murder is one of them.

Oct. 12 marked 20 years since the death of Matthew Shepard. In October 1998, Shepard, then 21, was a first-year college student at University of Wyoming. Under the guise of friendship, two men (Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson) lured Shepard from a tavern, tortured and bludgeoned him with their rifles, and then tethered him to a rough-hewn wooden fence to die—simply because he was gay.

That's the story the world over has come to know. And, for the most part, the LGBTQ community is tenaciously sticking with it, resulting in numerous hagiographies on Shepard as the quintessential LGBTQ icon.

However, with all iconic narratives, apocryphal tales abound, too, resulting in queries concerning the truth.

In 2013 investigative journalist Stephen Jimenez, who is himself gay, wrote *The Book of Matt: Hidden Truths About the Murder of Matthew Shepard*, upending a canonized narrative we all have grown familiarly comfortable with, irrespective of its sensationalized macabre details.

I had the pleasure of meeting Jimenez at his book reading at the Harvard Coop that October 2013. I told Stephen, referring to his book, that perhaps it's easier to kill the messenger (him) than hear his message.

Jimenez posits that Shepard's murder had nothing to do with his sexual orientation but rather his

involvement in the deadly underworld of Laramie's crystal methamphetamine drug trafficking. Jimenez writes that Shepard was not only a user but he was a courier who had plans just before his death to drive a shipment of meth.

"I learned that Matthew had been a user of meth. And from everything I was able to trace, Matthew got into meth in a serious way, when he was living in Denver before he moved to Laramie," Jimenez stated in an interview with Rachel Martin of Weekend Edition on NPR.

According to Jimenez, Shepard's murderers were not strangers—one is a bisexual crystal-meth addict who not only knew Matthew, but partied, bought drugs from and had sex with Matthew. With this "new" information, a more textured but troubling narrative emerges.

The response, however, to Jimenez's book was a thunderous rebuke that resulting in him becoming an instant media sensation—and a pariah, Judas and a colossal sellout. The response to Jimenez's book was such that Aaron Hicklin's article "Have We Got Matthew Shepard All Wrong?" (in *The Advocate*) asked, "Did our need to make a symbol of Shepard blind us to a messy, complex story that is darker and more troubling than the established narrative?"

In a 2004 episode of the television newsmagazine show *20/20*, investigative journalist Elizabeth Vargas also reported that money and drugs motivated Shepard killers' actions, not homophobia. However, many immediately discredit the episode once finding out that Jimenez was its producer, resulting in his controversial book.

This story, nonetheless, shatters a revered icon for LGBTQ rights—one who was deliberately chosen because of his race, gender, and economic background.

"Matthew Shepard's status as a gay everyman was determined first by the media, then by gay-rights groups—with little knowledge of who he was. He looked like an attractive, angelic, white college student from the heart of conservative America," Gabriel Arana wrote in her 2009 piece "The Deification of Matthew Shepard: What the gay-rights movement has lost by making Shepard its icon."

The anointing of Matthew Shepard as an iconic image for LGBTQ rights not only concealed from the American public the real person, but also hid the other varied faces of hate crimes in 1998.

For example, there was James Byrd Jr. The hate crime is depicted as lynching by dragging. Walking home from a party along a highway in East Texas, Byrd was offered a ride. The ride resulted being dragged by his ankles to his death— simply because he was Black.

In reading Jimenez's book, we shockingly learn that Matthew Shepard is a fictive narrative. Some, however, would empathically argue it's a good one to politically canonize in order to push for needed legislative changes in the protection and understanding of LGBTQ Americans.

The fruit of the Shepard narrative includes The Matthew Shepard Foundation, The Laramie Project, the TV movie *The Matthew Shepard Story*, and The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Hate Crimes Prevention Act (mostly known as the Matthew Shepard Act), to name a few.

Not bad, some would say, for a story built on more fiction than truth.

The cultural currency of the Shepard narrative's shelf life, however, might now after nearly two decades be flickering out. Or, in 2018, it's now of no immediate political expediency to its framers and the community it was intended to serve.

"There are valuable reasons for telling certain stories in a certain way at pivotal times, but that doesn't mean we have to hold on to them once they've outlived their usefulness," Hicklin, wrote.

I read Jimenez's *The Book of Matt* as a cautionary tale of how the needs of a community might have trumped the truth. In retrospect, crystal meth was popular in urban gay clubs and in small-town America like Laramie. Homophobia, unquestionably, played a role in Shepard's death, but drugs might have, too.

This year will be the 20th anniversary of Shepard's death. Perhaps, we should revisit the story anew.

letters

Immigrants attacked

Dear *Windy City Times*:

The Trump administration has proposed changes to our immigration system, this time going after low-income immigrants. This new proposed rule would bar an individual who is likely to become a "public charge" to update their status to lawful permanent resident.

A "public charge" as defined by the U.S. Citizenship

and Immigration Services (USCIS) referee to an individual who is likely to become dependent on government for subsistence, as demonstrated by either the receipt of public cash assistance—such as Social Security Income, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

What this means is that any immigrant using these resources may not be allowed to eventually become a lawful permanent resident.

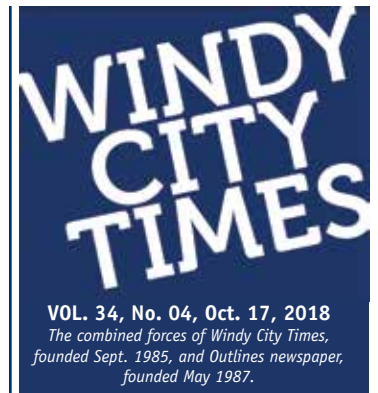
Make no mistake this is a direct attack on our families.

To learn more about the Public Charge, visit

<https://www.uscis.gov/greencard/public-charge> and <https://www.nilc.org/issues/economic-support/public-charge-overview/>.

Organizations and individuals can submit a formal comment on the proposed rule changes. To submit a comment, visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/10/10/2018-21106/inadmissibility-on-public-charge-grounds>.

*Association of Latinos/as
Motivating Action (ALMA)*



VOL. 34, No. 04, Oct. 17, 2018
The combined forces of *Windy City Times*,
founded Sept. 1985, and *Outlines newspaper*,
founded May 1987.

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THE GOLDEN GIRLS: BEA AFRAID!

PART OF OUR
HALLOWEEN
THEATER
WRAP-UP

PAGE 18

From left: Adrian Hadlock, Ed Jones, David Cerda and
Grant Drager in *The Golden Girls: Bea Afraid!*
Rick Aguilar Studios



THEATER REVIEW

Eclipsed

Playwright: Danaï Gurira

At: Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago Ave.

Tickets: \$18-30; PegasusTheatreChicago.org

Runs through: Nov. 4

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

"How you gonna survive?"

If you think about it broadly, every female must answer this question. But if you're a Liberian woman in 2003 when your country is in the throes of civil war, the answers are limited. You can have a commanding officer's baby and revel in the stolen outfits and boom boxes he brings you. You can become a peace activist, but only if you have the money and education. Or you can

pick up an AK-47 and make your own rules.

What if you're 15, abducted from your parents' home, tossed into a rebel camp and raped nightly? How exactly do you survive? Pegasus Theatre Chicago's *Eclipsed* sets out to answer that question and the results, while not for the faint of heart, are simply stunning.

In 2016, *Eclipsed* became the first play to open on Broadway with an all-Black, all-female creative team and cast. Playwright Danaï Gurira (yes, the same Danaï Gurira who starred in *Black Panther* and *The Walking Dead*) was inspired by a New York Times photo of African women, dressed fashionably and packing assault rifles. Indeed, one character (Adhana Reid)—formerly known as "Wife #2"—embodies that photograph. Once confined to a compound with a rebel officer's two other women, she now struts around in tight jeans and her very own gun, stopping in fre-

quently to rub her newfound power in the faces of the deeply insecure Wife #1 (Maya V. Prentiss) and the very pregnant Wife #3 (Aja Singletary). When a teenage girl (Sola Thompson) finds herself in the unfortunate role of Wife #4, she's torn between the two women who strive to protect her, and the one who seems to have it all despite the war-torn environment.

Director Ilesa Duncan infuses Gurira's frank dialogue with a series of arresting images. The Girl learns to use an assault rifle, her fingers festooned with bright pink nail polish. Peace activist Rita (Morayo Orija) teaches the illiterate Wife #1 to write her name in the dirt, and the latter's expression changes from disbelief to joy. When Wife #2 goes into labor, she cries out—not in pain, but for her beloved wig.

Gurira and Duncan never stop reminding us that these women are victims, but they're also human,

dancing to the radio and poring over their only book, a biography of Bill Clinton. (They refer to Monica Lewinsky as Clinton's "Wife #2.") The cast is incredibly skilled, navigating their characters' complexities and relationships with the kind of ease that only comes from very diligent preparation.

A thorough, illustrated lobby display informs the audience that the Liberian fight for freedom was very female-driven, with women negotiating for peace as well as shooting civilians. *Eclipsed* brings to glaring life a very recent piece of history with Black women at its center. "You have to work within the system," Wife #2 informs Rita, "and right now, the system is war." Perhaps one day, this line will feel irrelevant.

THEATER REVIEW

Crumbs From the Table of Joy

Playwright: Lynn Nottage

At: Raven Theatre, 6157 N Clark St.

Tickets: 773-338-2177 or

RavenTheatre.com; \$15-46

Runs through: Nov. 18

BY KAREN TOPHAM

Like Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lynn Nottage's 1995 family drama *Crumbs From the Table of Joy* is a memory play reflected through the mind of the oldest child of a very flawed, controlling single parent. In this case, the flawed parent is Godfrey Crump (Terence Sims), a man who has (as the play begins) recently lost the love of his life and uprooted his daughters Ernestine (Chanell Bell) and Ermina (Brandi Jiminez Lee) from the

south to Brooklyn.

The play's narrator is 17-year-old Ernestine. She's a high school senior who, unlike her social butterfly 15-year-old sister, pretty much keeps to herself. Her greatest escape is to go to movies, where she is awed by the great dramatic tales featuring actresses like Joan Crawford that manage to resolve themselves in two hours. Her own life offers no such neat resolutions. She lives in her imagination, even joyfully playing out alternative scenes from her life as she wishes they had occurred.

The Crump family's regimented life is uprooted twice: first by the arrival of Godfrey's sister-in-law, Lily Anne Greene (Brianna Buckley). Lily, arriving on the scene in ostentatiously bright and sharp clothing that the Crump girls cannot even dream of, is a hard-drinking, hard-socializing member of the Communist Party (because it is in favor of eliminating Jim Crow laws). The second disruption comes in the form of Godfrey's sudden marriage to a white German immigrant (Emily Tate), who at first seems a bit of a naïf but

reveals more depths as the play goes on.

Director Tyrone Phillips gets some outstanding performances from his entire cast. Sims plays Godfrey's desperation discover why he was left alone as the driving force of his life. It informs his newfound religion, his confusion over his feelings for Lily (with whom he shares a past), and even his honest and abiding love for his daughters. Lee is outstanding as the fiery, indomitable Ermina; she's a constant breath of fresh air in any scene she's a part of. Tate's throughout the play is fun to watch as she takes this white German woman (only a half-decade after WWII no less) and works to integrate her into the Crumps' lives only to meet massive resistance from both daughters.

Bell carries the weight of the play on her shoulders and is wonderful in the role of the wallflower daughter whose imagination is the greatest thing about her life. Her internalized and understated performance allows us to see all of the more flamboyant performances through her eyes, though it is by no means emotionless. Indeed, Ernestine

goes through just about every emotion possible during this play and Bell is a master of subtle expressions.

Among those flamboyant performances is Buckley's Lily. Buckley is a force of nature in this play: entering like a whirlwind in red, she immediately claims the stage, and whether boisterously drunk, audaciously sexy, or honestly tender, her Lily shines not only as the object of her nieces' affection but as one of the best performances of the year.

Crumbs From the Table of Joy asks us to find the delightful crumbs whenever and wherever we can because we don't always have full access to the table, but it suggests that the crumbs just may be enough. It's a quiet, simple play by Nottage, as understated as its main character, but it offers us a different glimpse into the playwright than her Pulitzer Prize-winning *Sweat and Ruined*; it's a sweet, lovely, loving play that never devolves into sappiness, and a small treasure in its own right.

THEATER REVIEW

Fun Harmless Warmachine

By: Fin Coe

At: Den Theatre, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Tickets: 773-697-3830 or

TheNewColony.org; \$10-20

Runs through: Nov. 4

BY SEAN MARGARET WAGNER

The New Colony is dedicated to the works of new authors, inviting you to take a risk on a show you've never seen.

Author Fin Coe and director James Fleming's *Fun Harmless Warmachine* attempts to make good on that potential before hitting a wall. What results is a narrow miss, so close to being a profound statement on toxic masculinity and loneliness, that I can't wait to see version 2.0 of this script.

Tom (Daniel Chenard) is disillusioned with his

life, job, and adulthood in general. His passion is online gaming, but his family and persistent friend DC (Londen Shannon) clutter his text history and distract him from it. When a co-worker (Emily Marso) turns him down for a coffee date, Tom rages so hard at his fellow gamers that he attracts the attention of a gaming society, the Order of the Sword. Soon, Tom is enlisted by Niko (Victor Musoni) and Hunter (Robert Koon) to join the Order, whose members game, but also battle outspoken detractors and dox anyone who has wronged them on social media.

It's innocuous enough to Tom, who is so won over by the camaraderie and respect he is handed, that his real life starts to improve. It doesn't occur to him to examine how complicit he is in the violence that the Order wreaks, until he has someone important he could lose, Ekaterina (Ayanna Bria Bakari).

When *Fun Harmless Warmachine* gets a moment right, it gets it incredibly right. It suspends us in a white forest of glowing screens, and overwhelms us with bullet fire and shrill feedback. The dialogue plants us exactly where adolescence meets adulthood, with characters

specific enough to be living in your building or working in the next cube.

It only takes one scene to unravel the whole work: a pointed confrontation meant to amplify women targeted by online harassment. In it, the characters speak with unearned emotional intelligence, forcibly furthering the plot, and making leaps they hardly seemed capable of, the scene before. I swear, if one more secondary female character has to help a white male protagonist self-actualize, she'll earn a free sub.

The cast of *Warmachine* is an unrelenting force for good, however, and because they are double-cast, they breezily shift from internet trolls to jolly midwesterners. Victor Musoni is the perfect example, shining as both sinister Order operative Niko and Tom's beaming brother Jack. Emily Marso suffers bravely through unwanted male attention as Melissa, and as DC, Londen Shannon is the buoyant best friend none of us deserve. As Tom and Ekaterina, Daniel Chenard and Ayanna Bria Bakari are equal parts magnetic and breakable. This production hopes to make us face our dangerous proclivities, and the screen-cap is nearly complete.

CRITICS' PICKS

Curve of Departure, Northlight Theatre, through Oct. 21. Wonderful four-person cast headed by living treasure Mike Nussbaum as the addled-but-wise patriarch of a family dealing with death, adoption and more in a well-crafted, warm-hearted play. JA

Downstate, Steppenwolf Theater, through Nov. 11. The always-irreverent Bruce Norris makes a case for penal colonies protecting those incarcerated therein from the wrath of outsiders seeking payback beyond the boundaries of justice. MSB

The Walls of Harrow House, Rough House Theatre at the Chopin, through Nov. 3. If the pictures are any clue, the puppets who guide us through Milton Harrow's secluded studio will prove scarier than clowns. MSB

The Little Foxes, Citadel Theatre, through Oct. 28. Lillian Hellman's exploration of greed and family in post-Civil War Alabama has a plot that hits like (spoiler alert, sort of) a heart attack while flaying bare (yes, I do mean flaying) the racism and misogyny of the Deep South both then and now. CES

—by Abarbanel, Barnidge and Sullivan



Henri Watkins courts Sydney Charles in *Flyin' West*.

Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW

Flyin' West

Playwright: Pearl Cleage

At: American Blues Theater,

Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: 773-654-3103;

AmericanBluesTheater.com; \$19-\$39

Runs through: Nov. 3

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Pearl Cleage's 1992 *Flyin' West* is her first full-length play, which is apparent from its simple dramatic development and structure.

Indeed, the major event of Act II is so strongly telegraphed in advance that it plays out as comic, whether or not that was Cleage's intent. The play's popular appeal comes from its feisty, folksy, often funny and sometimes ferocious female characters, all very well portrayed in this production under veteran director Chuck Smith.

Most of Cleage's plays concern "the intersection of sexism and racism" as it relates the Black community, according to the Lisa M. Anderson book

Black Feminism in Contemporary Drama, among other works. *Flyin' West* is true to form, although it has an historic setting: the all-Black town of Nicodemus, Kansas, which developed in post-Civil War America, when the Homestead Acts fueled Western expansion. By 1898 (the play's setting), adoptive sisters Sophie Washington (Tiffany Oglesby) and Fannie Dove (Sydney Charles) successfully farm several hundred acres. "This is the land that makes us free women," Sophie declares.

Grandmotherly Miss Leah (Joslyn Jones), born a slave, owns the adjoining farm, but is staying with Sophie and Fannie when youngest sister Minnie Dove Charles (Tiffany Renee Johnson) visits with her husband, the educated New Orleans Creole poet Frank Charles (Wardell Julius Clark). They've been living in England where Frank praises the absence of "colored" society. In Nicodemus, money-strapped Frank is interested to find white land speculators offering \$500 an acre, because Minnie has a deed to one-third of the family farm. It's also quickly apparent that Frank physically abuses Minnie. What to do? "There are no laws to protect a woman from her husband," Sophie again declares. "It isn't a crime until he kills her."

Flyin' West isn't subtle; sometimes one wants to hiss the villain and cheer the hero. Fortunately, the women are appealing and sympathetic, allowing one to endorse the frontier justice of their final triumph. Lest anyone thing Cleage's views of men are entirely one-sided, she offers a counterpoint to Frank Charles in Wil Parish (Henri Watkins), a rough-hewn but soft-spoken man who patiently courts Fannie with flowers and respect. One wishes Cleage had brought this sweet romance to some conclusion.

Grant Sabin's scenic design provides a neat, clapboard house interior typical of the play's setting, not fancy but furnished with taste and spotlessly clean. Lily Grace Walls supplies charming period-accurate costumes, some plain and some fancy. Sound designer Rick Sims' prairie winds frequently howl, yet no one closes close the door!

Although Nicodemus had a checkered history and only brief glory, the Homestead Acts did encourage women and Black Americans to access free Federal lands, allowing some to realize a free and better future, such as idealized in *Flyin' West*.

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SPOTLIGHT

The son of Charlemagne the Great tries to find his corner of the sky in Mercury Theatre's revival of Stephen Schwartz's enduring musical *Pippin*. Mercury's staging comes from the tried-and-true triumvirate of director Walter Stearns, music director Eugene Dizon and choreographer Brenda Didier. Kory Tarhan plays Prince Pippin, backed by a rock-solid supporting cast featuring Sawyer Smith as Pippin's extra-over-the-top step mother Fastrada and Donterrio Johnson as the leading player who urges one and all to leave their fields to flower. The Mercury Theatre production runs through Dec. 14 at the Mercury Theatre, 3745 N. Southport Ave. \$60-\$65; <https://www.mercurytheaterchicago.com>



Photo by Brett Beiner

Hand Mouth.

Photo by Chrystyne Kozol

Too ghoul for school: Theater for the Halloween weekend



BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The weeks surrounding Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, solstice and New Year's are often collectively dubbed the "holiday season" in our multicultural society, but you're not likely to hear the three days set aside to recognize the transition from October to November—individually, Halloween (or "Hallow's Eve"), Day of the Dead and All Souls' Day—grouped under the name "Death Day season" in the near future.

Theater's pagan Greek origins predispose it to celebrations reminding us that the darkness is only temporary. Refuting the gloom in 2018 are an abundance of spooky and spectral entertainments listed below:

Wear your walking shoes:

—**Les Innocents/The Innocents.** A concert in the Paris catacombs staged in 1897—no, not by the phantom of the opera—provides the source of this promenade-staged spectacle by (re)discover theatre. It runs through Nov. 4 at Mason Hall at the Preston Bradley Center, 941 W. Lawrence Ave. rediscovertheatre.com

—**Masque Macabre:** Strawdog takes advan-

tage of its wide open space to present a festive gathering with 14 storylines in real time, based on Poe's shivery tales, and let us choose which one(s) we want to follow. It runs through Oct. 31 at Strawdog (formerly Signal) Theater, 1802 W. Berenice Ave. Strawdog.org

—**The Walls of Harrow House:** Forget clowns! The humanoid puppet tour guides escorting us through this gloomy old house designed by a reclusive architect are far scarier. It runs through Nov. 3 at the Chopin, 1543 W. Division St. RoughHouseTheater.com

Pack your hankies:

—**The Madness of Edgar Allen Poe:** A Love Story: The Tudor mansion on the wooded Peabody Estate makes the perfect setting for our haunted hero's search through his tortured memories. It runs through Nov. 4 at First Folio Theatre, 1717 W. 31st St. in Oak Brook. FirstFolio.org

—**Little Shop of Horrors:** A carnivorous plant in this 1982 musical rom-com adaptation of the venerable B-grade screamflick adds a new dimension to the concept of "botanical weapons." Runs to Oct. 23 at Drury Lane Theatre, 100 Drury Lane in Oak Brook. DrurylaneOakbrook.com

THEATER

Look at your surroundings:

—**Near Death Experience:** Mentalist Neil Tobin displays his occult powers right in the Reaper's very own parlor at an actual working cemetery—can you get any more site-specific than that? It runs through Nov. 4 in the Rosehill Cemetery chapel, 5800 N. Ravenswood Ave. NearDeathx.com.

Travel the city from north to south:

—**Frankenstein:** Lifeline playwright Robert Kauzlaric re-imagines Mary Shelley's classic as a psychological journey fueled by filial devotion. Runs through Nov. 11 at Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. Lifelinetheatre.org 773-761-4477

—**Frankenstein:** The man-made creature recounts his story in all its brutal candor when British author Nick Dear's adaptation inaugurates

A Handbag trick and treat in this holiday romp. It runs Oct. 13-Nov. 3 at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. HandbagProductions.org; 773-327-5252

—**Poe.** Christina Lepri's "creepy/campy" comedy for Theatre Above The Law proposes a cabaret where a 12-year-old Lost Lenore hosts re-enactments of cousin Edgar's greatest hits. It runs Oct. 20-Nov. 11 at the McKaw Theater, 1439 W. Jarvis Ave. Theatreatl.org; 773-655-7197

—**The Rocky Balboa Picture Show.** Corn Productions parodies, not one, but two cinema classics in this musical mash-up. It runs through Nov. 3 at the Cornservatory, 4210 N. Lincoln Ave. Cornservatory.org

If restless spirits can roam the land of the living on Halloween, why not those of us still alive, too? Leave the candy by the door, throw on your cape and your calavera mask and go see a play! Boo!



Barrel of Monkeys in
That's Weird, Grandma.
Photo by Evan Hanover

Remy Bumpo's new home on Belmont Avenue. Runs Oct. 14-Nov. 17 at Theater Wit, 1227 W. Belmont Ave. RemyBumpo.org 773-975-8150

—**Frankenstein:** The light-and-shadow artists of Manual Cinema take up temporary residence in Hyde Park to explore Shelley's foresight as it applies to our technology today. Runs Nov. 1-Dec. 2 at Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis Ave. CourtTheatre.org 773-753-4472

Bring the kids:

—**Ghost, Ghouls and Talking Potatoes: That's Weird Grandma.** The creative staff at Barrel of Monkeys believes (quite correctly) that children themselves, not adults, know best what's fun for children. It runs through Nov. 4 at the Neo-Futurist Theater, 5133 N. Ashland Ave. BarrelOfMonkeys.org; 773-506-7140

—**Bunnica:** This heartwarming tale of a misunderstood orphan vegan-vampire rabbit is a perennial favorite in the Lifeline repertoire. It runs Oct. 20-Nov. 25 at Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. Lifelinetheatre.org; 773-761-4477

Chortle and guzzle:

—**The Golden Girls: Be a Freak!**—The Halloween Edition. The irreverent dragsters of Hell in



Above: **Les Innocents.**
Photo courtesy of (re)discover theatre
Below: **Man In Shadows.**
Photo by Mike Oleon



Photo by Matt Simonette



Center on Halsted hosts Orlando Traveling Memorial

BY VERNON HESTER

On Oct. 12, the Center on Halsted held an opening reception for The Orlando Traveling Memorial, a mural inspired by not only the Pulse nightclub attack which left 49 dead, but also the deaths of 2-year-old Lane Graves and singer Christina Grimmie in the same week.

Graves was fatally attacked by an alligator at Disney World and Grimmie was shot on the street after performing at a concert. The Pulse attack involved a lone shooter who attacked 300 patrons at a popular LGBTQ club with an automatic firearm; it is the deadliest incidence of violence against LGBTQ people in U.S. history. All three incidents happened in the Orlando area within the second week of June 2016.

Spearheaded by founder/visionary Colleen Ardaman, the mural is set to travel the country to “remember the 49 left behind.” Ardaman, who spoke at the opening, elaborated on the art work for the mural, which included painted portraits of the victims of the Pulse attack by surviving family members, and the “I Am A Handprint Campaign” that collected thousands of handprints of police, first responders, medical personnel, officials, local citizens, volunteers and groups who aided in the Pulse aftermath. Ardaman said, “The mural starts with our volunteers—the living part of the Memorial”—demonstrating support, compassion, kindness, humility and love to bring healing and restoration.”

The memorial will be on display on the second floor of Center on Halsted until Nov. 23, and will then move to Amundsen High School, 5110 N. Damen Ave.



Colleen Ardaman.

Photos by Vernon Hester (above and below)



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Jill Soloway.
Photo by
Jesse Chamberlin Marble

Jill Soloway looks ahead to celebrating new book in Chicago

BY DANIELLE SOLZMAN

Jill Soloway spoke with the Windy City Times ahead of the release of their new book, *She Wants It: Desire, Power, and Toppling the Patriarchy*. Soloway celebrates the book's launch during a sold-out event Oct. 18 at the Chicago Waldorf School in a conversation with Hannah Gadsby. Also joining Soloway for the event are Elaine Soloway, their mother; Faith Soloway, their sister; and Pidgeon Pagonis.

WCT: Congrats on the release of *She Wants It* and on your return to Chicago on October 18th. When did you start to get the idea for this book?

Jill Soloway: Thank you! I think this book has been on my mind in some iteration for a long time. I started with a lot of material about feminist storytelling—thinking about what a “female gaze” or “intersectional gaze” might look like,

and how necessary it is. Then I went through a series of really transformative personal revelations and experiences, starting with learning my parent was trans. That’s when the memoir element really started to take shape. I wanted to explore—do a little spelunking of my own soul—these changes I was experiencing.

WCT: The event will feature a conversation between you and Hannah Gadsby, in addition to Pidgeon Pagonis, Elaine Soloway, and Faith Soloway. What can fans expect?

JS: I’m so excited to share stages with all these heroes of mine. I wanted the tour to be a place to hold space and have community in the midst of everything going on in the world. I had this vision of a feminist tent revival, or a radical variety show. Audiences should expect laughter, debate, provocative notions, music, etc. We’re in such an extraordinary moment, and I wanted the tour to engage with that.

BOOKS

WCT: Like so many successful people in the industry, you got your start through the Chicago comedy scene. Is there an improv instructor who has had a meaningful impact on your career?

JS: The Annoyance Theater was such an essential part of my coming into being as an artist. Everyone there—my teachers and collaborators—shaped me from the very beginning. Mick Napier and Susan Messing deserve special credit.

WCT: Can you talk about 5050by2020 and its importance?

JS: 5050by2020 is a strategic initiative I founded within Time’s Up, with a mission to activate and empower artists. We realized there really was no infrastructure for bringing working artists and entry- or mid-level artists into the Time’s Up fold. The Hollywood elite are well-represented, but we all knew the movement had to be more than that. So we provide that infrastructure, and do so with an emphasis on intersectionality. We’re convening cohorts among disabled artists, sex workers, Latinx writers, MENA [Middle East and North Africa] and Muslim artists, tech and more, to shake things up and change the face of Hollywood. This summer we also launched our TRANSform Hollywood guide, including an open letter signed by 50-plus industry partners promising concrete ways they would improve the representation of trans people in their content.

WCT: Speaking for myself, I can say that the education and awareness from the success of *Transparent* helped in my coming out as transgender in late-2015. How often do you hear from fans about how much this show has helped with coming out?

JS: I can’t tell you what it means to me to hear that. It is a very kind thing I will hear now and again from viewers. When I started with *Transparent*, my goal was just to make the world a safer place for my parent. I like to say that protagonism is propaganda for privilege. Film and television are empathy machines, and if we put authentic stories of authentic people in front of the camera, I believe it can slowly but surely change the world. If *Transparent* has helped viewers understand themselves or others better in terms of gender and sexuality, that’s the dream.

WCT: As far as the state of transgender representation in TV/Film is concerned, do you feel that things are better or worse than when *Transparent* started?

JS: Better. Certainly better. Just recently we saw the conversation around cis actors playing trans roles get attention in a big way. Like I said earlier about the TRANSform Hollywood guide and open letter, the entertainment industry is starting to get on board with what trans people need from representation. We can’t keep giving trans roles to cis people. We can’t keep telling trans stories without trans voices. This isn’t to say that we’re there yet—we’re not. Both the quality and quantity of trans representation have a long way to go.

Proud to Run taking beneficiary applications

Proud to Run 2019 is now accepting applications from Chicago-area LGBTQ organizations seeking to be a beneficiary of the Proud to Run 10k run and 5k run/walk next June.

The deadline for submitting an application is Nov. 1.

Organizations submitting an application should be a non-profit that serves LGBT individuals in or around Chicago. PTR’s donations support a specific project or program that provide direct programming to the Chicago LGBTQ community donations do not support capital campaigns or annual funds, conferences and special events (i.e. fund raising receptions), lobbying efforts and/or political campaigns, or staff salaries. Beneficiaries will be selected by the Proud to Run board of directors in December of this year.

Last year’s beneficiaries included TPAN, Illinois Safe Schools ALLIANCE, PACPI and Care2Prevent. Find additional information, applications and instructions for submitting applications at ProudtoRun.org.

Chelsea Clinton at W&CF Oct. 21

Former First Daughter Chelsea Clinton will be at Women and Children First, 5233 N. Clark St., on Sunday, Oct. 21, at 1 p.m. to sign copies of a book for kids entitled *START NOW! You Can Make a Difference*.

In the book, aimed at children 7 and older, Clinton breaks down the concepts of health, hunger, climate change, endangered species and bullying so that readers can understand the world around them, as well as how they can make a difference in their own lives, their communities, and the world at large.

Clinton is also the author of the best-selling picture book *She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World*.

Visit <https://chelseaclintonchicago.brownpapertickets.com/>.

YEPP’s ‘Rise Up’ taking place Nov. 14

In recognition of the Transgender Day of Remembrance/Resilience and Youth Homelessness Awareness Month, Youth Empowerment Performance Project (YEPP) will host “Rise Up” Wed., Nov. 14, at Chicago Theater Works, 1113 W. Belmont Ave., 6-9 p.m.

Through performance and communion, attendees will honor those whose lives were taken, rejoice in the resilience of Trans youth, build community and raise funds.

See “Rise Up- A Celebration of Resilience” on Facebook.



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BOOK REVIEW

The Trans Generation

by Ann Travers
\$25; New York University Press; 261 pages

REVIEW BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Boy or girl?

That's a common enough question, if you're an expectant parent. You might've even wondered it yourself: will you need pink things or blue, and what name will you choose? For generations, it's been an exciting decision for prospective parents, but Ann Travers asks in *The Trans Generation* if it's a prudent one. Maybe letting the child decide would be a better choice.

Fifty-six years ago, when Travers was born, their mother's doctor unwittingly caused a lifetime of hurt: "It's a girl," he said, and Travers spent years trying to "untangle" what it meant. That, they said, is part of what drives this book. The other part is the desire to improve the lives of trans kids through understanding.

Getting to that point is harrowing: Ninety-five percent of transgender kids on one study felt unsafe in their schools. Many report that physicians misunderstand kids who are gender-nonconforming. Trans kids attempt suicide and/or self-harm at very high rates and, says Travers, "many grow up hating their bodies..." Most employ several kinds of coping mechanisms to live their lives.

In writing this book, Travers says, they interviewed a wide variety of trans kids from the United States and Canada—19 in all, ages 4 to 20, plus 23 parents. The children mostly came from middle-class families, which allowed them privileges such as better access to medical care and chances to change schools if they needed to do so. Other children Travers interviewed lived in poverty, their stories illustrating how being a trans kid can be socially and medically isolating, and how lack of access to needed resources can affect their well-being.

Parents, of course, can affect that well-being, too, but it takes a "phenomenal amount of care, advocacy, and activism ... to push back against cisgendered environments," schools, sports, binary-only bathrooms, social activities, medical facilities, and politics. It takes a willingness to learn, listen, and lean in.

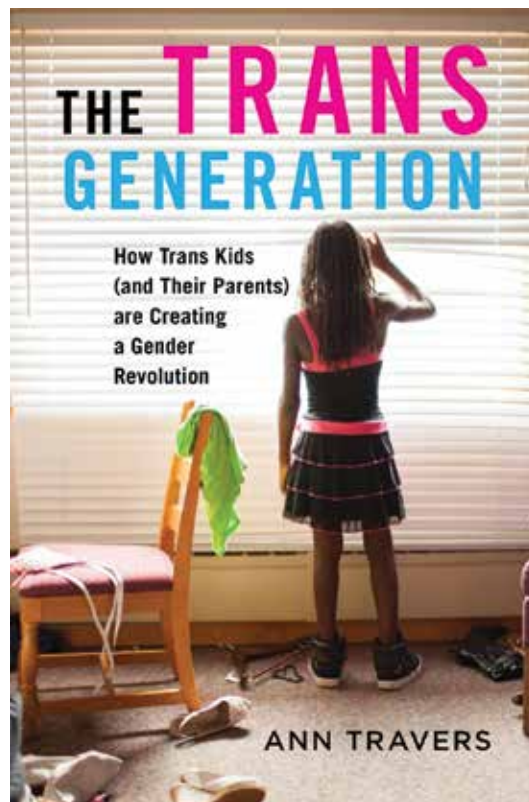
Not just for parents, but for teachers, advocates, and loved ones, *The Trans Generation* is one heavy-duty book.

Writing with a bit of a scholar's voice and occasional, relatively advanced, science and law studies, author Travers also offers readers plenty of eye-opening chats with trans kids, which turn out to be the most helpful, useful, and even entertaining parts of this book. From the mouths of babes, as they say, those interviews give insights that adults will find to be wise and thoughtful, even monumental. They're also heartbreaking but considering the kids readers are introduced to, and the singular interview with a 16-year-old who made her own hormone treatments in her high school's laboratory, they're a good indication of hope for the future.

While you could be forgiven for skipping to those case studies, you'd be missing out. The thicker parts of "The Trans Generation" are worth reading and reflection and are deeply instructive on pronouns, on gender fluidity, and on being trans in a cisgender-based society. They are also serious and weighty but that kind of rock-solid information could make this book the right choice.

Want more? Then look for *Trans Kids: Being Gendered in the Twenty-First Century*, by Tey Meadow; or *Parenting Beyond Pink or Blue: How to Raise Your Kids Free of Gender Stereotypes*, by Christia Spears Brown.

BOOKS



'Tinderbox' author at Unabridged



Author/historian Robert Fieseler (left) discussed his new book, *Tinderbox: The Untold Story of the Upstairs Lounge Fire and The Rise of Gay Liberation*, with Owen Keehnen before a packed house at Unabridged Bookstore Wed., October 10.

Photo by Katharine Solheim

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13th Annual Chicago Latino Music Festival to feature free shows, plethora of genres

BY AMELIA OROZCO

The International Latino Culture Center (ILCC) of Chicago kicks off its 13th Chicago Latino Music Festival this week.

From Wed., Oct. 17 through Saturday, Nov. 18, ILCC will oversee eight concerts at venues throughout the city such as Instituto Cervantes, Columbia College, Old Town School of Folk Music and the Art Institute of Chicago. Founded by Gustavo Leone and Elbio Barilari, the festival features numerous free performances of music ranging from classical to rock.

Windy City Times: What inspired you to create this festival?

Gustavo Leone: Seeing that there was a lack of this music in already-established events, we started to work on creating a space so that Latin-American or Hispanic music could be presented or appreciated by the public.

WCT: What makes this festival different from others?

GL: The variety of music that is represented in the different styles and from different time periods in history that are not normally presented such as music from the 19th century. There are also music compositions of today and one project that is made up of children from Mexico with a composer.

WCT: This is your 13th year putting on the fest. How has it changed from the first year?

GL: At first, we were establishing ourselves in the eyes of the audience because this is music that exists and has existed more than 300 years, and to see it presented should be something normal to see, and is has to interest us.

WCT: Why should it interest the public?

GL: It's not only that it doesn't appear in books, it doesn't factor into Latin American music. There is no chapter on baroque Latin American music, colonial music. It is something totally ignored. This year we are not presenting historical music, but we have done it every year. Last year, it was the music from the 18th century and the year before that, it was an opera from the Jesuit missions, also from the 18th century. And this is all music that doesn't get in the books but all this is going to change.

WCT: Will this change because of its exposure through this festival?

GL: Because of everything, because today the resurgence of this music and the study of this music are what students are music are studying. And now this music is being heard more, including in the programs that we create and also in-

MUSIC

cluded in different Latin American music festivals around the country. It's important to have these events in order to provide information to the public about it.

WCT: What type of music do you think people think of when they hear the term "Latin American music?"

GL: They think of folkloric music, and that's important of course and that is more commonly heard than classical music or concert music. Some may not realize that there is classical music, that there is a history in Latin America or, I should say, the Americas.

WCT: Is there any sociopolitical context throughout the program?

GL: In other programs we have done that before, but in this case, we don't have anything with a political or social connection.

WCT: What should people expect when they come to one of the shows?

GL: They will be surprised because each concert is a different style. In the first concert, they will hear jazz with Latin influences. In the second concert, they will find modern classical music by Latin American composers.

The next program will be guitar music, then a string quartet, an electronic music program, followed by Puerto Rican music and also guitar music in both Latin American and Spanish styles. Finally, the program will end with a concert of improvised music, with trumpets and special rock 'n roll sounds, free jazz and some elements of Bassanova and electronic music.

WCT: How much Spanish does one need to know to enjoy these shows?

GL: You don't need to know any Spanish. You simply need to feel the need to listen to music and then choose the program you'd like to attend.

WCT: Are these events set up for the audience to dance to the music?

GL: These are all concerts where the audience does not interact but watches the music performed on a stage.

WCT: Why do you think these events are important?

GL: We feel that this music-Latin American classical music is not as represented, and that is why we dedicate our time to this.

For more information about the festival, go to <https://latinoculturalcenter.org/chicago-latinomusicfest/>.

Rafael Vivanc.
Photo courtesy of Gustavo Leone



Lakeside Pride celebrates love and marriage

BY JOHN STADELMAN

Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles kicked off their season with the first of six themed performances honoring the legacy of the Stonewall Riots last Saturday, Oct. 13.

The "Love and Marriage" show by the Jazz Orchestra covered classic songs like "Fly Me to the Moon," "Besame Mucho" and Stevie Wonder's "Isn't She Lovely" (although the last song was one Wonder wrote to celebrate the birth of his daughter).

Every song had a special meaning to the couples involved with the ensemble. Between each song, orchestra members brought their partners to the stage and told their wedding stories. Trombonist Eric West and wife Natalia talked about learning their dance (with an impromptu performance in the aisles), while Development Officer Chuck Malm and orchestra band leader Scott Malinowski reread their wedding vows. Audience members were invited onto the stage to share their own stories.

A playful encore of Justin Timberlake's "Suit and Tie" rounded out the performance.

Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles will be performing five more themed shows from now until June 1, 2019, on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots.

Find tickets and more information at <https://lakesidepride.org/season/>.



Above: Ethan Carter. Below: Samantha Elliot and Mark Stickler.
Photos by John Stadelman



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Former Chicago Force star gets taste of NFL

BY ROSS FORMAN

Darcy Leslie spent eight years playing for the now-defunct Chicago Force, establishing herself as one of the best women to ever put on the pads. She was a national champion, and was decorated with many individual awards every season, including perennial team Defensive MVP and league All American. She also was Women's Football Alliance (WFA) Conference Player of the Year in 2013.

"My Force [career] entails some of my greatest athletic accomplishments," said Leslie, who lives in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood and is a general manager for Canine Crew and CrossFit Coach at Hardware Crossfit.

Football is still in her blood, though now retired from playing. Leslie was a Summer Scouting Specialist for the New York Jets.

Yes, the Jets of NFL fame.

"Last year, I applied for the Women's Careers in



Photo courtesy of Leslie

SPORTS

Football Forum, [which] helps the NFL identify qualified women to join its next generation of leaders," Leslie said. "I was accepted and went to Orlando [this past] January for two days of panel discussions, presentations and breakout sessions. It was a very educational experience and it helped me gain knowledge about various fields within the NFL that I was interested in, such as strength and conditioning, scouting and coaching.

"That weekend help solidify my desire to pursue a career in the NFL. Since then, I was able to make some invaluable connections, with individuals such as Sam Rappaport, NFL senior director of football development, and Scott Pioli, assistant general manager of the Atlanta Falcons. Sam and I have been in contact since the Forum and she was a huge advocate of mine. Because of her advocacy I was able to go to the Chicago Bears' training facility to watch practice and meet some of the players and coaches. After that experience, the opportunity to intern with the New York Jets was introduced to me and it is an offer I could not be more grateful for."

Leslie assisted the Jets' Scouting Department throughout training camp. "I was responsible for learning the ins and outs of football scouting, operations and analytics," she said. "The Jets taught me how to identify and differentiate between players. I learned how to evaluate the talent of football players and the critical factors for each position. With that, I was then in charge of writing weekly scouting reports for the position group I was assigned. In these reports, I had to differentiate and articulate different athlete body types, list their strengths and weakness and evaluate where this player stood on making our roster. It warranted a high attention to detail and helped me look at football from a different lens."

Leslie spent six weeks with the Jets, throughout training camp.

"I also learned that football at this level is made possible by the countless efforts of hundreds of people," she said. "Everyone is here putting in the long hours to help do what they can to make the team successful. It was pretty unreal to get a glimpse of what all goes on. I love football and have been a fan of the sport my whole life. As a fan, we just see what happens on game day. I had the pleasure of interacting with so many different departments while I was here, whether you are in the business department, equipment, operations, video etc, [and] everyone is working extremely hard day in, day out. It was truly one team, one goal around here."

Leslie, with a strong passion for fitness and nutrition, asked the Jets' strength and conditioning coach out to lunch to talk about his role and what his workload entailed. "I was expecting a 'No,' but instead, Coach [Justus] Galac welcomed the opportunity to share his knowledge. I learned



Darcy Leslie.

Photo by Ross Forman

so much in that hour about his role and how he manages to balance his job and family. He then invited me to sit in on the players' workout. It was definitely one of my highlights while being here. Justus and his two assistant coaches, Aaron [McLaurin] and Joe [Giacobbe], were very knowledgeable. They are always busy, but were so open to answer any questions that I had and I was never made to feel like I was wasting their time. I was grateful for that."

Leslie is convinced that women are capable of holding more "nontraditional" roles in the NFL. "We might have to work harder to get there, but it is not unrealistic," she said. "I learned that the most important thing is winning. If what you bring to the table will help the success of the team, then you are an asset, regardless of your sex."

"Some people are skeptical when it comes to having women in football and as a woman, when you get your foot in the door, there tends to be an even larger focus on the fact that you are a woman. My focus is putting in the work and making sure I work hard and have there be no question whether or not I belong there. I wish I could say me being a female shouldn't matter, but it does. It matters to me, it matters to the other women trying to pursue a career in this field and sports in general and it matters to that little girl that turns on the television. It's crucial that our young girls can see representations of women in the media, that they can see a female referee or coach during an NFL game and ultimately see what is possible."

Leslie also is a proud representative of the LGBT community, as she's an out, married lesbian.

"I was open about my sexuality my entire time with the New York Jets and was never once made to feel uncomfortable or less than," she said. "I shared with some of the coaches, players and staff that my wife was pregnant with our son and I got several congratulations and tips on the best products my wife and I will need once our son

is here. Several of them also gave me insight on what life would be like having a career in the NFL while trying to make time for your family. I am grateful for their inclusivity and affirmation of the LGBTQ community."

Leslie added, "I'm so grateful that Sam Rappaport and the New York Jets saw something in me that allowed me to earn this opportunity. Being a minority in nearly every space I have played sports in, worked in, and trained in, I understand the importance of including as many people from different walks of life as possible. What people see on camera and on sports teams is what they see as possible. Without such representation, future generations won't know what is possible. My son will be here in November and when he grows up, I want him to be able to turn the television and see someone who he can relate to and I hope I could offer that now to some little girl or boy."

Despite a taste of NFL life, Leslie has certainly not forgotten her Force roots.

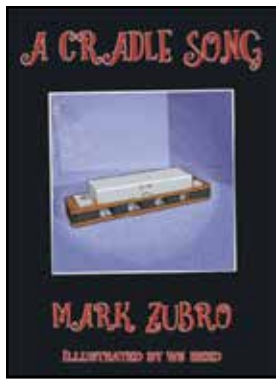
"The Force is the reason why I'm experiencing this amazing opportunity," she said. "I was coached by the best coach in women's football, [John Konecki]. I learned so much from Coach K and I believe having him as my coach and utilizing all that I've learned from him will help me on my path to a career in the NFL. I would also say, the Force helped me grow into the woman I am today. I started on that team at a very young age. I had the opportunity play and be mentored by some amazing women who were older and wiser than me. Linda Bache, Rosalyn Bennett, Pam Schaffrath, Jessica Mcpeake, and Keesha Brooks played pivotal roles in my development as a player and a young adult. If it wasn't for them and the Force, I'm not sure what my life would look like today."

Former Force owner Linda Bache was the first person Leslie called to tell her about the Jets' gig.

"Linda has been a big part of my life since I joined the Force [and] the one who suggested I apply for the Forum in January, and she is the one who wrote my letter of recommendation," Leslie said. "She's always had my back and has only wanted the best for me. I'm not sure what will come from this internship, but I do know I am grateful for Linda and for all that she has done for women's football and all that she continues to do for me."

Leslie said she developed good friendships with some of the Jets, such as Leonard Williams and Trumaine Johnson.

"I was able to interact with the players and coaches daily," she said. "Coach [Todd] Bowles is a great man, very knowledgeable about the sport and his players. I would chat with him several times a week. Since I was there as a scouting intern, I would be assigned a different position group each week and had to write scouting reports about each player in that position. This meant that each week I was interacting with a new set of players. Daily I had the chance to spend time with Coach [Karl] Dorrell, Coach [Jimmie] Johnson, several of the other coaches and in time, all the players. I got to know many of the coaches and players on an individual level, as we ate all three meals together in addition to spending countless hours together on and off the field."



A Cradle Song: Part One

WRITTEN BY MARK ZUBRO; ILLUSTRATED BY W.S. REED

A Cradle Song, written by Mark Zubro and illustrated by W.S. Reed, debuts in the Windy City Times as the new holiday classic. Filled with travail and woe, warmth and great joy, it is a story for the ages. It will appear in ten installments from October 17 to

December 19 and will also be available for gift giving as an e-book and as a paperback. For the true joy and meaning of the season, this is the book you want to read.

Today **A Cradle Song: Part One**.

Chapter One: Erik

The loneliest little harmonica sniffled. As best he could, he ignored all the distraction and noise from the store.

His name was Erik. Especially on a Christmas Eve like today, he tried to shut the world out. Then in his heart, he would listen to a cradle song for harmonica and orchestra, the most beautiful and soothing music he'd ever heard.

Deep inside of him, Erik had several secret wishes. The most important was that he wanted to be chosen by a good and caring child, and for that child he wanted to play a cradle song.

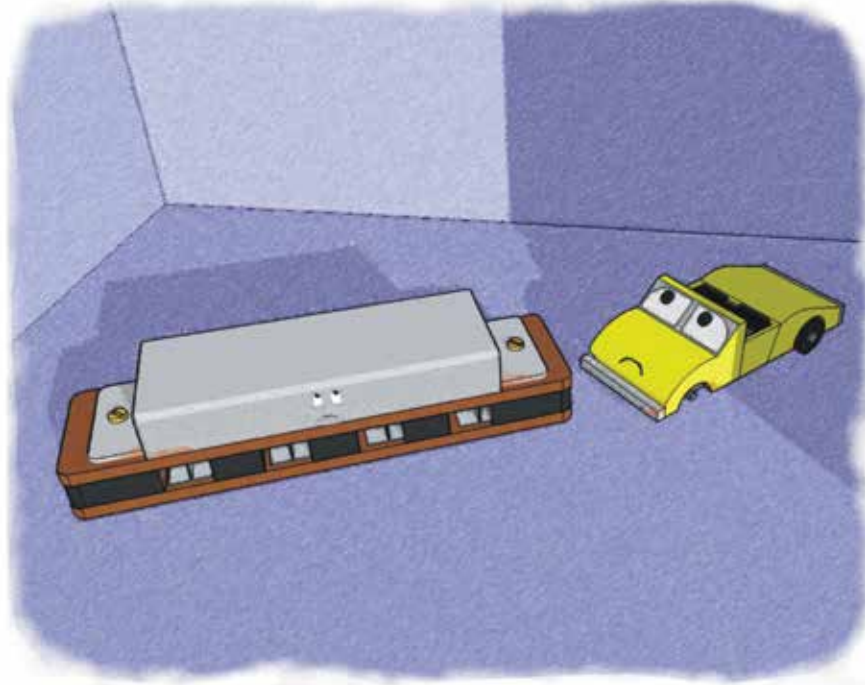
Long, long ago back to a time he could barely remember, Erik had heard cradle songs for harmonica and orchestra, a beautiful lullaby music. Only a few of those tunes existed. He wanted to make more. New ones. If not that, he wanted to make music with one little boy or girl, for one little boy or girl, music that would soar to the heavens in purity and grace. Music that would change the world, or at the least, heal a child's tired and broken heart.

He wanted to play a song like that, be part of a song like that. To play for a child with or without an orchestra, to play a lullaby as the child fell asleep on Christmas Eve, all this in Erik's forever home, nestled in the child's hands. That was his deepest dream.

But he'd been stuck back here for years, longer than Erik could remember. He'd never been chosen, not even close; picked up and put back only once.

Erik wore a coating of dust most of the year. Maybe in the big cleaning before Christmas, he was noticed in his quiet refuge and someone wiped away the year's dirt. Most times, they skipped him because they didn't see him.

Erik was far, far back on his shelf. The dim light rarely reached as far back as



Erik & Reggie.

he was. He was a little rusty and dinged up. All the bright, shiny trumpets, French horns, tubas, flugelhorns, coronets, and so many more were out in front on the big shelves throughout the store; ready to blare and blast at the slightest sign of interest. The kids who wandered this far back rarely even saw, much less put a hand out toward him.

Erik wasn't as frightened as he had been in the beginning. He was used to feeling alone. He liked being so far back because he refused to ever show anyone that he was close to sniffling, or worse, crying.

Every Christmas Eve was the worst. Most days, the store thronged with children who all passed him by. He didn't blame them. They couldn't even see him all tucked away. Christmas Eve was the busiest day of the year, with the poor and dispossessed kids admitted to the Isle

of Misfit Toys to pick and choose among them, and then take away a free toy. On that day, the crowds were the biggest of the year. To be bypassed by so many, added an extra drop to his despair.

On Erik's own shelf, a cluster of knocked-around but shiny trumpets lounged way out front, followed by the battered but preening flutes and then, way far in the corner, him.

Erik was an oddity, a little baby harmonica. He hadn't grown. He always thought this was because he'd been snatched from the factory too soon. The truth was, he'd been made that way, but he didn't know that, and really, it didn't make any difference to him. He was happy being the smallest possible harmonica. He just wished with all his heart to make music.

Today, Erik tried to be brave for the tiny little race car who had been thrust onto

his shelf a month or so ago. The little car had been shoved way back, by a boy who was being mean to his younger brother.

Reginald was the little car's name. It was his first Christmas Eve not being in someone's home, without being cherished by a child. That woe-filled first day, he'd told Erik his story between stifled sobs and snorted sniffles.

Reginald was barely bigger than a Monopoly token and must originally have been bright yellow. He'd been loved and held and played with until he was worn to a dull sheen. Now, Reginald was all dinged, rusted, and seedy-mustard yellow. He had lost his left front tire. In his home, he hadn't cared because he'd known he was loved.

Erik thought one of the worst parts of Reginald's story was that, years before, the poor little car had lost his mom and dad to a crazed parent who was determined to throw away all her son's so-called childish junk. Then disaster had struck on that recent fateful day just after Thanksgiving. That had been Reginald's very worst moment.

The little car had talked between his tears about his home and the boy, Daniel, who loved him. How he always stayed in a special place in the boy's bottom drawer. He had always been safe in that one tiny snuglement.

Daniel cared for Reginald, treasured him, and was very kind, and always protected him. On that horrible day, Daniel's older brother, Harold, had waited in ambush to snatch the car out of Daniel's hand. The little boy couldn't get Reginald back.

Daniel got very angry and cried. His big brother dashed away and laughed at him. Daniel ran after his brother. He even chased him down the street, but the older boy danced and skipped away always an inch out of his brother's reach.

All that time, Harold waved the weeping little car above his head.

The little boy told his parents. His daddy was harsh, said he needed to get tough and not be a baby. His mother kept silent because she was afraid of her husband and also fed up with hearing the boys argue. Then later that day, in this store on the Isle of Misfit Toys, when no one was looking, Harold had thrust Reginald as far back on this shelf as he could. Daniel didn't see him do it. No one did.

Their parents had been tired and shushed the squabbling boys, then rushed them out of the store so their fighting and wailing wouldn't embarrass the adults.

Erik felt sorry for the little car who had no one and nothing in common with anyone on his shelf. After he'd been crying, Reginald tended to hiccup in the night. Erik comforted the little car as best he could.

As for himself, Erik had been passed around for years in many homes. In each one, he'd tried to be cheerful and make friends, but so many of the other musical instruments were indifferent or cared only about themselves. Plus, he was so tiny, it was easy to ignore or overlook him.

In one home, he'd met some snotty violins. One time when he'd thought they were feeling mellow, he'd explained to one of them about music for harmonica and orchestra, cradle songs, the kind he loved. Unfortunately, unbeknownst to him, he'd picked the most wrong one to confide in.

Agnes, the meanest violin, had snipped at him, "Well, even if that kind of music does exist, and I doubt it, you're not a real harmonica, are you? You're a little baby harmonica, hardly worth the few notes you can play."

Agnes had liked to make the other toys feel bad. She tried to lord it over everyone, but Erik knew her secret. First, he'd noticed how she took to heart slights from the two closest other instruments, an oboe and a bassoon. He also saw that the bigger instruments and even other kinds of toys picked on Agnes. It was only when all of her tormentors weren't around that Agnes attacked and berated the ones smaller than herself.

The little harmonica felt sorry for Agnes, but his every kind word to her always fell flat. She was always meaner faster than any other toy he'd ever met.

Erik knew he didn't make as many notes as other instruments. Once, he'd met a huge grand piano. He'd lived in its bench for the longest time. The little boy of the house was made to take lessons on an instrument that seemed to be a bazillion times bigger and have a million more notes than the harmonica.

After his interminable session every day, the little boy would sneak Erik out of the great bench. The boy would hide in a vast closet in one of the elegant rooms, and he'd play and play. Erik did his best to help the little boy feel better.

His second favorite times at that house were when the mom or dad would read out loud with the boy. Erik would be all

nestled in the boy's shirt pocket, or if it was at night, in the pocket on his pajama tops, and Erik would feel the words wash over both of them as if they were part of a long flowing stream of stories stretching on endlessly into magic.

Then one day, the boy had taken him outside to a park. He had swung and twirled on a round-a-bout tilt-a-whirl. The boy had gotten dizzy and sick and forgot the little harmonica on the edge of the sandbox.

While climbing over the edge of the sandbox, a three-year-old girl with angelic blond locks had accidentally knocked Erik off the edge and down into the sand. The next day, the little boy had come to search for him. Everyone looked and hunted, and the little boy had cried. But Erik had landed under a small drift of sand that only got bigger as hands reached and searched for him.

Erik stayed buried in the sandbox for the longest time. It had rained and gotten very cold. Many nights, the harmonica shivered and shook.

Then one sunny spring day, another little girl had found him. She'd cleaned him up almost as good as new. Try as she might, she couldn't get every bit of the rust off, but she got most of it. Her fingers weren't skilled enough to fix the dents.

Erik lived for a while on a shelf with her dolls. They were friendly in a stand-offish way. They didn't like to talk to him because he wasn't one of them.

Later, Erik had been thrown into a box

of junk, which made its way through garage sales and rummage sales and finally giveaways in church basements.

Erik survived the drops, dings, and dents as best he could. He was seldom played with during all his jostlings and journeys. These days, the noise he made wasn't as true as it had once been.

In this store on the Isle of Misfit Toys, when he was brought in, they'd cleaned him up as new as he'd felt in years.

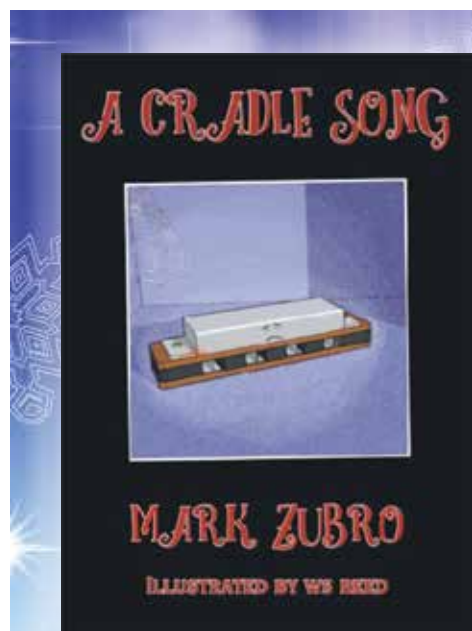
Even here with its kindly proprietor, the clarinets, flutes, and oboes farther along the shelves could be mean and snotty, most often in a snide way, whispering in their high or low-pitched whines.

The little harmonica knew he'd been here for years. No one had picked him. He'd barely ever been touched. He longed for one set of hands and one set of lips to bring him to life.

On his first Christmas Eve in this store, he was at one of his lowest points. At that moment, Erik had made the mistake of telling one of the other musical instruments his dream of playing a gentle cradle song for a child. He'd forgotten the lesson he'd learned from Agnes. He'd hoped her attitude wasn't shared by anyone else. Surely, no one could be as cruel as that violin? Alas, he was wrong.

Mildred was a brass trumpet who'd lost one of her shiny knobs and had a couple of big dents. At that time, Erik was closer to the front of the shelf, before he got shoved so far back out of the light and had begun to lose hope.

Part two coming next week.



"A Cradle Song is my very favorite of Mark Zubro's books. Tender, full of insight and love, it made me cry—but they were happy tears."

—*Jeanne M. Dams,*
author of the Dorothy Martin mysteries

"A Cradle Song is a wonderful, heartwarming story, and just right for Christmas. Open this present and enjoy!"

—*Barbara D'Amato,*
author of the Cat Marsala series
and the recent Other Eyes

A Cradle Song will be available soon as an ebook and as a paperback online and from **Unabridged Bookstore** in Chicago and **Outwards Books** in Milwaukee.

Mark Zubro is the author of thirty-six books and seven short stories. He has won the Lambda Literary award for *A Simple Suburban Murder* and been nominated eight other times. All are available as ebooks and most as paperbacks online or at **Unabridged Bookstore** in Chicago and **Outwards Books** in Milwaukee.

Entertainers come out for Michigan Avenue event

BY JERRY NUNN

National Coming Out Day, observed Oct. 11, had the crowds coming out to AT&T's downtown flagship store, 600 N. Michigan Ave., for an event celebrating people being their authentic selves. LOVELOUD and The Trevor Project joined with AT&T to bring in some diverse talent on that special evening.

Several of the performers stopped to talk with Windy City Times about their coming-out experiences.

RuPaul Drag Race's Shangela, who is currently in the middle of a 180-city tour, summoned her inner Beyonce for one number and also performed a parody of Bruno Mars' "Uptown Funk."

D.J. Pierce, also known as Shangela Laquifa Wadley, originally came out to his best friend in Paris, Texas, right before going to college. He said, "I think we should celebrate self acceptance and love. As people of the queer community, there are times we don't feel accepted, or feel alone. It is great on a national level that we can celebrate today. It's important to find out who you are and embrace that."

On his appearance in the movie *A Star Is Born*: "The audition was for a Marilyn Monroe impersonator. I knew, no matter how long I stayed out of the sun, that wasn't going to happen! They contacted me and said Lady Gaga wanted me for the part. I grabbed a white dress, put on a mole, and hopped on a plane!

"Bradley Cooper gave us a lot of freedom, so we seasoned it with drag, making it more authentic. I am thankful, hallelou!"

Although not a household name yet, openly gay singer Wrabel has an impressive resume with writing songs for Ellie Goulding, Adam Lambert and Lea Michele. When asked about the coming out process, he described it as difficult: "I tried to come out to myself for years, and came out once I fell in love. I met a boy in a diner, and that was it."

His memorable song "The Village" was written for two transgender people he discovered outside his stage door on his first tour. He performed it for the audience that night along with several other songs, hitting some impressive high notes. His full-length album is planned to be released soon.



Left: Shangela. Right: Jussie Smollett.
Photos by Jerry Nunn

Fox's *Empire* co-star Jussie Smollett closed the evening with several songs. He had worked with The Trevor Project to attend the recent LOVELOUD concert in Utah, which he described as "mind-blowing."

When asked about what coming out means to him he said, "It is about being who you are, and living your own truthful journey. Everyone's journey is different, and shouldn't be compared to

others. The most important person to be right with is yourself; the rest of the world is just icing on the cake!"

Smollett went on to say that people are made to feel invisible in the world right now, so these events are especially important. He couldn't give away too much information about the current season of *Empire*, but did say that it would be significant for his character Jamal Lyon.

CIFF: LGBT movies, star-studded premieres

BY JERRY NUNN

The Chicago International Film Festival (CIFF), the longest-running international competitive film festival in North America, turned 54 this year. With screenings at AMC River East 21 in Chicago, the festival runs now through Oct. 21.

There are several noticeable movies with LGBTQ+ themes competing for the festival's Q Hugo Award.

Boy Erased will be screened Oct. 18, with director Joel Edgerton in attendance. It's the story of a young man named Jared who goes under gay conversion therapy and Lucas Hedges, Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe, all of whom give strong performances. *Boy Erased's* general release in Chicago is planned for Nov. 9, so this is an opportunity to view it beforehand.

Kenya's *Rafiki* will screen Oct. 18, and has an interesting backstory. The tale of two lesbians navigating life where their love is outlawed should move audiences to tears, and was banned by the Kenya Film Classification Board. The film's director sued the government and it was allowed to be screened for Oscar consideration, but ultimately was not selected. After seven days it was banned again, so this is a rare chance to see the film on the big screen.

Look for Brazil's *Hard Paint* (Tinta Bruta) on Oct. 19-20, Peru's *Retablo* on Oct. 19 and 21 and France's *Sorry Angel* (Plaire, almer et courir vite) Oct. 20 and 21, all with queer themes.

On Oct. 13, Steve McQueen's heist film *Widows* was screened with a star-studded red carpet beforehand. Filmed in Chicago, *Widows* is the story of four women bonding together to settle a debt for their dead husbands.



Michelle Rodriguez, Steve McQueen and Iain Canning on the red carpet.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

Viola Davis, who stars as Veronica Rawlins in *Widows*, described Chicago as its own character in the movie: "The film is yours and our gift to you." She added, "It's great we have more female-driven narratives. Working with Steve was a great combination of the feminine and the masculine. He's comfortable with both."

On playing pansexual Annalise Keating on *How to Get Away With Murder*, she said, "I feel everybody has a right to be who they are. It was my idea to make her open to love in whomever she wants to love. I am proud to play a character that is open and free. To me, that feels revelatory—even more than just being a Black woman on a TV show."

Michelle Rodriguez spoke of taking on the character Linda and

how that persona is universal. When asked about the reaction of her coming out of the closet as bisexual, she said, "I have had tons of fans tear up, because I gave them some courage to come out to their parents. I kiss and hug them, then explain I was just being me!"

Cynthia Erivo portrays a single mother named Belle in *Widows* and said, "Belle pulls no punches."

Erivo is known for playing Celie in *The Color Purple*, for which she won the 2016 Tony for Best Actress in a Musical. She said Celie gave her a chance to celebrate the LGBT community, and felt that was the point of the show. "I was very specific in that show that I wanted it to be about those two people being in love. It was not a platonic thing. They loved each other. It was beautiful, and there were girls in that audience that felt it was okay to be a lesbian after watching it," she expressed.

Co-screenwriter Gillian Flynn said there is a twist in the story in *Widows* for gay audiences. "So many heist films were very exclusionary when I watched them in the past, and were always such a guy's club. Women are connecting with this film because it is told from a woman's perspective. It feels more relatable, and something they would do," she explained.

Openly gay *Widows* producer and Academy Award winner Iain Canning said he was on a plane with his husband during the recent National Coming Out Day, adding that, after winning his Oscar for *The King's Speech* that people came up to him on the street and told him how important his acceptance speech was for the gay community. The Englishman promised "an undercurrent in one particular character" that will be of interest to our queer readers.

Widows opens Nov. 16 in Chicago and a wider release.

The festival is presented by its parent organization, Cinema/Chicago, which Michael Kutza founded in 1964. A full schedule and ticket information for CIFF can be found at ChicagoFilmFestival.com.



"Shit, I'm attracted to everything."—**Jake Choi** expresses his sexual orientation. If only I could place him. If only I could place him, although the nudes on BillyMasters.com sure look familiar.

Melania Trump recently declared, "I'm the most bullied person in the world"—a statement that has some credence. To put it into context, the day she made this statement happened to be the 20th anniversary of the murder of Matthew Shepard—a young gay boy who was beaten and left to die in Laramie, Wyoming. In a twist that further connects these two stories, it was announced on this sad anniversary that his ashes will be interred at Washington's National Cathedral. Yes, that Washington—within sight of the place Melania occasionally hangs her pith helmet.

Actress **Yvette Nicole Brown** was filling in for Joy Behar on The View last week. On Oct. 12, reporter **Tom Llamas** was promoting his sit-down with Melania. One of the topics was the accusations of infidelity against Mr. Trump. Yvette said, "Is it possible that she's not concerned with his mistresses because she was one of them?" The response from the White House was swift. A spokesperson for the First Lady said, "Check your facts before you accuse someone of being a mistress. She's your @FLOTUS—she deserves your respect & certainly not your lies. Disgusting." **Sarah Huckabee Sanders** tweeted, "Sad @TheView continues their disgusting attacks on @FLOTUS. The left's 'war on women' they disagree with is a disgrace. @FLOTUS is strong, accomplished, and has a lot more class than the women who bully her." Yvette said, "I stand by every word I said. My mom taught me that respect is earned. And, thankfully, we live in a nation—at least for now—where I don't have to bow down to dear leader or his third wife." She added, "My views are my own. And I own every one."

Last week was the Point Honors Los Angeles 2018 Gala. As you know, the Point Foundation is America's largest scholarship-granting organization for LGBTQ students of merit. Oodles of gays were on hand, including **Greg Louganis**, **Adam Shankman** and **Thomas Dekker** (who gets sexier as he gets older). The evening featured a mini-concert by **Leona Lewis** that was spectacular. But the highlight was the award presentations. First honoree was **Steven Canals**, creator of Pose, who acknowledged all those whose shoulders we stand on. The next honoree was **Eric McCormack**, who was introduced by **Cheyenne Jackson**. When Eric took to the stage, the two kissed on the lips—not the first time (obviously). Video of the speech and the kiss can be found on BillyMasters.com.

Congratulations go out to actor **BD Wong**, who married Richert Schnorr in Brooklyn. Fun fact: The two met in 2010 at a singles mixer that was sponsored by an online dating app.

One of the people at BD's wedding was **Rosie O'Donnell**. The night before, she returned to stand-up comedy and made a bit of news. She an-



Cheyenne Jackson (above) and Eric McCormack had a little action at the Point Honors Los Angeles 2018 Gala, Billy says.

Photo by Karl Simone

nounced that **Lady Gaga** would headline a Broadway revival of *Funny Girl* and that she, **Rosie O'Donnell**, would play her mother. Nobody else has said a word about this project, but I suppose anything is possible. It should be noted that while not a prerequisite, **Fanny Brice** is somewhere in her late teens when the show begins. **Barbra** was all of 21 years old when she made the part her own. **Gaga** is 32, and this production will surely take a few years to happen. By then, she may be more likely to be cast as **Mrs. Strakosh**!

Tilda Swinton's got some tongues wagging due to her appearance in the remake of *Suspiria* (directed by **Luca Guadagnino**, who previously helmed *Call Me By Your Name*). In it, she plays **Madame Blanc**, the head of a dance studio in Berlin. She also plays **Dr. Jozef Klemperer**, an elderly Jewish psychiatrist. Being an actress' actress, **Tilda** decided that while inhabiting the person of **Dr. Klemperer**, she would wear what she calls "a weighty set of genitalia." She had the false phallus custom-made for her, "so that she could feel it dangling between her legs."

I do hate when friends of mine are embroiled in a scandal. But I will put on my impartial journalist cap and tell you about **Chris Marchant**, the hunky violinist in *Well-Strung* (who also strutted his stuff on *The Amazing Race*). The group is typically in summer residency at Provincetown's Art House. **Marchant**, who is no stranger to showing skin in snaps, posted a photo taken in a Provincetown cemetery that features his shirtless torso leaning against an obelisk with the caption, "Can't wait to get back to Ptown for Halloween and to help with the launch weekend of @ptownbrewingco."

Well, people were outraged—not about the post, but about the photo. One person said, "Someone wasn't buried there for you to take an abs pic"—although I suppose it depends on the person. Frankly, I wouldn't mind **Marchant's** sexy skin leaning against my erect obelisk—but that's another story. Initially, **Chris** was defensive—as



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one is wont to do. Then, after the story went viral, he deleted the post saying, "While it was never my intention to offend, I understand that it was disrespectful to take such a picture against a memorial to the life of someone I never knew. I deleted it, because the point of the post was to help a friend, and I would never want for my personal actions or words to harm the efforts of anyone else. I apologize for any offense I caused." That wasn't hard ... or was it? You can decide for yourself when you see the pic on BillyMasters.com.

When we're featuring a couple of stiffs in a cemetery, it's definitely time to end yet another column. It's apropos with all this cemetery nonsense that Halloween is just around the corner. And although I'll be headed to New Orleans (after working on my tan at the Filth2Go Beach House in Fort Lauderdale), I can quickly remind you to check out BillyMasters.com—the site that can even raise the dead! Should you have a question, send it along to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto: Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before **Melania** goes anywhere near **Donald's obelisk**! Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.



the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Twain; Halloween in Andersonville

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The new Logan Square restaurant **Twain** (2445 N. Milwaukee Ave.; <https://www.twainchicago.com/>)—which, yes, is named after the famed author and reflects where chef Tim Graham was raised—relies on a shrewd concept for its success: nostalgia.

Graham and sommelier wife Rebekah are the masterminds behind this spot that embodies the Midwest (but also a little of the South)—down to the flood-plain designs on the restroom mirrors and the farm animals on the huge felt mural on one side of the back of the restaurant. (By



Surf and turf at Twain.
Galdones Photography

the way, the server commented that people are encouraged to touch said mural—and if a part gets soiled, the staffers just called the artist for a replacement piece.)

As for the nostalgia, Twain relies on family recipes passed down through generations—resulting in some sublime comfort food (although some sport twists on classics).

Appetizers include Ants on a Log, a delicious item that includes celery, duck liver peanut-butter mousse and bourbon cherries; Brock's fried green-pepper rings—an unusual offering that consists of battered rings topped with powdered sugar; Sloppy Marrow, which is roasted

bone marrow topped with sloppy Joe; and the Virginia spoon bread (which is worth the price of admission alone), which comes in a mini-cauldron and is supplemented by cider-glazed pork shoulder and pickled onions.

Soup and salad items include the standard wedge salad (with bacon steak), but there are also shaved carrot salad and a delightful beer-cheese soup that comes with a mini-Miller High Life back. (Also, the various breads—such as pretzel biscuits, with malt butter—are made in house.)

Somehow, the entrees were even better than the apps. My dining companion raved about the steak and eggs, which came with eggs done over easy—and topped with tiny deviled eggs. My chicken and dumplings (sufficiently creamy) came inside a small pot like the one your grandmother used—again evoking nostalgia. And if you have room for dessert, definitely indulge: Who wouldn't want to try gooey butter cake with jam; Mississippi mud pie; or hand-cranked ice cream (that comes with the sheet cake of the day)?

Rebekah also knows what she's doing, thanks to concoctions like The Sconnie (with Korbel and Sprite)—although she did tell Windy City Times that she was threatened with harm if she actually changed the recipe. I think (?) she was kidding.

In addition, items are reasonably priced (with

no entree costing more than \$23)—making this one of the best deals in the city. I truly hope Twain is around for quite some time.

Halloween coming to Andersonville

Chicago's Andersonville neighborhood will celebrate Halloween the weekend of Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 27-28, throughout the business district.

More than 100 businesses participate each year in the Clark Street Trick-or-Treat on Oct. 27 at 12-3 p.m. and another 20 businesses will participate in the Andersonville Sweetish Stroll (formerly the Dessert Crawl) on Oct. 28 at 2-5 p.m.

Last year, the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce (ACC) planned to retire the former Dessert Crawl; however, due to popular demand, this "adult trick-or-treat" experience will relaunch the event as the Sweetish Stroll on Oct. 28. The event features two options—the August Gloop route and the Veruca Salt path, with 10 sweets-related stops on each. Tickets are available online now for \$20 per route; visit <http://www.andersonville.org/events/dessert-crawl/>.

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

Lips unsealed: New drag venue coming to Chicago

BY TONY PEREGRIN

The new dinner, drinks and drag concept that will be on everybody's lips next spring is Lips—a dinner-theatre "show-palace" located in the historic Motor Row district in Chicago's Near North Side. The first Lips launched 22 years ago in New York, and today there are locations in Atlanta, Fort Lauderdale and San Diego.

"Many moons ago when I was working in my glitter basement with a young friend who was a graphic designer we came up with the name Lips," said Lips co-owner and Chief Executive Queen Mark Zschiesche, also known as Yvonne Lamé. "I wanted a name that had something to do with the face because a fabulous face is what makes a drag queen. And "lips" also means love and happiness—and that's a big part of the concept behind Lips."

The Chicago location—which is set to lock lips with the Windy City in March/April 2019—will cater to celebrations of all kinds, including birthdays, bachelorette parties, marriages, divorces, retirement, graduation and more, according to co-owner Ed LaFaye.

"Lips is drag queen dinner theater," explained LaFaye. "It's a totally interactive experience.

DRAG/NIGHTLIFE

Instead of just coming in and sitting down and having dinner and drinks and then seeing a show for an hour, you're interacting with the waiters who are all in full drag on the floor." The interactive experience typically includes on-stage celebrations where guests are brought up to the stage, placed on a throne and presented with a crown or tiara.

Some members of the Chicago LGBTQ community have expressed reservations about partying alongside bachelorette parties in Boystown, which can feel invasive and disrupt the overall vibe of a night out at a gay enclave—and LaFaye readily acknowledges that perception. "If you go to Lips on a Saturday night, I would say the crowd is 90 percent straight. Twenty years ago, I think mainstream audiences didn't know what to expect when they went to a drag show. Now, people know what drag is. There are some people who don't want to be in that atmosphere and we encourage them to visit during the middle of the week. There's a little something for everybody at Lips, which is all about love and diversity, and all types of people coming together and enjoying a night out.

RuPaul's Drag Race has played a pivotal role in the mainstreaming of drag and has been a factor in Lips enduring appeal to audiences of all backgrounds, according to LaFaye. "To be honest, I think RuPaul's Drag Race has upped the game for everybody, because now people are expecting to see Drag Race-type queens when they go out. I think it's helped [the industry] dramatically."

LaFaye and Zschiesche are looking for Chicago-based talent to entertain their guests, with at least 10 shows per week.

"Lips will definitely use local queens because that's what makes Lips become a part of the Chi-

cago community," said Zschiesche. "One of my main jobs for the Lips company is finding the best talent out there, and I think I have a pretty good eye. In fact, at least six Lips queens have appeared on RuPaul's Drag Race, including Peppermint from our New York location and Violet Chachki from Atlanta."

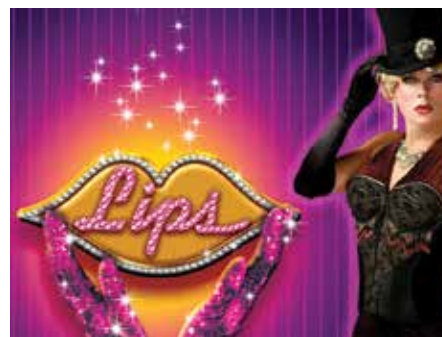


Image courtesy of Lips

"When we opened Lips Atlanta five years ago we had more than 100 auditions," added Zschiesche. I think Chicago's auditions will be even more because I have already been contacted by at least 40 Queens and we have not even run one ad about the auditions." Zschiesche said he is not only looking to cast "current stars in Chicago," but the queens who will be "the fabulous stars of tomorrow."

The show's hosts are always the most challenging to cast and hire, revealed Zschiesche, because they require comedic skills that can "carry the room."

Not only do all four existing Lips locations share a commitment to hiring top-quality entertainers, they all boast a similar look and vibe. "We have jewel tones; we have pink, purple and blue and colors that most people might not think

go together," said LaFaye. "The whole idea behind the Lips decor was that it should look like a drag queen's jewelry box had exploded all over the room."

Unique to the Chicago location are the bones of the building, which in a previous life, housed a Ford dealership with 25-foot tin ceilings. "Because the dealership kept automobiles on all of the upper floors of this building, it was reinforced with humongous steel beams across the ceiling. These beams allow us to have a big show room theater setting with no columns or anything else that will interfere with guests viewing the stage and the show," said LaFaye.

Existing Chicago venues, including Kit Kat Club and The Baton, feature a similar style of entertainment. Is the Chicago market large enough to support another show-bar?

"I think there is room for everyone," said LaFaye. "There are several clubs in New York and everybody's got more than enough business. 22 years later and there's several other big outlets there, but we're still doing record business pretty much in all of our locations."

As for getting LGBTQ audiences to venture out of Boystown or Andersonville and to the Near South Side, LaFaye doesn't think it will be a problem as none of the other Lips outposts are located in traditional gayborhoods.

"There are a lot of places that are starting to open in the Near South Side," added LaFaye. "By the time we open in March or April, there will be several other restaurants, bars and hotels in the area or opening shortly thereafter. Some people have said there is a great possibility that this area will become the next River North. The thing about Lips is that it's really a destination. You're not really getting people walking down the street saying, "Oh, this looks good. Let's go in." When you have a destination—a big party like this—people will travel to you."

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LARGE ONE BEDROOM APT. LOYOLA UNIVERSITY neighborhood. Available 11/01/2018. One block from the beautiful parks, bike paths and beaches of Lake Michigan. Laundry/parking \$1100.00 includes heat & water. 773-761-2738 (11/7/18-4)

FOR SALE - MULTIUNIT BUILDINGS

ANDERSONVILLE TWO FLAT Meticulously maintained 2 Flat in Hot Andersonville, each unit 2 bd 1 bth, new electrical, large high ceiling basement perfect for extra space or convert to income producing unit, new 2 car garage, larger city lot, fabulous building to rent out or become live-in landlord. **Contact Paul Hickman Compass Real Estate for more info.** paul.hickman@compass.com . (10/17/18-4)

FOR SALE - SINGLE FAMILY HOME

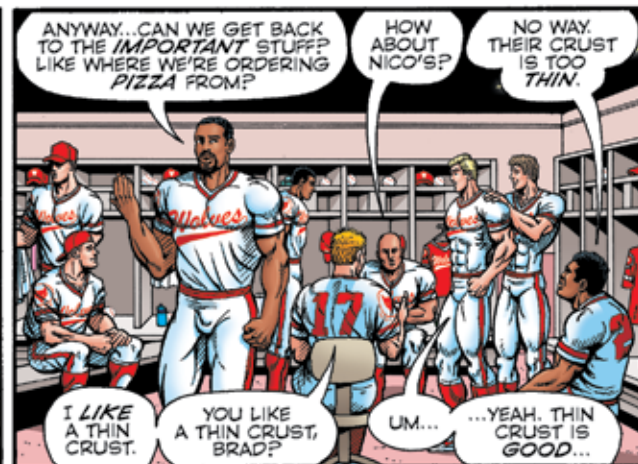
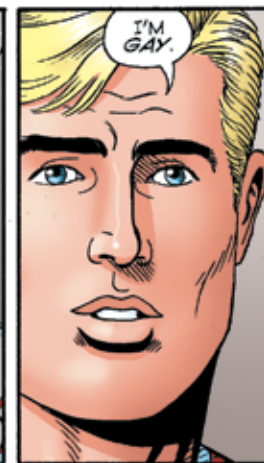
STUNNING 5 BEDROOM, 3.2 BATHROOM VICTORIAN on private, double lot combining modern amenities with original features & tons of character. Exceptional staircase & entry, 12' ceilings, beveled & stained glass, hardwood floors. Great room with built-in cabinet & dramatic fireplace, separate dining room has ornate built-in hutch. Custom chef's kitchen with high-end appliances, heated slate floor, tons of custom cabinets fill every nook & cranny, island with prep sink & seating, built-in bench, new windows & fabulous lighting! Spacious 2nd level features master suite, library/media room with custom cabinetry, 2 other bedrooms & vintage bathroom. Amazing 3rd level with cathedral ceiling has another bedroom & bathroom. A magnificent home to entertain in with huge screened porch, private yard & 2car garage. 5 Blocks to the lake! <http://tour.circlepix.com/home/VPW6PR/6732-North-Bosworth-Avenue-CHICAGO-IL-10051010> Presented by Gagliardo Realty Associates / Laurie@gagliardorealty.com (10/24/18-4)

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KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Oct. 17

Swan Lake Tchaikovsky's classic score and performed live by the Chicago Philharmonic in four acts. Through Oct. 28 3:00pm Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University 50 E Congress Pkwy Chicago <http://joffrey.org>

Christina Aguilera, The Liberation Tour With new song "Accelerate," featuring Ty Dolla \$ign and 2 Chainz, released in May, the first song from forthcoming album, Liberation 8:00pm The Chicago Theater, 175 N. State St. <http://LiveNationEntertainment.com> Tickets: <http://www.christinaaguilera.com>

Thursday, Oct. 18

Eve Ewing, author Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side Poet/author releases her nonfiction book with a launch party. The book covers the 2013 closing of 53 Bronzeville schools and its aftermath. 5:00pm - 7:00pm Chicago Teachers Union, 1901 West Carroll Ave., Chicago <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/ghosts-in-the-schoolyard-by-eve-l-ewing-official-launch-party-tickets-47783435542>

Art for Life Chicago Benefit Auction Save the date. Juried live and silent auction of 80 pieces of contemporary art, including painting, photography, sculpture and other 3D media by biggest names in contemporary art. Benefits those living with and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Tickets \$100.00 6:00pm - 10:00pm Venue West, 221 N. Paulina St. 312-644-6412 <http://www.diffchicago.org>

The LGBTQ Movement: Then and Now Out@COMCAST and Out@NBCUNIVERSAL, with Out & Equal Chicagoland, present panel LGBTQ movement history in Chicago moderated by NBC5's Chris Hush and including Tracy Baim, publisher Chicago Reader newspaper and founder Windy City Times, Bernadette Smith CEO of Equality Institute and co-chair of Out



ALL ABOUT EVE

Thursday, Oct. 18

Eve Ewing will host a book-release party at the Chicago Teachers Union.

Photo by Nolis Anderson

& Equal Chicagoland, and Daniel Hernandez attorney at Walczak Hernandez, P.C. Light refreshments. Register online. 6:45pm - 8:00pm 455 Cityfront Plaza Dr., NBC Studio Chicago <http://www.eventbrite.com>

Jill Soloway Discussing forthcoming memoir She Wants It: Desire, Power, and Toppling the Patriarchy. Guests Hannah Gadsby, Pidgeon Pagonus, Precious Brady Davis, Faith Soloway, Elaine Soloway 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://jillsolowaychicago.brownpapertickets.com/>

The WOMB Open Mic Nite Open mic poetry event. Affinity Community Services is a social justice organization serving the needs of the Black LGBTQ community of Chicago with a particular focus on Black women. 7:00pm Affinity Community Services 2850 S. Wabash Ave. #108 Chicago <http://affinity95.org>

Marin Alsop Out conductor with concerts part of public programs, A Time for Reflection-A Message of Peace, organized to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the World War I Armistice on Nov. 11,

1918. Oct. 18, 19 and 20 8:00pm Chicago Symphony Center (Orchestra Hall) 220 S Michigan Ave Chicago <http://cso.org>

Friday, Oct. 19

Orlando Traveling Memorial Art installation created by Pulse Nightclub shooting survivors, first responders and family members, The Orlando Traveling Memorial (OTM), will make its first stop here. Through Nov. 23 12:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Orlando-Traveling-Memorial-to-debut-at-Center-on-Halsted/64350.html>

Isaac Mizrahi: Moderate to Severe Actor/fashion designer/singer Isaac Mizrahi will perform classics from Charles Aznavour, Blondie and Cole Porter, joined by his band of jazz musicians, led by Ben Waltzer. 7:30pm City Winery Chicago 1200 W Randolph St Chicago <http://citywinery.com/chicago>

Gypsy, A Musical Fable Stars E. Faye Butler as Rose, Broadway's legendary "stage mother" who raises her daughters to assume the heights in the world of show business. Through Nov. 25. \$20 - \$66 8:00pm The Ruth Page Center for the Arts, 1016 N. Dearborn St. 773.777.9884 <http://PorchlightMusicTheatre.org>

Pride Action Tank's 3rd Anniversary Fundraiser Dream It. Speak It. Do It. Pride Action Tank launched three years ago as a project of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago sing a collaborative model for improving outcomes and opportunities for LGBTQ+ communities and other marginalized groups. Thair, the lead singer of Chicago alternative band Astro Samurai performing. RSVP at link. 8:00pm - 9:30pm Clark-Hill PLC, 130 East Randolph, Suite 3900 http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=7234

Saturday, Oct. 20

2nd annual TransTech Summit Second annual TransTech Summit will include workshops in web/app technology, media technology, design technology, and business technology. Lunch provided. Keynote speaker Angelica Ross, founder of TransTech and actress on the FX hit TV

Series Pose. Early registration \$25-\$50. Lunch provided. info@transtechsocial.org. 8:30am - 8:30pm 600 W Chicago Ave Tickets: <http://www.universe.com/events/transtech-summit-2018-chicago-tickets-R7DVPK>

Memorial gathering for Arthur Gursch Gursch, who died June 22, was a member of Gay Liberation Network, formerly Chicago Anti-Bashing Network, participated in the senior program at the Center on Halsted, and other groups including the Stonewall riots, both in Chicago and New York. 1:00pm - 5:00pm Grace Place, 637 S. Dearborn St. <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/PASSAGES-Activist-Arthur-Gursch-dies-at-72/63423.html>

HalloWig party Show up in a new do and get Wiggy with the guys from Stonewall Sports - Chicago. Prizes awarded for Best Styling, Best Group Wig, Highest Hair. Bring multiple hair to wear and play games with Dixie Lynn Cartwright. 3:00pm - 8:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/events/1698655620260885/>

Big Orange Ball Howard Brown Health's fourth annual kick-off to the Halloween season with dancing, beats by local DJs, full bar, light bites, tons of spooky surprises. Early bird price \$125. 8:00pm - 12:00pm Park West Chicago 322 W Armitage Ave Chicago, <https://howardbrown.org/event/big-orange-ball-2018/>

Uncovered: Aretha Franklin Respect to the Queen Music and dance tribute to Aretha Franklin. Franklin recorded an array of music styles including blues, folk, jazz, soul, pop, and spirituals. Dance party directly following the concert. 8:00pm Old Town School of Folk Music 4544 N Lincoln Ave Chicago <http://www.oldtownschool.org/concerts/2018/10-20-2018-uncovered-aretha-franklin/>

Sunday, Oct. 21

Chelsea Clinton book signing Book signing in celebration of her new kids' book, START NOW! You Can Make a Difference. One signing line ticket with book purchase admits up to four family members. 1:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago Tickets: <http://chelseaclintonchicago.brownpapertickets.com/>

Petition to Be a Queer Disney Princess Queer solo show with stand up and comedy music with Lisa Ridarelli accompanied by Robbie Ellis 7:00pm Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret 1383 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago <http://davenportspianobar.com/events/lisa-ridarelli/>

Monday, Oct. 22

Lynn Sage Cancer Research Foundation Annual Fall Benefit Luncheon Guest speaker Jill Kargman, creator, writer, producer and star of the scripted comedy "Odd Mom Out" 11:00am - 2:00pm Chicago Hilton and Towers 720 S Michigan Ave Chicago 312-926-7133. <http://www.lynnstage.org>

Jeff Awards ceremony Honoring outstanding theatre artists since 1968. Time:TBA Drury Lane Oakbrook 100 Drury Lane Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181 <http://www.jeffawards.org>

Tuesday, Oct. 23

Gender and Sexuality Studies Workshop The Willful Sexual Invert in Alfonso Hernandez-Cata's El angel de Sodoma. Ebenezer Concepcion, CSGS Dissertation Fellow/PhD Candidate in Hispanic and Lusobrazilian Studies Discussant: Prof. Alison James, Romance Languages and Literatures 5:00pm - 6:30pm First floor seminar room of 5733 S. University Ave <http://voices.uchicago.edu/genderandsexuality/>

Wed., Oct. 24

Chicago 00: The 1968 DNC Protests exhibit Exploring a watershed moment in U.S. politics-the 50th anniversary of the convention protests-with the new virtual-reality experience. From photographs and documents from the Chicago History Museum's archives to the site of the demonstrations. David Farber, Ph.D., narrates the 14-minute VR tour that can be viewed through YouTube; the Chrome browser; or with Google Cardboard VR glasses. Ongoing. 12:00pm Chicago History Museum 1601 N Clark Chicago <http://chicago00.org/experiences.html#dnc>.



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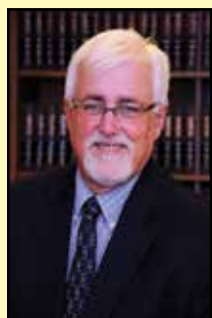
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