

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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BLAKK POWER
 WCT talks with the original Joan Jett Black, Terence Alan Smith.
 Photo by Joel Moorman
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PRIDE IN THE SUBURBS
 Aurora, Woodstock hold Pride parades.
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MIDSOMMAR-FEST
 Andersonville's annual street fest kicks of summer.
 Photo by Jerry Nunn
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Gay Liberation Front first demonstration three weeks after the riots (Segal on right with bag). Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library

RIOT ACT

50 years later,  Remembering Stonewall —its impact and legacy



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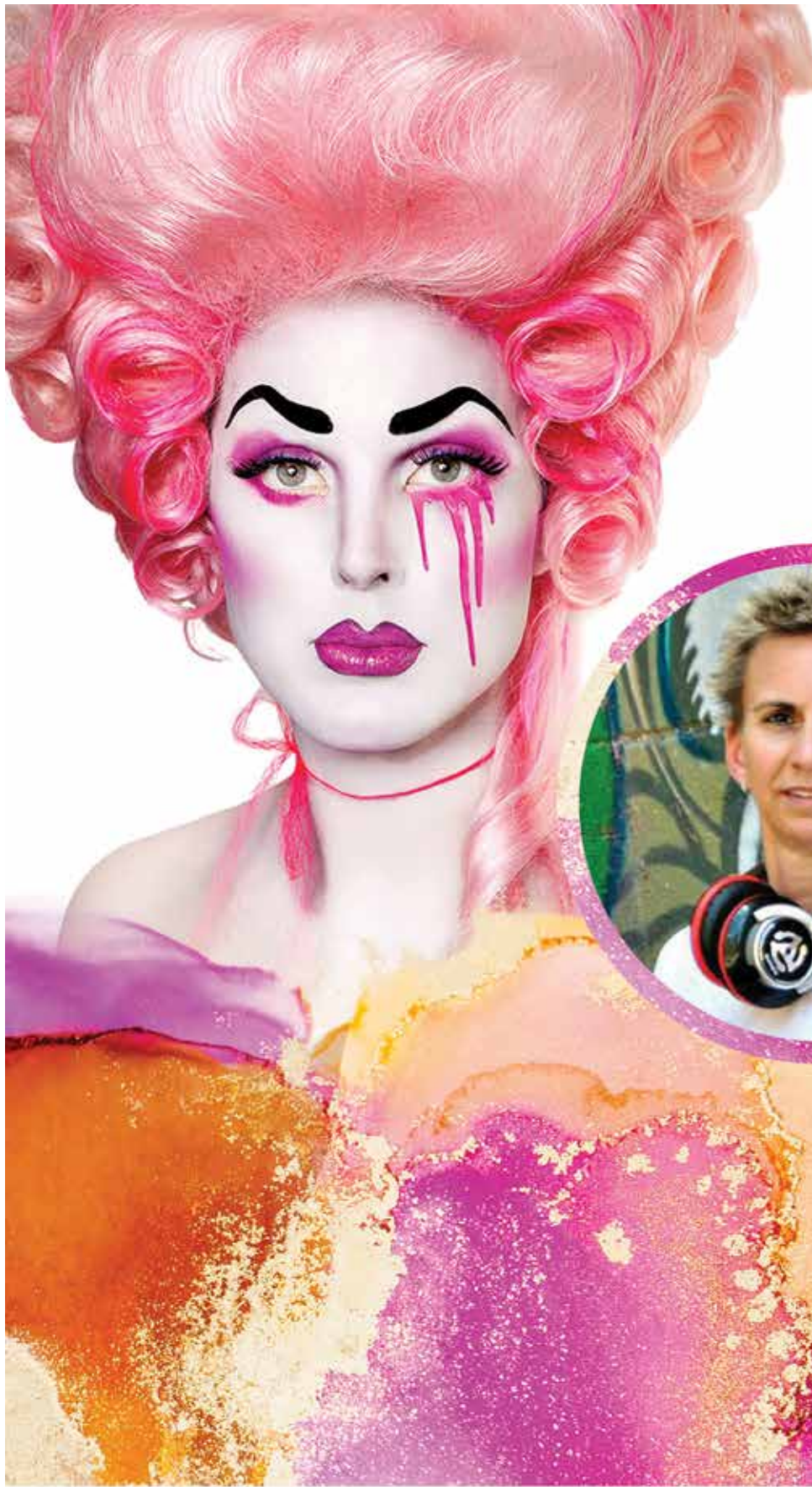
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REMAINING 2019 WINDY CITY TIMES PRINT DATES:

June 19	Aug. 21	Oct. 30
June 26	Sep. 4	Nov. 13
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July 24	Oct. 2	Dec. 11
Aug. 7	Oct. 16	Dec. 25

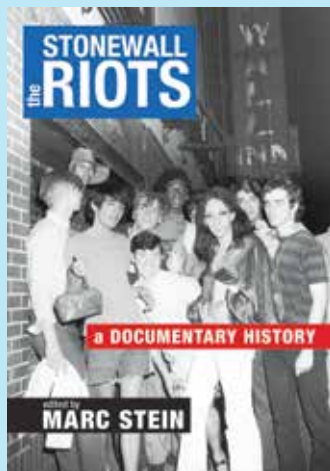
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BETTYE BUSINESS

Bettye LaVette is among the performers whose shows are analyzed in this month's music roundup.
Photo (left) by Vern Hester

WHAT A RIOT



WCT offers a roundup of Stonewall-related tax books.

'SOCIAL' CALL

HRC Chicago held an event, "Social!," that marked 50 years of LGBTQ history.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Tiffany Haddish, Junior Vasquez and Marcia Cross.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS



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'16 Chevy Malibu LTAutomatic, Full Power, Butte Red, 21789A\$14,995	'14 Forester TouringAuto., Sunroof, Leather, Red, 22169A\$15,995
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'08 Toyota Camry HybridAuto., 1-Owner, Only 39K, White, 22214A\$9,995	'13 Outback Prem.Auto., Alloys, All Weather, Silver, 22255A\$14,995
'17 Hyundai Elantra SEAutomatic, Full Power, Silver, P6232A\$8,995	SUBARU CROSSTREK	
'11 Hyundai Elantra Touring SELeather, Sunroof, Silver, 21498B\$7,995	'18 Crosstrek Prem.Automatic, Blind Spot, Eyesight, Orange, P6183\$22,995
'12 Kia Soul+Manual, 1-Owner, Black, 22217A\$7,995	'15 Crosstrek Ltd.Auto., Eyesight, Sunroof, Leather, Black, 22317A\$19,995
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Xavier MaatRa continues giving back to the community

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Giving back to the community has been the focus of Xavier MaatRa's professional life, culminating in the creation of their latest endeavors, Chi City Foods and DAB of Consulting.

Xavier (they prefer to use their first name) grew up in a small farming/college town in southern New Jersey and was active in their church, giving their first sermon when they were 17.

"I studied history at a Christian college," said Xavier. "After the trauma I dealt with there, I started organizing and developing my own political voice in ways that supported my ability to live my truth as a Black, queer and transgender person."

After college, Xavier worked as a union orga-

nizer with the SEIU in California and helped with disaster relief in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. Both experiences laid the groundwork for what Xavier has done since coming to Chicago 11 years ago.

"I am very proud of my work at the Chicago Freedom School building their training program from the ground up," said Xavier. "The program has impacted over 5000 youth and adults throughout the U.S., United Kingdom, Iraq and various countries across South America."

"My time as a drop-in worker at the Broadway Youth Center (BYC) was my entry into the queer community here. I built relationships with my co-workers that we cultivate to this day. Working at the BYC also gave me the opportunity to support LGB and trans and gender non-conforming (TGNC) youth in transformative ways. I enjoy watching the youth I worked with back in 2010 grow into adults over these years."

With their farm and eco-campus Chi City Foods (CCF), Xavier is taking their advocacy a step further by, according to the organization's website, "providing poor and marginalized groups in Chicago with access to fresh produce and training opportunities in urban agriculture."

CCF is located in Altgeld Gardens on the Far Southeast Side of Chicago. This predominately Black community is in a food desert and has one of the most isolated housing developments in the city. It is the only urban micro farm in Chicago that is led and staffed by Black TGNC people.

Xavier told Windy City Times that CCF is dedicated to cultivating great organic produce and honey through their subsidiary, Mystic Bee Hive Honey, while promoting urban agriculture skills and food justice awareness. Xavier said CCF is currently working toward its organic certification.

"We aim to create spaces for environmental stewardship for marginalized groups to restore the food knowledge and skills that were lost due to colonization and oppression," said Xavier. "At CCF, we hope to teach people how to feed themselves on the path toward healthy, self-determined and sustained communities."

Mystic Bee Hive Honey is run by Brave Space Alliance Founder and Executive Director (and master beekeeper) LaSaia Wade, who is also Xavier's partner.

"The goal of Mystic Bee Hive is to create a space for bees to thrive, produce local organic honey, support veggie production at CCF and train people how to bee keep on the South Side of Chicago," said Wade. "We are excited to provide another avenue for TGNC people to participate in Chicago's growing Urban Agriculture community."

This June, Xavier is expanding CCF with the launch of their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Each participant will receive a bi-monthly produce box containing a minimum of 10 organically grown vegetables and fruits, when available. Members receive 10 boxes of produce



Xavier MaatRa, with some of the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor. Collage courtesy of Xavier

over 20 weeks.

Xavier explained that last year over 30 children and adults volunteered with CCF and they hope to grow that number this year.

"This season we are launching a pilot fellowship program focusing on beekeeping, building and farming skills," said Xavier. "Our fellowship provides people with various amounts of skills and experiences with an opportunity to learn and apply their skills in creative ways towards the vision of CCF."

Xavier is also reaching out to Chicago's LGBTQ community to provide fresh produce to those who are dealing with food insecurity through the Fresh Produce Pop-Up Pantry Project in conjunction with Brave Space Alliance and Cooperation Operation, an urban agricultural non-profit in the Pullman community. This is a produce give-away to those in need that will take place Aug. 15 and Sept. 19 at 12-2 p.m. at the Brave Space Alliance, 2747 W. 79th St. It is sponsored by CCF and Chicago LGBTQ community organizations.

When Xavier is not tending to their CCF business, they can be found doing consulting work with their company—DAB of Consulting.

"After years of doing pop-ups for other organizations, I wanted to continue to the work but on my own terms combining my experience as an organizer, youth worker and community educator to support movement building and to strengthen populator education in the non-profit sector,"

said Xavier.

One of Xavier's clients is the Groundswell Fund, via their grassroots organizing institute.

"Groundswell Fund has provided me with the opportunity to share my almost 20 years of experience with community organizing and non-profit development to support amazing groups within the reproductive justice movement," said Xavier.

When Xavier is not working, they do training sessions for the staff and board members at Brave Space Alliance and learning with fellow farmers at the Urban Growers Collective. They also love to listen to music, watch movies, play video games and cook.

Xavier's message to anyone who is interested in what he is doing with CCF is, "Donate to the Pop-Up Pantry Project, sign up for the CSA and/or come out and get in the soil with me. This farm is a labor of love and a part of my dreams of connecting community education and organizing to create opportunities for social transformation. We could never reach our goals without the help of amazing volunteers. Check out the volunteer form on our website and sign up for a date to come help us. If you want to volunteer during the week send an email to chicityfoodsllc@gmail.com to schedule a time."

Volunteering takes place every Saturday through October of this year.

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

City of Chicago salutes LGBTQ Veterans

On Tuesday, June 25, the City of Chicago Salute to LGBTQ Veterans will feature speaker Tatyana Moaton, Howard Brown Diversity and Inclusion Service Co-coordinator and transgender veteran. The event is hosted each year by the American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) Chicago Chapter and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations. Questions can be directed to Jim Darby at jamesdarby@aol.com or 773-752-0058. The event is free and the public is encouraged to attend. It begins at noon at the Daley Center Plaza, 50 W Washington St Chicago. For more information, see <http://www.facebook.com/AVERChicagoChapter/>.



Jim Darby with AVER in the 2018 Chicago Pride Parade.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald
(www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)



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Reproductive Health Act is law, making Illinois a 'beacon'

BY CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

CHICAGO—Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker made Illinois the most liberal state in the United States for access to reproductive health care with the strokes of 20 pens June 12 at the Chicago Cultural Center.

It was a vow he made at the beginning of the legislative session, and a charge both backers and detractors of the Reproductive Health Act maintained would come to pass. The measure became law immediately with his signature.

Pritzker said the law makes the Prairie State a "beacon" for access to pregnancy care, contraception, birth control, abortion procedures and other related benefits by making access to these things a "fundamental right." That means no level of government in Illinois can infringe upon a woman or man's access to reproductive health care.

"Let the word go forth today from this place that if you believe in standing up for women's fundamental rights, Illinois is a beacon of hope in the heart of this nation. We trust women," the governor said.

While opponents say the law strikes protections from statute—including the automatic autopsy of a woman who dies during an abortion, penalties for an illegally-performed abortion post-viability and inspections of clinics where the procedure is done—proponents say it codifies current practices and removes aspects of statute enjoined by the courts.

Advocates also point out the measure treats abortion procedures as health care.

"The government shouldn't be able to tell a woman what's best for her body and her future. By making the Reproductive Health Care law in Illinois, we're sending a clear message—that we trust women to make their decisions about their bodies," Senate sponsor Melinda Bush, a Democrat from Grayslake, said. "We believe that women should have the same autonomy over their bodies that men do."

The legislation was introduced in February by House sponsor Rep. Kelly Cassidy, a Democrat from Chicago, and in the Senate by Bush. The twin bills sat in legislative limbo until early May, when calls for action came from advocates and lawmakers after moves by states such as Louisiana, Georgia and Missouri to restrict access to abortion procedures.

Some of those laws were passed to challenge the 1973 case *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized the procedure nationwide, before the U.S. Supreme Court.

"All of us believe the state of Missouri and the rest of the states that have passed laws taking away women's rights should change their minds, should revisit the issue," Pritzker said. "But Illinois knows where we stand and we're going to be here for women if they have to be refugees from other states. We don't want them to be—we want

women to be able to access health care where they live and all of us believe in that."

Immediately following the signing ceremony, opponents of the act held a news event in opposition to the new law. Present were representatives from the Thomas More Society, a Chicago-based pro-life law firm, and Illinois Right to Life Action, a pro-life lobbying group.

"It's a tale as old as time. Illinois politicians are more concerned with pandering to cash-wielding progressives and Chicago media outlets than they are with representing the people of our state," said Mary Kate Knorr, Illinois Right to Life Action spokeswoman. "Pritzker doesn't care what the people of Illinois want, nor does he care that abortion takes a human life."

Peter Breen, vice president and senior counsel of the law firm, said the "deceptively titled" Reproductive Health Act makes Illinois "an abortion destination for the country."



J.B. Pritzker at the bill-signing.
Capitol News Illinois photo by Rebecca Anzel

Vatican releases anti-LGBT document

The Vatican has released the document "Male and Female He Created Them: Towards a path of dialogue on the question of gender in education" to address issues surrounding sexuality and gender identity, PBS reported.

"Male and Female"—released during LGBT Pride Month—rejects the idea that people can choose or change their genders and insisting on the sexual "complementarity" of men and women to make babies.

Not surprisingly, LGBT Catholics have denounced the document. In a press release, New Ways Ministry called the Vatican's work "a harmful tool that will be used to oppress and harm not only transgender people, but lesbian, gay, bisexual people, too. The document associates sexual and gender minorities with libertine sexuality, a gross misrepresentation of the lives of LGBT people which perpetuates and encourages hatred, bigotry, and violence against them.

"The document, from the Congregation for Catholic Education, will confuse those who sincerely struggle with questions of gender identity and sexual orientation. Such confusion leads to self-harm, addiction, and even suicide. The misinformation the document contains will cause families to reject their children, and it will increase alienation of LGBT people from the Church."

DignityUSA Executive Director Marianne Duddy-Burke said in a separate statement, "Although presented as a call for dialogue, this statement reinforces the Vatican's entrenchment in a simplistic and outdated ideology of biological determinism. From the very title, Church leaders are perpetuating a vision of hu-

manity that fails to respect the diversity of human experience.

"This document fundamentally disregards and disrespects LGBTQI people by claiming our gender identity and sexual orientation are simply 'choices.' It denies the truth of our experience of gender and sexuality as innate, God-given blessings. The Vatican's stubborn refusal to reconsider its stale vision of gender complementarity as the exclusive basis for human identity and relationships in the light of decades of contrary scientific findings and personal testimony from millions is tragic."

The PBS article is at <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/lgbtq-catholics-denounce-vaticans-document-on-gender-identity>.

Ecuador approves same-sex marriage

By a vote of five to four, Ecuador's highest court approved same-sex marriage in a landmark ruling in the small and traditionally Catholic country on June 12, *Aljazeera.com* reported.

Pro-LGBTQ activists celebrated the decision in the capital of Quito as well as the port city of Guayaquil.

Other South American countries that recognize same-sex marriage include Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay.

Ecuador's current constitution defines marriage as a heterosexual union. The charter, which was ratified in 2008, also bars same-sex couples from adopting children.

The full article is at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/ecuador-highest-court-backs-sex-marriage-190613052724457.html>.

Publication promotes health, safety of TGNCI youths in facilities

The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) and the Center for Children's Law and Policy (CCLP) released a new publication, "Model Policy: Transgender, Gender Nonconforming, and Intersex Youth in Youth Confinement Facilities," with support from the National PREA Resource Center, a press release noted.

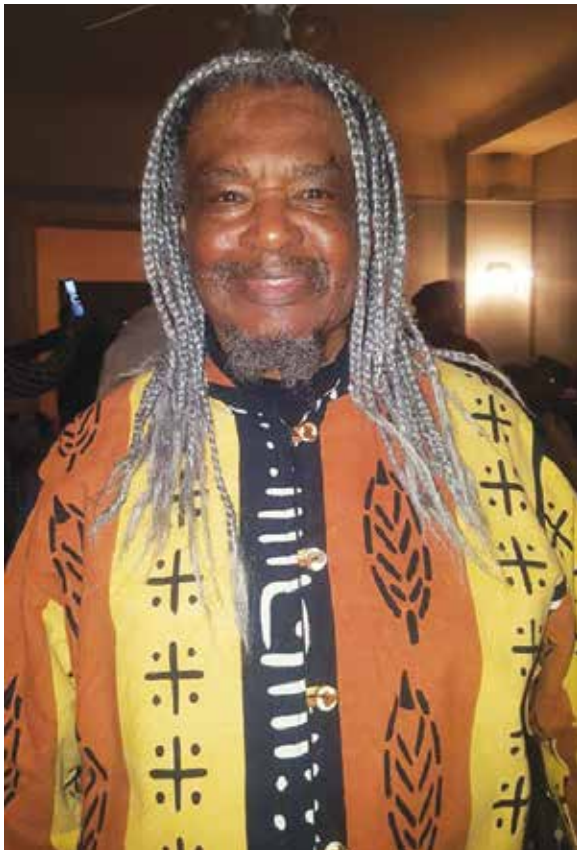
The model policy provides a blueprint of practices that promote the safety, dignity and well-being of transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex (TGNCI) youth in youth justice facilities. The policy was developed with input from a diverse group of advocates, justice professionals and formerly incarcerated young people.

The policy addresses a range of practices that create a safe and healthy environment for TGNCI youth, including:

- How can facility staff safely and respectfully identify TGNCI residents?
- What concrete steps can facilities take to affirm the gender identity of youth?
- How can facilities assess and remedy the risks associated with TGNCI status?
- Where should TGNCI youth be housed in sex-segregated facilities?
- How can facilities protect the privacy of TGNCI residents?

Among other things, there is also a glossary including a variety of LGBTQ-related terms.

The report is at <https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/sites/default/files/library/TGNCI%20Model%20Policy.pdf>.



Ruffin Nelson Robinson.
Photo from Facebook account

PASSAGES

Ruffin Nelson Robinson

Ruffin Nelson Robinson, a retired registered nurse who resided in Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood and was born in Eufaula, Alabama, died peacefully June 6. He was 74.

Ruffin was the beloved spouse of 14 years (together for 24) to Robert Gerald Schwartz; and loving uncle of six. He was preceded in death by parents Vinie Mae "Missie" Robinson and Richard Snipes.

Ruffin was a U.S. Army veteran, serving in Vietnam and Europe. He loved playing bid whist with his cards group, and also enjoyed attending operatic performances.

He achieved more than 25 years of sobriety, and attributed his coming out as a gay man and his relationship to Bob to his recovery, along with other accomplishments.

A celebration of life will be held for a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to New Town Alano Club (<https://www.newtownalanoclub.org/>).

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

PASSAGES

James Andrew Aull IV

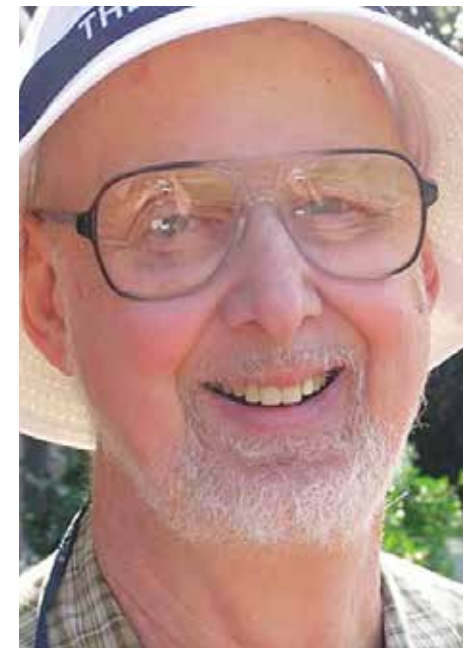
James Andrew Aull, IV, of Oak Park, died peacefully June 8 surrounded by family and friends. He was 80.

Jim was born Dec. 18, 1938, in West Norriton, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and grew up on a 50-acre farm, with woods, streams and wild-life; his love of nature never left him. He attended the Hill School preparatory boarding school. He graduated from Princeton University with a B.A. in history in 1960, and earned an M.Div. from Chicago Theological Seminary and an MAT from Northwestern University.

During his professional life, he worked for the YMCA, taught high school in Woodstock, Illinois, and spent 25 years with the Chicago Youth Centers, retiring as director of quality improvement. It was during his work at the YMCA that he became involved in the civil-rights and social-justice movements that became a lifetime commitment.

Jim is survived by his beloved spouse of 30 years, Jeffrey Jon Smith; his loving sons, Gino Aull of Naples, Florida, and James Bradley Aull of Berwyn; and his granddaughter, Rebecca Aull of Chicago. Jim was preceded in death by his father, James Andrew Aull III; his mother Sarah Helena Aull (nee Longacre); his sister, Jean Kathryn Aull of Lyme, New Hampshire; and late partner Dennis Thompson.

Jim was greatly loved and will be missed. He realized his altruism through word and deed, and did what all of us should aspire to do: He made



James Andrew Aull IV.
Windy City Times photo

the world a better place.

There will a celebration of life during the summer.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Vermont's Open Fields School, founded by his sister: <http://www.openfields.org/>.

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Community forum held on Boystown situations and solutions

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Several dozen community members gathered the evening of June 5 for a meeting to discuss follow-up engagement in the wake of recent racist incidents in Boystown.

"Many of our congregants do not feel comfortable and, for too long, have accepted [racism in Boystown] as a reality," said Rev. Jamie Frazier of Lighthouse Community Church, where the meeting was convened.



Lighthouse Church Pastor Rev. Jamie Frazier.
Photo by Matt Simonette

The gathering was organized by a coalition of Chicago organizations that included Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus, Lighthouse's clergy and members and Affinity Community Services, among others.

One of the controversies began when Progress Bar management sent out an email the week of May 27 instructing DJs to no longer play rap music. That email was distributed publicly via social media a few days later, igniting a community firestorm.

Many community members noted that Progress Bar had previously been one of the most welcoming Boystown bars for Black gay customers, and read the rap ban as de facto ban on them as well. Progress Bar owner Justin Romme apologized May 31.

But community advocates have said that Romme's apology was not enough, and that Progress Bar's rap ban was emblematic of racist treatment of Black individuals when they visit many Boystown establishments. A protest was held at the corner of Halsted and Roscoe Streets on June 2.

In late May, community member Dennis Byrd alleged via social media that the owner of Beatnix threatened to call the police after he and a friend asked him to explain an article of clothing that was adorned with the Confederate flag.

a voice?"

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus' Erik Glenn said that, for many Black LGBT folks visiting or residing in Boystown, microaggressions "stacked up."

He explained that when he was living in Boystown, "It was nice not to be called a fag on a regular basis, but it was not nice with all the other stuff that was adding up."

Byrd, the patron making the allegations against Beatnix, said that persons of color "feel targeted and followed" in Boystown; he added that the store owner told him that he was being "like Jussie Smollett, making something out of something that was not a big deal."

Police, he noted, are frequently "weaponized" in the area against persons of color.

Most participants concluded that a call for a boycott of businesses was best saved as a last resort. Frazier, for example, suggested that business owners be required to pay into a fund that could assist persons at risk. Others thought that owners and staff should perhaps be required by the city to attend diversity and cultural competency training sessions as part of licensing requirements.

Blair noted that Romme had requested a meeting with stakeholders in an effort to rectify the situation.

But one audience member wondered aloud why such an incident and backlash have to occur in order for a business owner to make such overtures.

"Why didn't you come to us, the people who come to your establishment?" asked the audience member. "Maybe we can have the owners be honest about what the heck they're so upset about."

Lighthouse Church to host anti-racism forum July 13

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Lighthouse Church of Chicago, 2335 N. Orchard St., will host a meeting July 13 to address the pervasiveness of racism within the LGBT community.

The gathering, Racial Justice Summit: Boystown & Beyond, is aimed at forming a locally-based coalition to tackle the issue, is intended for clergy of LGBT-welcoming churches and their parishioners, as well as anyone who considers themselves an ally of LGBT persons of color, said Lighthouse Pastor Jamie Frazier.

His announcement comes weeks after a large-scale controversy erupted after the owner of Progress Bar issued a dictum that rap and hip hop music would be banned in the bar, an edict that has often been regarded as a tacit ban on persons of color in other locales. Allegations of racism were also leveled against the store Beatnix in Boystown.

"We believe that our white allies are going to want to stand up and speak," said Frazier. "Many churches are looking for a way to make real that commitment. Lighthouse is going to create a way for them to do so."

The meeting will be held at 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Lighthouse. For more information, see lighthousechicago.org.

Man charged in dating-app attack

Uptown resident Cedric Johnson was charged with eight counts of aggravated battery to a peace officer and individual counts of aggravated battery with a deadly weapon after a Lake View attack involving another man he met through the dating app Grindr, The Chicago Sun-Times reported.

Judge Arthur Wesley Willis denied Johnson bail at a June 16 hearing, calling him a threat to public safety.

Prosecutors said Johnson met the other man, a local professor, at the alleged victim's apartment on the 600 block of West Aldine Avenue. After a while, an argument ensued, with Johnson allegedly attacking the victim with a hammer and hitting him several times. The professor was rushed to Illinois Masonic Medical Center and treated for multiple injuries. Several officers were also injured while apprehending Johnson.

Johnson's next court date is Friday, June 21.

The full article is at <https://chicago.sun-times.com/crime/2019/6/16/18681052/cedric-johnson-hammer-attack-grindr-dating-app-uptown-lakeviewl>.

Lightfoot, CPD launch community policing initiative

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot joined Chicago Police Department (CPD) Superintendent Eddie T. Johnson and Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) Commissioner Rosa Escareno to launch a new community-policing initiative designed to build and foster a collaborative partnership with local businesses in communities across Chicago.

As part of the initiative, all 22 police districts will have a designated business liaison officer to work closely with the district commander and BACP to provide positive engagement opportunities for entrepreneurs, address chronic problems or concerns of business owners and improve overall public safety through collaboration with the community.

Each business liaison officer will work directly with businesses in their district to establish engagement strategies to encourage positive community interactions and relationships.

This new initiative is part of the Chicago Police Department's community policing strategies and its ongoing efforts to improve the communication and cooperation between police officers and the communities they serve.



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Engage with Inspiring Leaders in LGBTQI Catholic Social Justice



Mary E. Hunt



Miguel Díaz



Bryan Massingale



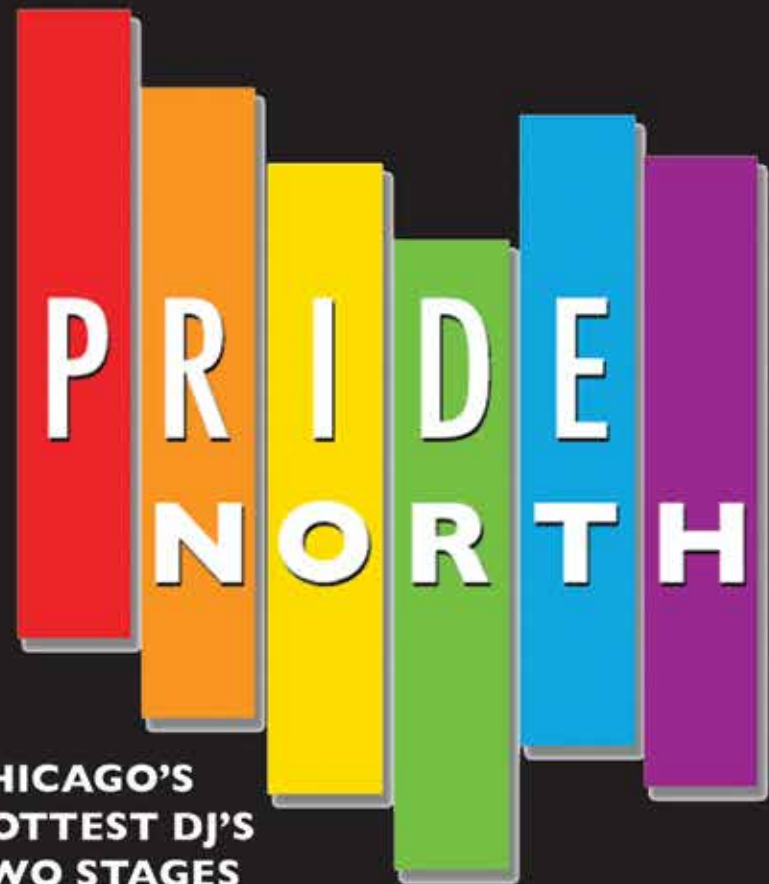
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Aging with HIV focus of Reunion Project event

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Reunion Project 2.0—Chicago hosted a two day event focused on people aging with HIV June 14-15 at Loyola University's Water Tower Campus.

The day-long employment resource event organized by National Working Positive Coalition took place June 14 with opening remarks by Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Office of Employment and Training Deputy Director Julio Rodriguez.

Sessions included considering work, navigating work earnings and government benefits, legal rights and protections in the workplace and strategies and resources to maximize options and success in job seeking and at work.

To kick off the June 15 town-hall style meeting on "HIV, Aging, Surviving and Thriving: A Family Reunion" both The Reunion Project Co-Founder, Positively Aware editor and TPAN Director of Publications Jeff Berry and TPAN CEO Christopher Clark spoke about the importance of holding these events across the country and what it means to them.

National AIDS Memorial Board of Directors Chair Mike Shriver recapped the previous day's activities, adding what he took away from it was that "no matter where you live in the country, the system is meant to frustrate those of us liv-

ing with HIV."

Performer and former Windy City Times contributing writer Sanford Gaylord gave a rousing spoken-word performance from Craig G. Harris' work "Cut Off From Among Their People."

The Global Girls' Marvynetta Woodley-Penn, Arzula Maxine Gardner, Shawneita Irvin and Ryonn Gloster performed their "My Choice. My Voice. My Vote." storytelling, singing and movement piece focused on reproductive access, including the right to get an abortion, and inclusive, comprehensive sex-education.

Gregg Cassin, who created the Honoring Our Experience retreats for long-term survivors of HIV, spoke about the power of sharing one's stories. Cassin asked attendees to share their stories and what was evident from every person who spoke was the shame and stigma associated with HIV and how it has caused social isolation, especially for those who are older.

Loyola University School of Social Work Assistant Professor Keith Green gave the keynote address, "Saved by Spirit, Science and Semi-Structured Social Support: Musings from a long-term survivor who recently turned 40."

Green told his story of being diagnosed with HIV when he was a senior at Hyde Park High School (when he was 17) in 1994, when he took part in a blood drive via Lifesource (now Vital-



From left: Matt Sharp, Vanessa Johnson, Mike Shriver, Louis Spraggins and Mark Misrok.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

ant). He explained that the stigma of having HIV, especially as a young man in the prime of his life, was too much to handle at times and he decided that death would be a better choice. Green said this led him to move to North Carolina in 2001 to die—and he came very close to it via an infection, resulting in him becoming very thin and frail.

In speaking about his career journey, Green said it started with being in a hospital in North Carolina when he got some literature that included Positively Aware magazine. He explained that seeing that the magazine was published in Chicago made him want to move back and connect with the organization, which he did. That led to a volunteer position at TPAN (where the magazine is published) that turned into a paying job.

Green spoke to the challenges with diversity and inclusion that existed within many AIDS service organization at the time, and still today. Although TPAN was founded by a group of gay white men during the early days of the epidemic, the organization had appointed its second African American executive director, Charles Clifton, by the time Green stumbled upon it. Green said he found solace in the organization's emerging diverse programming, ultimately becoming a mentee of both Clifton and Berry. When he was first hired, Green explained that he was still recovering from his infection. At times, this forced him to have to lie on the couch and rest during the work day and no one, especially Berry, made him feel bad about it.

"The unconditional support was vital," said Green.

Green explained that due to Clifton and Berry's mentorship when he came back to Chicago, he was able to further his education and move from TPAN and become a project director at John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County, Director of Federal Affairs at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) and his current position at Loyola University where, to his surprise, he has been able to bring his full self into his work and talk about LGBTQ issues and HIV/AIDS.

"The only way we will end disparities related to HIV healthcare is at the intersection of spirituality, science and semi-structured social support, which is what we have here today," said Green.

Among the day's other activities were remarks by National Working Positive Coalition Executive Director Mark Misrok who spoke about being impressed by Rodriguez' address the previous day, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus Equity Coordinator Louis Spraggins who gave some background on The Reunion Project, and The Reunion Project Co-Founder Matt Sharp explaining the history of AIDS activism ahead of an ice breaker activity led by Shriver and Ribbon Consulting Group, LLC Co-Founder Vanessa Johnson.

Other speakers included Cook County Health and Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center Attending Physician Dr. Gregory Huhn, who did a presentation on the ways in which other health issues interact with people who have HIV and how to mitigate them by changing the way one lives, such as smoking cessation, eating a healthy diet and exercising. AFC Prevention and Community Partnerships Vice President Cynthia Tucker spoke about the corrections case management program at AFC to help formerly incarcerated cisgender and transgender people with HIV navigate the world following their release from prison and University of Illinois at Chicago Associate Professor of Psychiatry Lisa Razzano, who focused on mental health for those aging with HIV.

The Reunion Project 2.0-Chicago event was supported by Positively Aging—a collaboration of The Reunion Project, TPAN and Positively Aware magazine—and Gilead Sciences' Age Positively initiative.

AFC, Brave Space Alliance, Chicago Center for HIV Elimination, Chicago Department of Health, Chicago Area HIV Integrated Services Council, Loyola University Chicago, Rush Center of Excellence on Disparities in HIV and Aging, Vida/SIDA and the Women's Connection Program at the AFC were the other event collaborating partners.

See www.tpan.com/reunion-project.



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30 Under 30 Awards to be held June 26

Windy City Times will again mark Pride Month with its annual 30 Under 30 Awards.

The ceremony will take place Wed, June 26. As in the past few years, the event will take place at Polo Cafe and Catering, 3322 S. Morgan St.

There will be a 5:30 p.m. reception, with the program being 6-7:30 p.m.

Honorees are 30 years or under as of June 30, and have made some substantial contributions to the Chicagoland LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, sports or other areas.

Windy City Times Managing Editor Matt Simionette coordinates the awards program for the paper. Hundreds of people have been honored by the paper in the more than 10 years since the awards were established.

Most honorees have gone on to great success in their careers and educations, including working for the Obama presidential campaign and administration, plus individual successes in music, legal, professional and academic careers and much more.

AMA adopts new pro-LGBTQ policies at annual meeting

The American Medical Association (AMA), voted to adopt new policies on emerging health care topics during the first day of voting at its annual meeting, held June 8-12 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

Among other things, the AMA's House of Delegates took action to help prevent anti-transgender violence.

To highlight the discrimination and physical dangers faced by the LGBTQ community, and

the disturbing pattern of violence toward black transgender women, the physicians and medical students gathered at the AMA Annual Meeting adopted policy directing the AMA to:

—Form partnerships with other medical organizations and stakeholders to educate members of the public, legislatures and law enforcement using verified data on hate crimes against transgender individuals and highlight the disproportionate number fatal attacks on black transgender women;

—Advocate for consistent collection and reporting of data on hate crimes across all levels of law enforcement that includes demographic information on a victim's birth sex and gender

identity;

—Advocate for a central law enforcement database to collect data on reported hate crimes that correctly identifies a victim's birth sex and gender identity;

—Advocate for stronger law enforcement policies regarding interactions with transgender individuals in order to prevent bias and mistreatment and increase community trust; and

—Advocate for local, state, and federal efforts that will increase access to mental health treatment and address the health disparities that LGBTQ individuals experience.

Also, the AMA will support state policies allowing minors to override their parent's refusal for vaccinations. The AMA will also support the posting of signs, notices, posters, placards and other educational material in local clinics, emergency departments and other medical settings to provide information about reporting human-trafficking activities, or provide information that connects victims and survivors with assistance.

Commissioner looking to amend rights ordinance

Newly elected Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison is aiming to amend a section of the human-rights ordinance.

The change would eliminate language on the books under the public-accommodation section that would allow for someone to ask for an ID



Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison. Photo by Serhii Chrucky

to "prove" that person's gender before accessing some areas such as restrooms.

The amendment would read, "For the purposes of the exceptions set forth in Section 42-37(b) (1)a through c, "sex" includes both biological category and gender identity. Each person determines their own gender identity; no proof of an individual's sex or gender shall be required except for the person's expression of their own gender."

The Human Relations Committee meeting in which this amendment will be heard will take place Wed., June 26, at 10:30 a.m. at 118 N. Clark St.

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Court lets Trump trans ban stand—and orders new review

On June 14, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals allowed President Trump's ban on transgender members of the military to stand—setting aside a ruling by U.S. District Judge Marsha Pechman, who is one of four federal judges to rule against Trump's policy, Reuters reported.

The appellate court—which basically ordered Pechman to reconsider her decision—said Mattis' policy “discriminates on the basis of transgender status” but was nevertheless “significantly different” from the ban.

Trump announced the transgender ban in July 2017, saying the military needed to focus on “decisive and overwhelming victory” without being burdened by the “tremendous medical costs and disruption” of having transgender personnel. The following March, he backed a revised policy from then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis that disqualified most transgender people with a history of gender dysphoria from military service. Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a five-to-four vote, erased lower-court injunctions that blocked the ban from going into effect.

In a statement, Lambda Legal's Sharon McGowan said, “With [the] decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, we moved one step closer to our goal: vindication of the constitutional

rights of transgender service members.

“In an unanimous decision, the Ninth Circuit held that this administration's ban targets transgender people, rejecting the government's pretense to the contrary, and therefore must be analyzed using heightened judicial scrutiny, flatly rejecting the government's request for rubber-stamp approval. It also made clear that the district court was entitled to evaluate this discriminatory policy through a full presentation of the facts, which we are eager to make.

“Earlier this year, the Supreme Court rejected the Trump administration's premature request for review precisely because it wants the lower courts to evaluate the constitutionality of the ban on a full record. This ban remains rank discrimination that does nothing to promote national security and inflicts deep harm on the transgender people who wish to serve and the families whom they support, and who support them. But we are more determined than ever, and eager to continue this fight to relegate this hateful policy to the dustbin of history.”

The full Reuters article is at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-transgender/us-court-lets-trump-transgender-military-ban-stand-orders-new-review-idUSKCN1TF1ZM>.

Supreme Ct. declines to decide gay wedding-cake case

On June 17, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to decide if an Oregon baker can refuse on religious grounds to design a cake for a same-sex wedding—a question it sidestepped last year, USA Today noted.

The new case involves Sweetcakes by Melissa, which was fined \$135,000 for refusing to serve Rachel and Laurel Bowman-Cryer, who wanted a wedding cake. Melissa and Aaron Klein, who owned the bakery, closed the store.

Rather than hearing the case, the justices sent it back to a lower court to take its 2018 ruling (Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission) into consideration. In a seven-to-two ruling, the Court ruled on narrow grounds that the commission violated Masterpiece owner Jack Phillips' rights to free exercise.

Chicago House names new CEO

Chicago House announced that its board of trustees has appointed Michael Herman as its newest CEO. His term will begin July 8.

Herman brings nearly 20 years of executive management and fundraising experience in the nonprofit sector to his new position. Most recently, he was vice president of development at Kohl Children's Museum, where he led the Play It Forward Campaign—a \$15-million fundraising effort to create greater access to play.



New Chicago House CEO Michael Herman.
Photo courtesy of Chicago House

For eight years, Herman was chief development officer at Chicago House. He previously spent 17 years as a priest, serving largely the Latinx community across Chicago via social activism, education initiatives and creating access to affordable housing.

“It is an honor and a privilege to return to Chicago House,” Herman said in a statement. “My dedication to serving individuals living at or below the poverty line and providing access to affordable housing has remained a central focus throughout my career. I am humbled by the opportunity to make a sizable difference for Chicago House clients.”

Herman is a coach and board member for Northside Chicago American Youth Soccer Organization and supports the Logan Square Neighborhood Association. He lives with his husband, Bernard Bartilad, and 12-year-old son in the Rogers Park neighborhood.

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Aurora Pride

Tim Carroll Photography

Aurora, Woodstock stage Pride Parades

Aurora and Woodstock are among the Chicago suburbs that staged Pride Parades this year.

The Aurora Pride Parade took place June 9—and the second annual event was able to happen because of a massive fundraising push courtesy of Indivisible Aurora.

Expenses, which totaled about \$17,000, covered security and other unexpected costs—and nearly quadrupled last year's budget for the event.

As such, Aurora Mayor Richard Irvin announced its cancellation on April 16, after Indivisible Aurora said it could not meet the new costs. However, Indivisible Aurora Executive Director Chuck Adam mounted an online fundraiser that same day—and the group raised more than \$20,000.

Woodstock Pride took place on the same day at historic Woodstock Square. Local business leaders and politicians such as U.S. Rep. Lauren Underwood (D-Illinois) were present at the event.

Woodstock Pride

McCarrel Photography



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Stonewall: A personal memoir

BY MARK SEGAL
GAY LIBERATION FRONT 1969-71

That night, standing in Stonewall, I could not have imagined what the next few hours would do to change the gay and lesbian community around the world. I doubt anyone else could have known. How could we have known, on June 28, 1969, that we'd be participating in history?

It started when the lights flickered on and off, alerting the patrons to something imminent, though I had no idea what. It was my second month in New York, my second month walking Christopher Street, my second month being an out and proud gay. Looking over at my friend, I asked what was happening and he said, nonchalantly: "Oh, it's just a raid." As an 18-year-old new to everything, his words were frightening.

The police barged in, pushing around anyone who was in drag or stereotypical-looking. They hurled insults and hurled people around. Anyone who looked like they were successful, anyone who had a few bucks, were forced to take out their wallets and, in the bright light, give their money to the cops, who slid the bills in their pockets. Welcome to Extortion 101. They robbed us in plain sight, and we had no possible recompense. That is how they felt about us. That's how they

felt they could treat us: any way they wished.

As this was happening, they began to clear the bar by carding people. To this day I don't know why they were carding, since it was an illegal bar and drinking age didn't matter, but that was the procedure. At 18 and fresh from Philadelphia, I looked like the boy next door. They had little use for me and I was one of the first to be carded and let out, and I was glad about that.

But as I came out, I saw an obvious difference in what certain clientele were doing. Those with family ties, those with a good job, those on the fast track to a professional career, all ran for the subway as soon as they could get out that door. People like me, a street kid living at Sloane House YMCA on 34th Street, and others, who today you'd call trans, just stuck around. We had nowhere safe to go. Our safety was with each other, right there, watching what was transpiring.

Eventually there were more of us outside, and inside the bar remained only the police and employees. Those of us who stayed formed a semi circle around the double doors into the street. My memory tells me that there were between fifty and a hundred of us. The doors opened and the police shouted out a few insults and told us to disperse. We didn't. They opened the door a second time and again spewed insults and demand-



Gay Liberation Front first demonstration three weeks after the riots (Segal on right with bag).

Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library

ing we disperse. We didn't, and we this time we yelled insults back at them. They closed the door, and at that point people picked up whatever there was around them. Stones, discarded soda cans, and bottles. For the first time in history our community wasn't just fighting back. We had imprisoned our oppressors, the police. They were now our prisoners.

This continued for sometime, and it was awhile before police re-enforcement came to their rescue. It is my belief that the reason for the slow re-enforcements was the police inside that gay bar were so embarrassed to call their station house and have to tell their fellow officers: We're trapped and surrounded by angry fags and dykes. Please save us.

The fact that we had them trapped created a certain joy on the street. People began to run to other bars in the area, passersby turned their heads as they came around the corner.

While this riot was happening, Marty Robinson, who had created a group called the action group, came up to me with chalk, and said: "Write on the walls and street "Tomorrow Night, Stonewall." I have no idea where he got the chalk, but I'm thankful he got it. That chalk was a catalyst for much more than one night of rebelling.

From the river, to Greenwich, all along Christopher Street, I wrote: "Tomorrow Night, Stonewall."

People ran and screamed and laughed. It was a joyous evening. We were fighting off 2,000 years of oppression, though we didn't realize it in that moment.

Amid the joy and the excitement, I had a lightbulb moment. Standing across the street from Stonewall, watching everything around me, I thought to myself: "Black people are fighting for their lives. Women are fighting for their lives. Latinos are fighting for their lives. What about us? What about me?" It was at that point that I

finally knew what I'd do for the rest of my life. I would be something that didn't exist yet, something that didn't have a title, something that had no salary: a gay activist. I didn't know, and I didn't care, how difficult it would be. All I knew in that moment was that I found what I was meant to do.

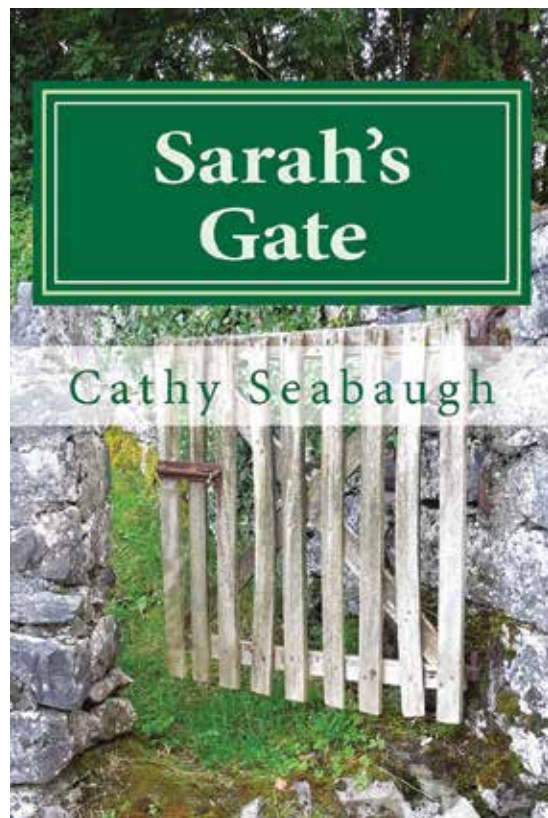
I was at a riot that started a revolution, and I would be a part of it.

In the commotion, I saw a window broken. I didn't see any molotov cocktails. I saw a feather boa being put on the statue of General Sheridan in Sheridan Square. I wasn't there when anyone was arrested, but I was there each and every night that followed, along with all of us who would later call ourselves Gay Liberation Front.

It was the members of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) who wrote on the street that night, members of GLF who stood proudly at the front doors of Stonewall the second night to hear Marty Robinson and Martha Shelley speak, members who understood the changes we were demanding, not asking for.

The third and fourth nights were filled with organizing and a circus atmosphere that continued the entire week. We were joyous, since from the ashes of Stonewall came GLF—a group that would turn our community and the world upside-down. Also from the third night on, leafletting began on Christopher Street. For the first time we were united, and for the first time we were a diversified community.

Let's make this clear: Before GLF, you didn't see anyone but white men in suits and ties and white women in dresses representing the LGBT community. Those earlier organizations wouldn't have anyone else as spokespeople. That is why I was in the Action Group. Mattachine didn't want me, a youth of 18, in its office since the members felt they could be raided for corrupting the morals of minors. And drag queens, people of color?



Cate McGuire's life in Chicago was fulfilling, successful and nearly all she ever dreamed for herself.

Big-city journalist from a small, rural community, she felt like an integral part of the world, a contributor to society. Her beautiful life partner was igniting change through the public school system. They were happy. Life was good. Cate learns she does not always get to write the story the way she wants it to go.

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Mark Segal filming NBC documentary on Stonewall, in *The Stonewall*. Photo courtesy of Segal



Gay-rights demonstration (Segal in beige sweater). Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library

Stonewall was not one night—it was a year, and GLF was its spirit. That spirit of rebellion transformed our world. Before Stonewall, less than a hundred out people represented us, all white men and white women, no diversity allowed. One year later at Gay Pride, people of color, trans people, and youth, gathered under a grassroots movement that welcomed all segments of our community, we were not 100 picketing once a year. We were now thousands.

I wasn't just at Stonewall, more importantly. I was with Gay Liberation Front.

Stonewall and GLF are synonymous. One night led to one magical year—a year that changed the world.

Mark Segal is publisher of *The Philadelphia Gay News* and last year his personal papers and artifacts, including some from this article, were inducted into The Smithsonian Institute American History Museum in Washington, D.C. His memoir *And Then I Danced, Traveling The Road To LGBT Equality* was named book of the year by the National Lesbian Gay Journalist Association.

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They were ignored by those groups. But we in GLF welcomed all. From lesbian separatists, to radical fairy collectives, youths, street kids and, yes, drag queens, they were all GLF. You may have heard about a couple of our members: Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera; they were welcomed.

GLF is the most important LGBT organization to have ever existed. We made more change in one year for this community than any other organization since and we also were certainly the most dysfunctional, and we are all proud of that! That first year, from Stonewall to the first Gay Pride in 1970, was pure magic, and it made our community what it is today. It changed our lives in so many ways that no organization had.

We would no longer be invisible, we were out, loud, and proud of who we were and we would no longer accept society's labels, we would tell them who we were. We were not "homosexuals." We were gay men, gay women, lesbian, dykes, drag queens. Not only would we be open about who we were, we'd also be in your face to fight for our rights, not merely plead for them. This was all revolutionary, since 99.9 percent of our community was in the closet and in 1969, before GLF there were only four types of places to go. Illegal gay bars, cruising areas, private parties, and secret meetings of organizations, which were hidden so the police would not raid them.

GLF advertised our meetings. We advertised that we were going to have a dance, women dancing with women, men dancing with men—and not in an illegal bar, but in public. We dared the police to raid us, and they were afraid to. That was rebellious! We also publicly took back our street Christopher Street by leafleting every night and facing off against the police. We did legal alerts, medical alerts, notices to gather for our next demonstration, handouts for Gay Youth meetings, a hotline, the nation's first trans organization, and the nation's first LGBT Community Center. And if all that were not enough, we were the organizers and marshals for that very first Gay Pride in 1970, which was called Christopher Street Liberation Day March originally dreamed up by Craig Rodwell and Ellen Broidy.

STONEWALL AT 50

Stonewall bartender talks about fateful night, dispels myths

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Legacy Project kicked off Pride month with a talk featuring Stonewall Inn bartender Tree Sequoia and LGBTQ historian and Legacy Project co-founder Owen Keehnen on June 5 at Sidetrack. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots.

On June 28, 1969, Tree (he prefers that people use his first name only) was scheduled to be interviewed for a bartending job at the Stonewall Inn, located on Christopher Street in New York City; while he was there for the interview, the Stonewall Riots began. What many may not know is that it took decades for Tree to start that job because the Stonewall Inn was shut down after the riot and did not reopen until the mid-'90s. (While the Stonewall Inn was not in operation, Tree worked at the nearby 9th Circle and the Julius bars.)

Sidetrack General Manager Brad Balof told the packed house, "Fifty years ago, it would have been illegal for this many homosexuals to gather in the same place," adding that this year's Pride motto for the bar is "Sidetrack Celebrates."

Legacy Project Co-Founder/Executive Director Victor Salvo spoke about the need to bring LG-BTQ history to the forefront because it has been redacted from textbooks and school curriculums. Salvo explained that, along with the Legacy Walk, Legacy Wall and website, he recently attended the first meeting to discuss the new LGBTQ-inclusive middle and high school curriculum that will begin across Illinois in 2020. He also teased the

Legacy Project's upcoming music-focused event on Saturday, June 29, at Sidetrack.

Keehnen asked Tree, who grew up in Brooklyn, about his first introduction to Greenwich Village. Tree said when he arrived in Greenwich Village, the first place he went was Mama's Chicken and Ribs—where he encountered a gathering of gay men for the first time in his life. He explained that going to this restaurant and then the Stonewall Inn (which the mafia owned) to dance was the way he spent many weekends.

The conversation turned to the rules gay people had to follow when they were out at the bars so they could order drinks since they were not supposed to be served alcohol in public. Tree said the police would monitor the bars in Greenwich Village and raid them when the bar owners had not paid them off in a while. He explained that this is how he ended up being arrested more than a dozen times—but it would only be for a night because the mafia would pay everyone's \$20 fine so they could return to the bar the next night.

Tree said he met Sylvia Rivera, who was then known as a drag queen, and Marsha P. Johnson, whom everyone identified as a street kid, before the Stonewall Riots. Johnson was let into the Stonewall Inn when the weather was bad, even though she had no money, Tree said, adding that the riots raged all night, with Johnson showing up until around 2 a.m.

Keehnen asked Tree about the first night of the riots, including the scene inside the Stonewall Inn.

Tree said it was painted black—including the



From left: Owen Keehnen and Tree Sequoia.

Photo courtesy of The Legacy Project

windows and doors—so no one could see inside the bar, among other details. He said while he was dancing with some other patrons they heard screams, and that was when he knew something was wrong. He explained that this raid was different because it was the vice squad, not the regular police officers, and they pushed Storme DeLarverie—a butch lesbian who died in 2014—against the wall. DeLarverie, according to Tree, started beating the vice officers up, which was how the riots started.

Continuing, Tree said a neighborhood police officer got him and four other people away from Stonewall so they would not be arrested. When Tree got safely outside, he and others helped break the lock on one of the paddy wagons so the bar patrons inside could escape. Tree said all the stores and residences on the block let paddy wagon escapees hide in their hallways so the vice officers could not re-arrest them.

Tree explained that no one knows who threw the rock or brick into the Stonewall Inn window. He said some people took a parking meter out of the ground and used it as a battering ram against the vice officers and they lit garbage cans on fire

to throw them into the bar to burn it down with the police inside.

Keehnen wondered what the biggest misconceptions about the riot were and Tree said the things stand out that were not true—such as Johnson throwing the rock, that a high heel broke the window and that Judy Garland's death had something to do with it.

In terms of when Tree knew the riots were a big deal, he explained that it was not until much later, when he was asked to give a speech at the United Nations on the 25th anniversary of the event.

Tree said he is proud to have been at the Stonewall Inn when the riot started and to be working there since it reopened. He added that middle and high school students now come to the bar on field trips to learn about the riots and other LGBTQ history, concluding that this means so much to him because he gets to share his experiences with them.

A Q&A session followed.

Note: Carrie Maxwell is also a volunteer with the Legacy Project.

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STONEWALL AT 50 NYPD apologizes for actions

Five decades after the historic Stonewall riots that many said launched the LGBT-rights movement, the New York Police Department (NYPD) apologized to the community for its role in the violence.

"The actions taken by the NYPD [at Stonewall] were wrong, plain and simple," Police Commissioner James O'Neill said June 7 dur-

ing a Pride Month safety briefing, CNN.com reported.

O'Neill called the historically anti-LGBT police behavior and laws "discriminatory and oppressive," and apologized on behalf of the department to the audience's applause.

"To have the NYPD commissioner make these very explicit remarks apologizing, it's really moving," said openly gay City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, who had a day earlier called for a police apology, The New York Times noted.

However, some warned that the NYPD needs to support its words with actions.

Rewatching Stonewall at the movies

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Early in gay director Nigel Finch's 1995 sort-of docudrama *Stonewall*, the drag queen La Miranda (Guillermo Diaz), who's one of the central characters, looks at the audience and says: "There's as many Stonewall stories as there's queens in New York. ... This is my Stonewall legend."

Finch, who died from AIDS complications shortly before *Stonewall's* release, turned the film into a pastiche of sorts. The film opens with authentic documentary footage from the uprising, and punctuates key moments with drag queens like La Miranda lip-syncing musical numbers that provide a Greek chorus-like commentary on the action.

While solidly constructed, Finch's film highlights a number of shortcomings with filmed historical drama, specifically those around how filmmakers can maintain accuracy while formulating a story that can still engage an audience. The 1995 film and a subsequent *Stonewall* film released two decades later illustrate how easy it is for filmed dramas to leave the participants with the highest real-life stakes behind.

Stonewall's audience surrogate is Matty Dean (Frederick Weller), a new arrival to New York who is introduced both to the denizens of the Stone-

wall Inn as well as other gay New Yorkers, among them members of the Mattachine Society, whose meetings Dean attends.

While Finch acknowledges the role of drag queens in the uprising, it's Dean who is needed to largely inspire a call for liberation among them in the film. To be clear on the film, the drag queen Bostonia (Duane Boutte) throws the first punch in the raid that seemingly triggered the uprising. But the Greenwich Villagers, it seemed, would have not been so impatient had Dean showed.

The film was an adaptation of sorts Martin Duberman's documentary book *Stonewall*, and had the unenviable challenge of whittling down numerous storylines into a three-act screenplay. Among those interviewees Duberman consulted was activist Sylvia Rivera—whose role in the uprising has only in recent years largely been acknowledged. Indeed, Rivera's visit to the draft board in the book is the scene Finch seemingly riffs on, using Dean. The late Chicago activist William B. Kelley was among those who read Duberman's initial drafts.

The film *Stonewall* had relatively minor impact when it was released in the summer of 1995. The filmmakers had solid credentials when it came to LGBT cinema—Finch had executive produced *Paris Is Burning*, for example, and lesbian producer Christine Vachon has made multiple pres-



The 1995 film *Stonewall*.

tigious films before and since, most notably in partnership with gay director Todd Haynes. But contemporary viewers now might come away from the film feeling that the queer characters are short-changed. Matty Dean seems to be learning the ropes even as he educates those around him—those who have lived in New York City for years longer—how to be authentic.

If audiences were ambivalent about such whitewashing of history in 1995, they were enraged by it in 2015. That was when blockbuster director Roland Emmerich presented his version of the story, also called *Stonewall*.

Like Finch, Emmerich concentrated on a white, cisgender surrogate from the Midwest, Danny (Jeremy Irvine), who encounters a panoply of Greenwich Village characters. The film centers on Danny's coming-out—his attending the Pride parade is the film's coda, and it's him who throws the first brick that launches the uprising.

Not only were critics unkind, but members of the public picketed some showings; a protest was held at a Chicago screening. Many among the 2015 audience were all too aware of Hollywood's tendency to whitewash its narratives and had higher expectations for its depictions of race and gender-identity issues. Depicting *Stonewall* with the drag queens only in the background could no longer cut it.

All this begs the question: Was *Stonewall* in the end an unfilmable event these filmmakers shouldn't have touched? So much of *Stonewall's* "true" history has to be uncovered by word of mouth, from participants whose narrations might be unreliable. But perhaps probing these narrative and representational shortcomings have at least led to discussions about the uprising's origins and the identities of several of the principal participants. Perhaps it also would lead to discussions of how filmmakers—even when tackling ostensibly universal LGBT issues—have in the end been uncomfortable discussing racial and gender-related politics.

Fortunately, though, we don't need the cinema to offer us histories of *Stonewall* and the LGBT-rights movement. Multiple historians, such as John D'Emilio here in Chicago, have compiled comprehensive accounts of the movement, and our city has Gerber Hart Library & Archive among its resources. Furthermore, Illinois schoolchildren will soon have LGBT history as part of their curriculum, ensuring that the collective memory of *Stonewall* will not be lost to the ages.

The full version of the article is online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

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viewpoints


**Christopher
PETT**

We remember, we celebrate, we believe

There is a lot of remembering, celebrating and believing going on right now.

The “uprising” at the Stonewall Inn 50 years ago represents a significant turning point in an emerging yet powerful movement; the merging of individual voices and experiences into one larger, clearer, more defiant and more authentic voice demanding respect and inclusion.

Among those many voices were those who were also brought their spiritual woundedness, a longing of both body and spirit to be free in an identity that expresses itself as both queer and as believer.

As we celebrate Stonewall, the convergence of a movement, we also celebrate the contributions and life-force brought to this justice work by communities of faith.

There are only two currently existing LGBTQ faith-based organizations that pre-date Stonewall: the Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) and DignityUSA.

These two faith-based organizations have survived, thrived and helped propel the LGBTQ-justice movement over 50 years in recognition of a core yearning and need that brought small communities together all over this country beginning in 1969 to claim and integrate peoples’ sexual and spiritual identities. “Yes, you can be both gay and spiritual” was the rallying cry.

DignityUSA, as a Catholic LGBTQ organization, brings its unique voice and presence to the party; emerging then maturing and now fully engaged and amplified.

While the broader movement worked for societal equality and claimed its political power, small communities of queer and supportive Catholics across America came together, driven and energized by the need for safety; a place to come out in sexual and gender identity and integrate our spirituality. These communities gradually evolved into the national voice and movement, DignityUSA

On July 5-7, the larger DignityUSA community, including Dignity/Chicago, will come together for our 50th-Anniversary National Conference here in the heartland. This will be a time for remembering, celebrating and believing. We will honor our past achievements and our prophets. We’ll solemnly recognize those who have transitioned to eternity, including Jim Bussen who was a courageous mover of LGBTQ rights and dignity here in Chicago. And we will celebrate; we’re still here, we’re still queer and we’re not going away.

Also, emerging global LGBTQ organization the Global Network of Rainbow Catholics is convening its third biennial Assembly here in Chicago on July 1-3. DignityUSA will be hosting this unique gathering and the delegates will have the experience of touring the Center on Halsted and the Legacy Walk, and learn about the growth and maturing of the LGBTQ community here in Chicago. Hopefully, these delegates, some of whom come from countries where homosexuality is still criminalized, will be inspired and enriched in their own efforts. The LGBTQ community of Chicago has a lot to be proud of.

The celebration of MCC and DignityUSA during this Stonewall remembrance is a reminder of the many diverse yet united voices and lived experiences that have brought us to where we are today as an extended LGBTQ community and movement. These groups’ tenacious insistence that LGBTQ people have the inherent right to be full, equal, affirmed members of their faith communities has helped transform millions of people of faith—straight and queer—into supporters and passionate advocates for equality and justice.

Over the five decades of DignityUSA and MCC’s ministry and witness, these two groups and LGBTQI

movements within many other denominations have greatly improved the situation for queer people of many faiths. We have drastically reduced the likelihood that being gay or transgender people will be condemned during sermons, seen more denominations open ordination to LGBTQI people, and have prompted countless faith leaders to take public stands on our behalf. While there are clearly still powerful religious voices raised in condemnation, more and more they are the “noisy gong” of our sacred scriptures, loud but ultimately insignificant.

As ever-growing numbers of believers come to believe that being LGBTQI people are as morally good as everyone else, embrace us within our faith communities, and support civil protections, the “God vs. gay” narrative is fading into history. As our current political climate reminds us, however, we must persist in telling our stories and claiming our places within communities of faith so that the gains we have seen do not slip away.

As DignityUSA continues to demand respect and inclusion in the Catholic Church, we also join with others in the demand for racial, economic and gender justice. We stand with immigrants and refugees who are seeking the same freedom and safety that brought our small faith-based communities together 50 years ago.

As we remember and celebrate, those of us who claim our spirituality also believe. We believe in a larger life-force and sacred Spirit who represents pure and radical love to be shared with all creation. And we join in partnership with all the other voices and efforts towards justice to ensure the work continues, and the goal of equality and respect is reached for all. We have done this for 50 years, and will be faithful to this goal for as long as it takes to achieve.

Christopher Pett is a member of Dignity/Chicago and President of DignityUSA, the world’s oldest organization of Catholics working for justice, equality and full inclusion of LGBTQI people in the church and society.

letters

Respecting elders

Dear Editor:

No one likes to talk about it, but it happens every day. However, this crisis remains vastly underidentified and underreported.

The Illinois Department on Aging is on pace to respond to more than 20,000 reports of abuse of adults 60 and older, and persons 18-59 with a disability this fiscal year; which ends June 30. As Americans, we believe in justice for all. Yet we fail to live up to this promise when we allow members of our society to be abused or neglected.

Abuse takes many forms that include financial exploitation, emotional abuse, passive neglect, physical abuse, willful deprivation, confinement and sex-

ual abuse; and these often occur in tandem. Victims are often abused by family members or other relatives—and abuse, neglect and exploitation of any individual is an affront to human rights in Illinois and around the world.

We all have the right to be treated with dignity and respect—to feel safe and secure. Unfortunately, many of our most vulnerable citizens find themselves victims at the hands of individuals they have trusted.

The fact is it’s challenging for older adults to stay involved with and be connected to our communities as they age. As a result, older individuals are more likely to experience social isolation, which increases the likelihood of abuse and neglect. But it doesn’t have to be that way. There is help.

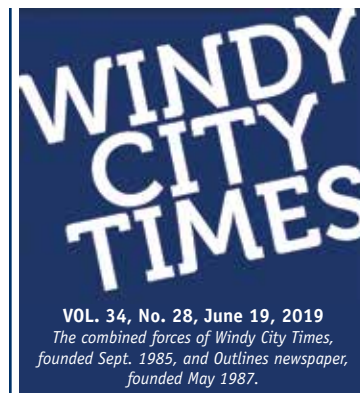
If you are a victim of abuse, neglect, or financial

exploitation—or suspect that someone you know is a victim—call our statewide 24-hour Abuse Hotline at 866-800-1409. The sooner we know about the abuse, the sooner we can put a stop to it.

June 15 was Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Illinois. And to that end, I encourage all of us to educate ourselves on elder abuse; how we can recognize the signs, provide intervention and stop this abuse from happening. We must, as a community, work together to make a difference in the lives of our older adults living in our neighborhoods.

We owe it to our elders to respect yesterday, support today and plan for tomorrow.

*Sincerely,
Paula Basta, M.Div.
Director, Illinois Department on Aging*



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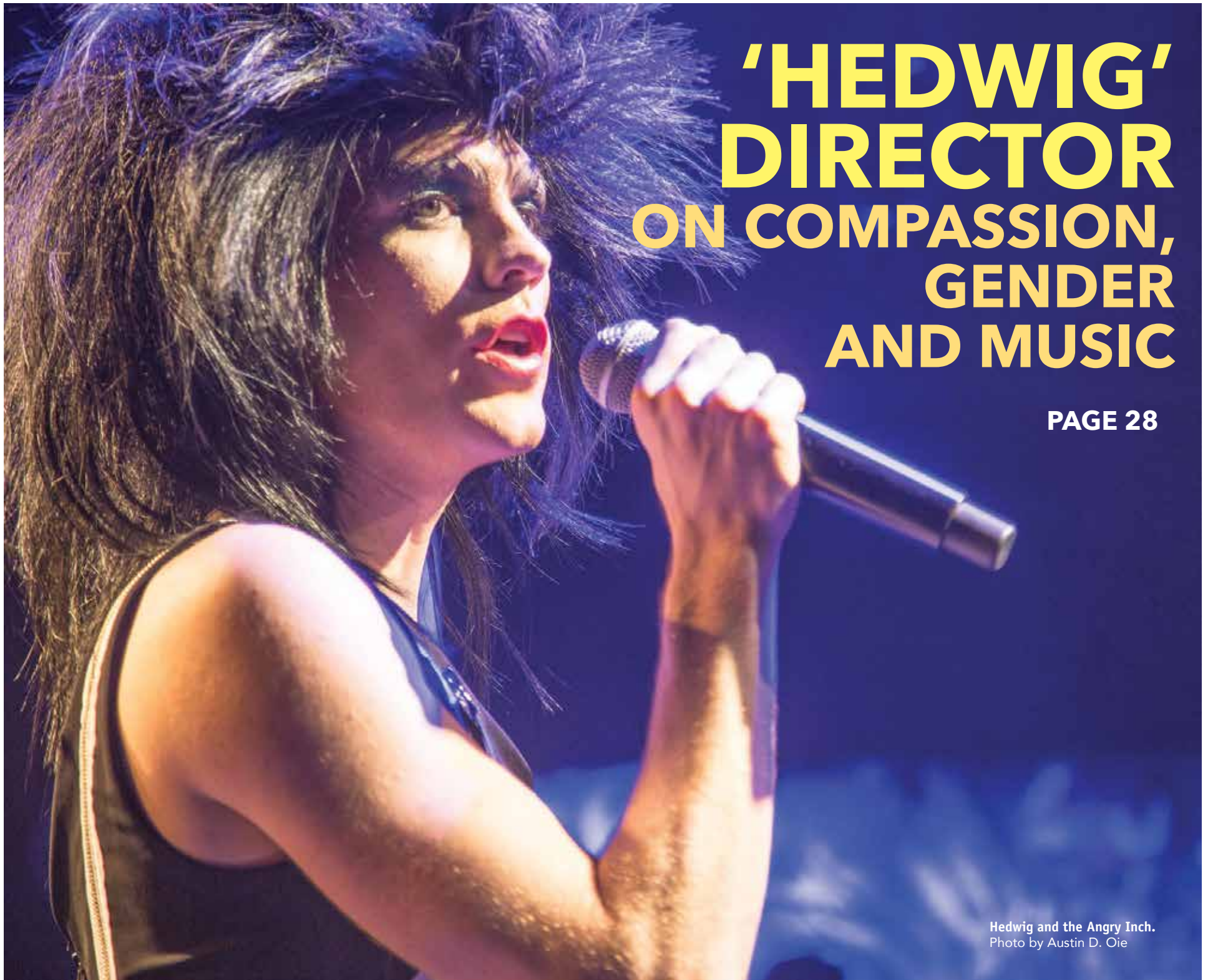
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'HEDWIG' DIRECTOR ON COMPASSION, GENDER AND MUSIC

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Hedwig and the Angry Inch.
Photo by Austin D. Oie

Terence Alan Smith.

Video stills courtesy of Leean Torske, Steppenwolf Theatre

**THEATER**

Terence Alan Smith: The real 'MS. BLAKK'



BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Terence Alan Smith, the Detroit native behind the drag persona Joan Jett Blakk, is still taken aback that a portion of his life has been transformed into a world-premiere play at Steppenwolf Theatre.

MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT travels back to 1992 when the Chicago chapter of the protest group Queer Nation endorsed Joan Jett Blakk as the nation's first drag queen candidate for President of the United States. One of her campaign slogans was "Lick Bush in '92."

"It's not something you would ever expect that somebody would do," said Smith about the play. "Usually people, when this kind of thing happens, are dead already."

But Smith and Joan Jett Blakk are still very much with us. Smith was just one of many luminaries like Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot who were in attendance for the opening night performance of MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT earlier this month.

Smith also returned to Chicago this past weekend as Joan Jett Blakk for two late-night Lookout Series performances in Steppenwolf's intimate 1700 Theatre. Blakk, along with co-host Babette, held court as talk show hosts and were feted by the MS. BLAKK cast and creative team—especially by the Academy Award-winner Tarell Alvin McCraney (the play's title star and co-author) and Tony Award-nominee Tina Landau (the play's director and co-author).

"I wasn't ever sure that anyone got it," said Smith about his political drag activism. When

Smith as Blakk first ran for Chicago Mayor in 1991 and then the next year as president, it was largely to draw attention to the LGBTQ community at the height of the AIDS crisis.

"There were so many wild things that happened along the way," said Smith, remembering both terrifying and welcoming moments during his Chicago years of protest. "It's weird how emotional it is for me."

For instance, Smith said it was not uncommon for police to remove their badges so they couldn't be identified when roughing up ACT UP or Queer Nation protesters in mass demonstrations. But he also remembers kind gestures, like when Illinois Senator John Cullerton shared his spot in Chicago's St. Patrick's Day Parade so Joan Jett Blakk could participate.

MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT focuses on Smith as Blakk trying to gain entry to the 1992 Democratic National Convention at New York's Madison Square Garden. Not only does the play focus on Smith's moments of self-doubt, but also the potential for real violence at the hands of convention security.

"On the convention floor, I thought they'll swoop me up and I'll disappear," Smith said. "But doing drag is very much like armor. You're afraid, but you feel invincible because you are so visible. It was both fear and excitement."

Chicago's harsh winters are what pushed Smith to relocate to San Francisco in 1993. There Blakk joined the gay African-American performance group Pop Afro Homos and ran as drag candidates again for president and San Francisco mayor. She

also did a live drag talk show.

"I did it up until about 2000. I really haven't done much drag since then," Smith said. "I kind of viewed it as something that I did."

Joan Jett Blakk's '90s political campaigns were mostly noted in the LGBTQ press at the time, even including a mention in Alison Bechdel's comic strip Dykes to Watch Out For. Joan Jett Blakk later received attention in books like L.M. Bogard's 2007 scholarly journal Electoral Guerrilla Theatre: Radical Ridicule and Social Movements, and in the 2008 historical overview Out and Proud in Chicago edited by Tracy Baim (publisher of the Windy City Times and the Chicago Reader).

It was Blakk's photo on the cover of the latter book that spurred Landau and McCraney to reach out to Smith and ask his permission to create MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT. Smith is grateful to be remembered, especially when he considers that so many other drag performers have been forgotten.

"I'm really big on drag history now more than ever," Smith said. "The people who were doing drag in the 1920s, '30s and '40s. My god! What would it have taken to go to a drag ball? We think that we're brave. I think about that and all the unsung heroes and heroines who don't get mentioned at all."

In terms of contemporary drag, Smith said he doesn't follow the current TV phenomenon of RuPaul's Drag Race too closely. Yet he does enjoy Drag Race alums Trixie Mattel and Katya Zamolodchikova in their online comedy show UNHhhh. Smith also had loads of praise for the talent and LGBTQ advocacy of stars like singer/songwriter/choreographer Todrick Hall and Tony Award-winner Billy Porter of Pose fame.

Smith is also surprised every now and then to run into people who remember Joan Jett Blakk during her heyday of visibility and activism.

"The best thing about it is that people have said to me, 'Because I knew about and was following Joan, it made my coming out easier,'" Smith said. "That was not a goal of mine, but when it does happen it's so wonderful."

And as someone who survived the worst of the AIDS crisis, Smith can't help but think "about all of my friends who aren't here anymore who would have loved [MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT]."

"Tarell and Tina got it. They really took this moment in history—a moment in my life—they really understood and it comes across quite well," Smith said. "It's very humbling and very flattering."

MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT continues through Sunday, July 21, in the Upstairs Theatre of Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St. Performance schedule varies, but largely at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 3 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and 2 p.m. Wednesday. Tickets are \$20-\$94. Call 312-335-1650 or visit steppenwolf.org.



Tarell Alvin McCraney as Joan Jett Blakk in Steppenwolf's world premiere production of MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT.
Photo by Michael Brosilow

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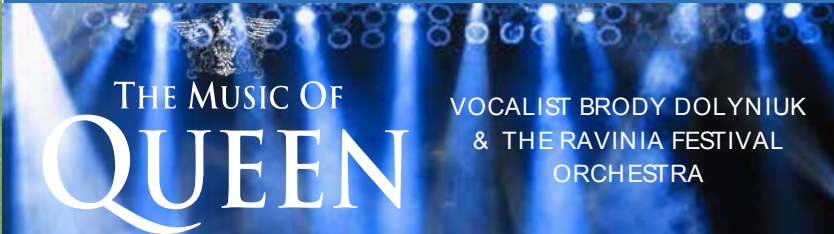
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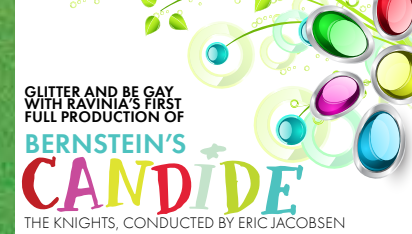
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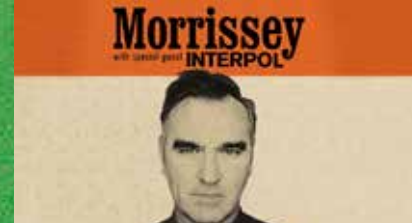
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THEATER REVIEW

**The Ballad of
Lefty and Crabbe**

At: The Understudy, 4906 N. Clark St.

Authors: Ben Auxier, Brian Huther
and Seth Macchi (book);

Auxier & Huther (music & lyrics)

Tickets: UnderscoreTheatre.org; \$20-\$25

Runs through: July 14

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The Ballad of Lefty and Crabbe is a bouncy, good natured, lickety-split new musical set around 1927-28, when Hollywood switched to talkies but still made silent films as well.

It's a bromance about stage comedians Lefty Childs (Kyle Ryan) and Crabbe Hathaway (Shea Pender), who move to movies as vaudeville is dying, guided by oily agent E. G. Swellington (incredibly fast talking Mike Ott). Breaking up their double act, the studio makes chubby Lefty a comedian (think Fatty Arbuckle) and handsome Crabbe a romantic lead, enhancing their bank accounts but depleting their craft and friendship. Personally and professionally they are better together than apart. There are many parallels to last year's exquisite and poignant film, Stan and Ollie, but Lefty and Crabbe (written before the film was released) moves with the speed of an animated cartoon and is not a serious show.

The clever lyrics and dialogue brim with puns and wordplay. Female star Lolo Carmichael (Elisabeth Del Toro) sings in Smile Your Way Through, "It takes effort to be effortless, it's work to play pretend." And Swellington intones, "If you don't want to miss your gravy train you'd better get your mashed potato ticket stamped," a droll absurdity.

The Underscore Theatre cast of 10 enthusiastically plays in an exaggerated knockabout style, directed by Rusty Sneary. Leads Ryan and Pender have good comic chops and fine high baritone voices (especially Ryan) and are ably supported by Del Toro and Natalie Rae (as speakeasy chan-



Elisabeth Del Toro (center) with the cast in **The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe**.

Photo by Evan Hanover

teuse Evelyn Rose) who also are fine songsters.

Despite its energy and style, however, The Ballad of Lefty and Crabbe could be better. Dying vaudeville and early Hollywood are familiar tropes (consider Singin' in the Rain, Merrily We Roll Along and Gypsy) and this show borrows conventional caricatures they've helped establish such as the egotistical studio chief, blonde female star and maniacal director. The minimal character development is OK for stereotypes but not for Lefty, Crabbe, Lolo and Evelyn who need fleshing out.

Most of the 14 songs (nimble accompanied by pianist Annabelle Revak) are tuneful up tempo numbers, varied by one waltz and one actual ballad (Lefty's Eat Your Heart Out). Two additional change of pace numbers would do wonders and could deepen the characters, perhaps something romantic involving Lolo and/or Evelyn (who needs more to do).

Finally, the show teases us with snippets of Lefty and Crabbe's vaudeville routines, but we never actually see them perform their double act. Someplace, somehow they gotta' show us their stuff! The writers are clever enough to pull this off.

The Understudy is Underscore Theatre's new storefront home (50 pleasantly roomy seats), within which scenic designer Nicholas Schwartz has created a colorful tiny proscenium stage perfectly suggesting yesteryear's small time vaudeville.

THEATER REVIEW

Saving the World

Author: Marc Kelly Smith (libretto), Diana Lawrence (music)

At: Chicago Tap Theatre at

Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: 773-327-5252; stage773.com; \$30-\$40

Runs through: June 30

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The literary aspects of dance get scant attention, but think how many dance works have characters and narrative lines. Someone had to write the scenarios for Swan Lake, Slaughter on 10th Avenue, The Rite of Spring and countless others, and it rarely was the composer. Many distinguished literati have prepared librettos for dance works, among them Jean Cocteau who did several.

Mark Yonally, founder/artistic director of Chi-

cago Tap Theatre, calls such works "Story Shows" (his caps) and other dance troupes also use the term. Yonally wrote several himself before partnering with Chicago poet and storyteller Marc Kelly Smith. This world premiere of Saving the World is Kelly's sixth collaboration with Chicago Tap Theatre.

The story is simple and simplistic, but no more so than the great ballets cited in the opening paragraph of this review. Idealistic June Pasteur (Jennifer Pfaff Yonally) creates Disaster Relief Control (DRC), which helps resettle folks left homeless by natural calamities. DRC wins international renown but has no visible means of support, so it partners with smarmy billionaire Max Worthington (Mark Yonally), who soon coopts June and the DRC. With the help of her longtime DRC partner (and maybe boyfriend), David Hart (Isaac Stauffer), June and her allies rally to take DRC back from Worthington.

The entire tale is told through Yonally's tap

Turn to page 31

THEATER REVIEW

Prophet\$

Playwright: Anthony Tournis

At: Factory Theater, 1623 W. Howard St.

Tickets: TheFactoryTheater.com

or 866-811-4111; \$25

Runs through: July 22

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Protestant Christianity's individualistic approach to its source material acknowledges a variety of interpretations, enabling virtually anybody to make a career of spreading the gospel in all its enigmatic diversity. Human nature being what it is, however, the number of self-styled proselytizers motivated by greed and hypocrisy should come as no surprise.

The '80s, in particular, stand out in the history of our nation as the benchmark for a virulent epidemic of Tartuffian humbuggery. Promoters of "Prosperity Theology"—the belief that physical health and material wealth constitute manifestation of divine favor—addressed unseen viewers over low-cost public access television, exhorting their followers to donate vast sums of money in support of spurious evangelistic ministries, while secretly using it to subsidize their own lavish lifestyles. When exposed as frauds by the government, many of the perpetrators continued to conflate the spiritual and temporal, attributing their criminal behavior to diabolical intervention and pleading for the absolution granted penitent sinners.

So what do a bunch of clerical-collar crooks getting their comeuppance 30 years ago have to teach us in 2019? Don't we all know by now that the old-time religion is a sham and scientific secularism, the one true faith?

Fortunately, pin-dancing polemics about the route to righteousness are almost wholly absent from the parable recounted by Factory playwright Anthony Tournis, who instead employs



Hilary Sanzel, LaRose Washington and Timothy C. Amos in *Prophet\$*.

Photo by Michael Courier

the language of evangelism to endorse (however briefly—this is a comedy, after all) the universal values of honesty, kindness, respect and compassion.

Our story begins with three (later four) unabashed con artists looking to get rich on the largess of gullible pilgrims seeking to buy their way into heaven—a plan that runs afoul of a powerful megachurch pastor bent on protecting his own money-making swindle. In a world where everybody is self-serving, virtue lies, not in ethical intent, but in accountability. What distinguishes the "good" thieves from the bad is that the latter, when confronted by evidence of wrongdoing, feign remorse while refusing to admit their error, unlike the former, who humbly make apology and reparation.

Under the direction of Wm. Bullion, the progress of our heroes and the social commentary conveyed therein is illustrated in comic-book proportions: at one point, the corrupt Rev. Goode succumbs to full-blown Chick-tract rage, while a promo for the Church of the Prophet—as our faux amen-snorters baptize their pastorate—features tropes from the golden age of music videos, choreographed by Becca Holloway and backed by a Dag Juhlin song so period-perfect you'll look for it on youtube.com.

But all of the unfounded confidence in the world can't help Emma's matches from backfiring. Her efforts to help Harriet Smith (Madeline Pell) marry up have led to social chaos, and her own attempts to court Frank Churchill (Peter Gertas) are thwarted by an unwitting rival Jane Fairfax (Jeri Marshall). Mr. Knightly (Cory David Williamson) is the only man who can stop Emma's meddling and help her restore mangled friendships, but he harbors romantic secrets of his own.

To portray a sprawling community of notables with only five actors, this *Emma* adopts a 'role-share' program that allows anyone to pick up a prop or a mannerism and step into a character for a moment. Regardless of what sort of lady or gentleman that person was in the seconds preceding, if an actor is handed a cane, that person stoop over, puts some gravel in his/her voice and become Emma's elderly father. Snap open the tines of a fabric fan, and the actor is a venom-dripping Mrs. Elton, or stand next to a rolling dress form and that person becomes both Ms. Bates, and her mother, Mrs. Bates, who can't hear a blasted thing.

THEATER REVIEW

Emma

Author: novel by Jane Austen,

stage adaptation by Phil Timberlake

At: Lifeline Theatre Company, 6912 N. Greenwood Ave.

Tickets: lifelinetheatre.com or

773-761-4477; \$20-\$40

Runs through: July 14

BY SEAN MARGARET WAGNER

Lifeline Theatre's *Emma* is charming and ridiculous in the best way—but my favorite thing about this adaptation from author Phil Timberlake and director Elise Kauzlaric is how much trust they put in their audience. The cast and artistic team put on so many hats to ensure this nimble production doesn't waste a second of stage time, you'll have to forgive me gushing on their behalf.

With one successfully matched couple married, young Emma Woodhouse (Emma Sipora Tyler) considers herself the premier matchmaker for all the singles in her wealthy 19th-century village.

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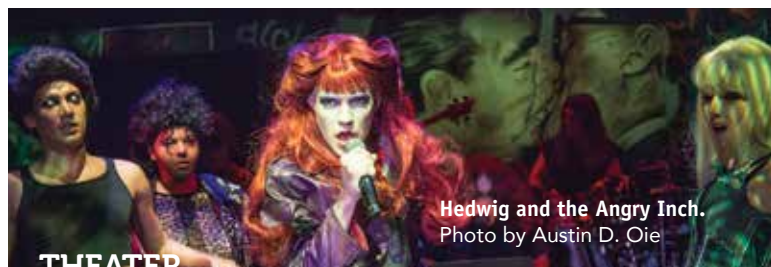
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Turn to page 31



Hedwig and the Angry Inch.
Photo by Austin D. Oie

THEATER

'Hedwig' director talks compassion, gender and music

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

Since its off-Broadway premiere, Hedwig and the Angry Inch has garnered a film adaptation, four Tony Awards and a substantial following.

Initially, Toma Tavares Langston was not a fan.

"I didn't get it," the director of Theo Ubique's production, which runs through July 28, confessed via phone. "I was introduced to the movie by an ex-boyfriend, and it was confusing to me. I was very narrow-minded back then."

After seeing the 2014 revival tour, Langston changed his tune.

"Transgender identity has always been around but didn't permeate the community [in 2001] the way it has in the past 10 years," he said. "With [shows like] RuPaul's Drag Race, we now have that in-your-face queerness. We're talking about gender identity now."

Written by Stephen Trask and John Cameron Mitchell (the latter starred in the initial off-Broadway run and film), Hedwig and the Angry Inch was one of the first musicals to address gender identity. The title character, born "Hansel" in East Germany, suffered from a botched reassignment operation that left her with an "angry inch" of flesh.

ers.) Langston is enthusiastic about his leading player.

"As a director, you never really know what you want until you see it," he said. "Luckily, Will walked right in the door." Will Lidke, Theo Ubique's Hedwig, recently played Snoopy in Drury Lane Theatre's You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown and won critical acclaim for his Seymour in last fall's Little Shop of Horrors, also at Drury Lane.

"He sounds like Freddie Mercury," Langston said. "His voice is so rich and you want to watch him all night. A lot of young kids come in and don't know how to use their instruments, [but] I was blown away by Will's level of talent."

During the rehearsal process, Langston called upon his musical childhood.

"I grew up in a house that was all music: gospel, blues, contemporary," he said. "And I'm a huge fan of '70s rock like Iggy Pop and Lou Reed. The action in the play represents the struggle of identity, and glam punk rock music has always given the space to explore masculinity and femininity, and how we can blur them."

"I think this show really speaks to the rock and roll lan-



Toma Langston.
Photo by Kris Krajewski

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BY Traci Godfrey

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Now a glam punk rock singer, Hedwig explores her feelings through music as her former lover Tommy Gnosis plays a nearby stadium.

Although the musical is almost two decades old, Langston feels its relevance has only increased.

"The reason I wanted to tell this story so much at this time, [is that] we have this nonbinary individual trying to navigate the world of love in a binary society," he said. "I want people to really see the struggle. Hopefully it will give them the ability to be more compassionate to those who are struggling with their identity and its complexities."

Langston also gave the production Chicago flavor.

"We set the show where Tommy is playing Wrigley Field and Hedwig is in Evanston," Langston said. "We've added some language to make it site-specific to Chicago, and there are a lot of references I think people will enjoy."

Although Hedwig is usually staged as a concert, with an onstage band and Hedwig's gender-bending backup musician Yitzhak the only other visible characters, Langston took the concept further.

"My treatment of Hedwig is more like a memory play," he explained. "I was dying to explore the idea that everything is in Hedwig's head. And we still have Hedwig and Yitzhak, but you'll also get to meet Tommy [and other characters], who are played by backup singers and understudies. I was always confused about the Tommy character, and I read online that other people are as well, so I thought it would help if we saw different actors. You'll get a little treat."

Hedwig's title character must showcase a spectacular vocal and emotional range while strutting around in high heels, heavy wigs and tight outfits. (Theo Ubique even held a special audition for trans and nonbinary perform-

guage because the songs really move the narrative along," Langston continued. "The music in the beginning is very folksy soft rock, something kids would find pleasant to hear. Then we go into teenage music, hardcore and 'I don't know who I am. Why are you expecting this from me?' Then it's jazzy, much more adult and established. By the end of the play, you're going to feel like you're at a rock concert." He added, "You grow up with Hedwig as the music changes."

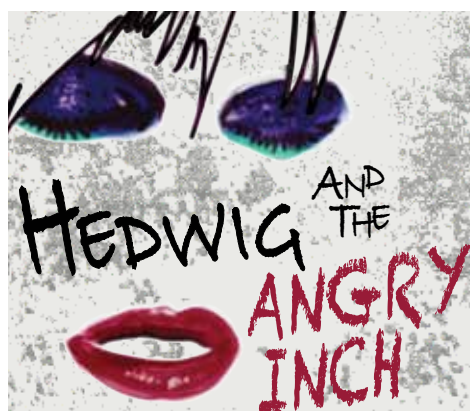
Langston directs with an eye toward spectators. "I always approach a show as if I'm in the audience," he said. "If I were sitting there watching, what would I enjoy and what do I need to get from this?" He hopes Theo Ubique's production will attract both die-hard Hedwig fans and those who aren't as familiar. "Gender identity can be very complex, and I want the show to explain more of it and make it more digestible for the audience."

Langston was nominated for a Jeff Award for directing last year's world premiere of The Light at The New Colony. Though Hedwig is a decidedly different show, he wants this production to spark discussion and action.

"When I did The Light, we wanted to make sure we were telling a story that people didn't forget when they got to their car," he said. "I'm hoping the same thing with Hedwig, that all people—straight, gay, whatever their backgrounds—walk out of the theater more open to the needs of others and be a little more respectful, even if they don't understand something."

"Be more compassionate to each other, that's all."

Hedwig and the Angry Inch plays Thursdays through Sundays through July 28 at Theo Ubique's Howard Street Theatre, 721 Howard St., Evanston. For tickets, call 773-347-1109 or visit theo-u.org.



Text by
JOHN CAMERON MITCHELL

Music and Lyrics by
STEPHEN TRASK

Directed by
TOMA LANGSTON

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THEATER REVIEW MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT

Playwrights: Tina Landau and Tarell Alvin McCraney
At: Steppenwolf Upstairs Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.
Tickets: 312-335-1650 or Steppenwolf.org; \$20-\$94
Run through: July 14

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The past roars to the present in Steppenwolf Theatre's world premiere of *MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT*. Co-authored by ensemble members Tina Landau (who also directs) and Tarell Alvin McCraney (who also stars in the title role), this raucously out and proud play vividly shines an theatrical spotlight on a lesser-known piece of LGBTQ U.S. history to defiantly speak to our own times.

In 1992, the Chicago-based African-American drag queen Joan Jett Blakk (aka Terence Smith) publicly announced a run for U.S. president. Although many would write it off as an attention-grabbing stunt akin to that era's protests by ACT UP and Queer Nation, it was a big deal to Blakk and her shoestrings staff—especially as they all tried to appear on the floor of the Democratic National Convention, then held in New York.

That's the basic plot of *MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT*, but Landau and McCraney expand the whole experience into other theatrical realms. One min-



Tarell Alvin McCraney and Patrick Andrews in Steppenwolf's world premiere production of *MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT*. Photo by Michael Brosilow

ute you're part of a performance art happening (complete with installation pieces in the lobby) or at a drag/dance revue. The next minute, you're attending an impassioned protest rally led by Blakk lambasting Republican indifference to minority communities dealing with AIDS and poverty.

Through it all is a wonderfully irreverent queer camp comic sensibility. The laughs lighten the dramatic flashes of peril at the hands of police, while also enlivening other debates on censorship and inner turmoil on self-doubt.

The whole cast gets across the anger and exuberance of the era. Patrick Andrews, Molly Brennan and Jon Hudson Odom are great as bickering activists, while Daniel Kyri is endearing as JJ, a limber loved one who is dragged along for the ride. The very flexible Sawyer Smith gets to float on and off as many fantasy characters in Toni-

Leslie James' fabulous costumes (many would be the envy of any RuPaul's Drag Race contestant).

Landau and her production team create a free-wheeling and rough-around-the-edges event that is steeped in history (take time to look at all the period fliers recreated by set designer David Zinn and marvel at projection designer Rasean Davonte Johnson's curated videos). Yet the show is also very much about today, and Heather Gilbert's sometimes confrontational lighting design forces the audience and onstage artists to take a serious look at themselves.

With *MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT*, it's clear that Landau and McCraney don't want audiences to forget earlier activists who fell and fought the good fight for more LGBTQ equality. And as McCraney's galvanizing title performance attests, we need noisy risk-takers to forge a path for others to follow.

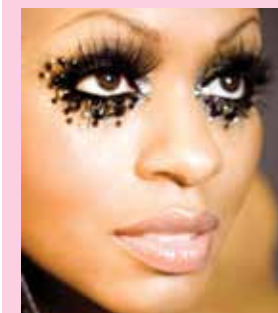
Chicago PrideFest set for June 22-23

The weekend before the 2019 Chicago Pride Parade makes its way through Boystown, the Chicago PrideFest will start the celebration.

Chicago PrideFest will take place June 22-23, 11 a.m.-10 p.m., at Halsted Street and Waveland Avenue. Approximately 100,000 people are expected to attend, celebrating LGBTQ life, culture and community. The festival features live music by popular artists, three stages, food and drink, 100+ arts/craft and merchant vendors, DJs and dancing, drag shows, pet parade, sponsor booths and more.

Among the acts slated to perform are LeAnn Rimes, Ultra Nate, Adam Barta, Inaya Day, Sixteen Candles, the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus and more.

See <https://www.chicagoevents.com/events/chicagopridefest/>.



Ultra Nate. Photo by Karl Giant

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CRITICS' PICKS

La Havana Madrid, Teatro Vista @ The Den, extended through 30 June—Last two weeks to see this thrice-remounted musical about Chicago's Latinx history, presented in the hottest performing arts multiplex in town. Arriba! *MSB*

Four Places, The Den, through June 30—Aging children and parents struggle to reconcile past grievances, even though the matriarch (Meg Thalken steals the show) is the most toxic harri-dan since Violet Weston in August, Osage County. *MSB*

Queen of Mist, Firebrand at The Den, through July 6—In 1901 Annie Edson Taylor shot Niagara Falls in a barrel and lived. Michael John LaChiusa's musically challenging storytelling is brilliantly realized by Firebrand and Barbara Robertson as Taylor. *JA*

For Services Rendered, Griffin at The Den, through July 6—It's a rare chance to see W. Somerset Maugham's 1932 drama attacking British indifference to its WWI veterans and civilians whose futures the war altered. Particularly well acted by the women. *JA*

—By *Mary Shen Barnidge*
and *Jonathan Abarbanel*

SPOTLIGHT

On Sunday June 23, **Free Street Theater** will mark its 50th anniversary—very few Chicago theaters are older—by performing a play in every Chicago ward in just one day! **50 IN 50** will spread the Free Street Theater's unique brand of joy (and urban socio-political commentary) far and wide across Chicago's neighborhoods as 10 performing teams each presents a different piece in five wards. Performance times will be 10 a.m. as well as 12, 2, 4 and 6 p.m. Performances are FREE and outdoors unless it rains. Free Street Theater always has been Chicago's most inclusive troupe, a tribute to founder Patrick Henry who died in 1989. The current chief is writer/director Coya Paz, co-founder of Teatro Luna and Proyecto Latina.

Photo of the cast of *Meet Juan(ita) Doe*, one of the plays in **50 IN 50**, by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux



REVIEW from page 27

Director Elise Kaulzaric has done an amazing service to this sweet show. The "role-share" style of performance is not only inherently fun, but it showcases actors in ways they might never be seen in more traditional stagings. Where else could we ever see performer Jeri Marshall shine as both the reserved and secretive Jane Fairfax, and as Emma's concerned/doddering father? How else could we know that actor Peter Gertas is equally well-equipped to play the consummate

romantic reject Mr. Elton and his own eventual wife, Mrs. Elton? The standout for me was Madeline Pell, who makes each role she steps into so distinct, I wouldn't mind a production of Emma with her magically spliced into every role.

The production goes by with such perfect manners, that when real emotional depths appear, it's truly affecting to watch them unfold. Emma Sipora Tyler, as Emma, and Cory David Williamson, as Mr. Knightly, deliver a knockout culminating scene that is so genuine, you may catch some feelings of your own.

REVIEW from page 26

choreography and original music—sometimes lilting, sometimes driving—composed by Diana Lawrence (also musical director) and played on keyboards (with a good deal of sampling), cello and bass guitar. They've worked with director Raphael Schwartzman on the staging, in which Smith himself provides bits of wry narration.

Yonally's engaging choreography runs through every possible dance combination from numerous solos through duets (even a pas de deux for June and David), trios, quartets on up to full company (12 dancers) unison. There's even a brief company kick-line. Yonally's patterns are relatively simple—circles, lines, v-formation and two lines/groups facing each other—but entirely effective in communicating the gist of each situation. For instance, the ensemble dances the natural disasters before assuming positions as victims, and it's clear when they are a tornado, a wave or a hurricane.

For reasons that are arbitrary, Smith's libretto includes a danced version of a computer game, Pong Ping, played three times by different people. The third match, a duet by ensemble dancers Sterling Harris and Case Prime, is notably athletic and dazzling. The Pong Ping sequences also show off Jeffrey Bivens' fun projections. Of course, Yonally saves several excellent bits for himself—song and dances minus the song—clicking his heels in snazzy two-tone Oxford tap shoes.

Saving the World runs 90 minutes and is easy to take, easy to like—and is family-friendly.



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MUSIC

LeAnn Rimes goes from 'Blue' to a rainbow

LeAnn Rimes.
PR photo



BY JERRY NUNN

Singer LeAnn Rimes career took off at the tender age of 13 years old with a Bill Mack song called "Blue." After reaching number one on the country album chart, she eventually moved toward pop music and the songs "How Do I Live" and "Can't Fight the Moonlight" kept her on the radio with a career selling more than 44 million albums.

Last year, she released re-recorded versions of

these past hits along with "Borrowed" featuring the iconic Stevie Nicks.

This year, in honor of Record Store Day, she dropped a live album titled Rimes: Live at Gruene Hall.

Rimes most recently started working with The Trevor Project, an organization that provides services for crisis intervention and suicide prevention for LGBT youth.

Windy City Times: How have you been,

LeAnn?

LeAnn Rimes: I've been great! Glad it's summertime, going to start recording a new album, still touring, family is good.

WCT: The last time you were with the Chicago LGBT community was at Roscoe's. Will this be a similar appearance?

LR: Well, if the gods shine down on me, then it will be that spectacular.

WCT: Are you bringing backup dancers and a full band to PrideFest?

LR: This time around, it will be just me.

WCT: At Joe's in Chicago, you sat down and just captivated the audience. Are you planning a quiet moment like that or is that difficult with a street festival?

LR: Intimacy—a connection is what I want to bring to every show whether we are in a theatre or for an outside festival. I approach every show from that place, to create a bond between the

audiences heart and my heart, that's my goal.

WCT: What advice would you give a young star starting out in the music business?

LR: I would tell them what I would tell my 13-year-old self, take a deep breath and take in each and every moment and appreciate every moment life gifts you.

WCT: Are you bringing [husband Eddie Cibrian] with you?

LR: I am not sure. He will probably come if he isn't shooting or it will depend if we have the boys, but I always love having him and the kids with me on the road when they can!

WCT: Do you really watch the movie Love Actually every year together?

LR: We actually do watch that movie together every year. It's one of the things he promised me when we got married. [Laughs] It is my favorite holiday movie.

WCT: What music are you working on?

LR: I can't say too much, but I am heading back into the studio in June and this record is going to be really different, really powerful. I am excited!

WCT: Do you have a song in your catalogue that reminds you of the gay community?

LR: "Love is Love is Love" from my album Remnants and "What I Cannot Change" from my album Family.

WCT: Are you coming to Lollapalooza this year?

LR: I'm not making it to Lollapalooza this year. I had so much fun with [founder] Perry [Farrell] and it was such an incredible experience to be there.

WCT: Didn't you get a tattoo at Lolla that time you were there?

LR: Yes, I did. Speaking of new tattoos, I have been mulling around in my brain about a new one.

WCT: What are your future plans for the rest of 2019?

LR: I'm working on the new album, touring, vacations, the sky's the limit!

Rimes headlines at PrideFest Sunday, June 23, at 9 p.m. at the Papa John's North Stage.

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Drag Seed' cast announced

Hell in a Handbag Productions has announced casting for its world premiere of *The Drag Seed*—an unauthorized parody of the 1956 psychological horror-thriller film *The Bad Seed*, inspired by our changing times, written by Artistic Director David Cerda and directed by Cheryl Snodgrass.

The cast includes ensemble members Kristopher Bottrall, David Cerda, Sydney Genco, Ed Jones and Elizabeth Lesinski, with Kelly Anchors and Tyler Anthony Smith.

The production will run July 5-Aug. 25 at Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St. Tickets are at dragseed.brownpapertickets.com or 800-838-3006.



The Drag Seed's Kristopher Bottrall.
Photo by Brandon Shade

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HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL

Photo by Vern Hester for Windy City Times



MAYOR LORI LIGHTFOOT

Mayor Lightfoot's bio is well known to the public who, in record numbers, voted for her in the mayoral election. Her background and vast experience in both federal positions and local positions with previous administrations is also part of the public record. Mayor Lightfoot will be marching near the front of the parade (directly behind the front banner and color guard carried by the Scout troops) as did her predecessors, Mayor Daley and Mayor Emanuel. She is the first open lesbian mayor in the city's history.

YOUTH GRAND MARSHAL

MOLLY PINTA

Youth Grand Marshal is a 12-year-old middle school student who lobbied to have a Pride Parade in her hometown, Buffalo Grove, and came out as a lesbian to her parents, friends, teachers and world-at-large. Molly is the result and a shining example of the hard work and sacrifices made by those generations of activists who for 50 years have toiled before—and leading up to Stonewall.

Molly attended last year's Aurora Pride Parade and decided to plan for a parade in Buffalo Grove. She and her family have long been advocates for social justice in her town. Molly is also a longtime actor, singer and dancer. She has aspirations to be a teacher like her parents and to continue running their new nonprofit, The Pinta Pride Project, to keep Pride coming to Buffalo Grove every year and to support other young people in bringing their own events.



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Pinta

ORGANIZATIONAL GRAND MARSHAL

The "Indivisible" group, the Aurora Pride organizers who coordinated the first Chicago-area suburban Pride Parade in history last year, and worked hard, with community help and support, to secure their second parade this year after they initially had to cancel it due to an increase in their city fees. The second annual Aurora Pride Parade is scheduled for June 9. For more information: www.aurorapride.org

PRIDEChicago 2019 GRAND MARSHALS

LEGACY GRAND MARSHALS

JIM FLINT

Community activist, best known as the owner of the Baton Show Lounge. Jim's involvement in local Democratic Party politics; on fundraising during the AIDS crisis in the 1980s; his involvement in the sports community (he was a founding member of the Windy City Athletic Association) and his many other awards and accomplishments are best spelled out in the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame web site: www.GLHollofFame.org



Photo by Hal Baim for Windy City Times



Photo by Tracy Baim for Windy City Times

MARGE SUMMIT

Community activist, best known as the owner of the former His 'n Hers bar. Marge has contributed time, energy and resources to numerous community organizations over the years, including pre-Stonewall's Mattachine Midwest, PFLAG, produced and appeared in several educational LGBTQ+ video projects and initiated the "Gay\$" project that pointed out the spending power of the LGBTQ+ communities. But she is best known as owner of the the former His 'n Hers bar that brought LGBTQ+ womyn and men and our Allies together for entertainment, good food and camaraderie. For more information: www.GLHollofFame.org

JOEL HALL

Community activist who was founder of the Joel Hall Dancers in 1974. He has been a composer, teacher, adviser and so many other things in his life. His community involvement, list of accomplishments, creations and awards over the past 40+ years are so long and inspiring that we refer readers to joelhall.org to see the life's work of this accomplished individual who more than deserves to be called a Legacy Grand Marshal. For more information: www.GLHollofFame.org and the more updated: www.joelhall.org

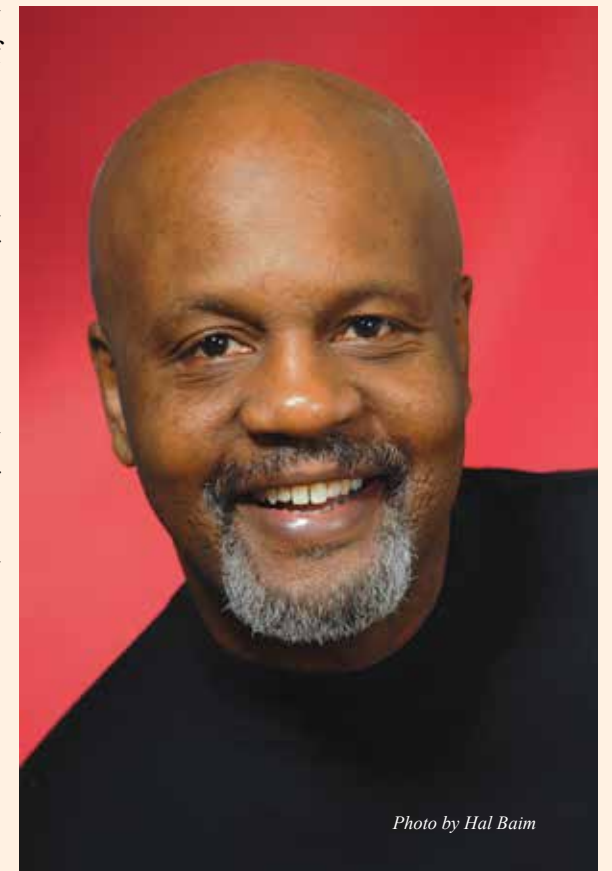


Photo by Hal Baim

Chicago Pride 2019



STONEWALL 50
MILLIONS OF MOMENTS
OF PRIDE

PARADE INFORMATION

courtesy of PRIDEChicago
50th Annual Chicago Pride Parade

Sun., June 30

For changes or updates: www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org •
PrideChgo@aol.com • 773-348-8243

DATE: Sunday, June 30

TIME: 12 Noon

STARTS at: Broadway & Montrose.

LINE UP: North Broadway (both the east and the west curb lanes, from Montrose to Wilson); West Montrose (both the north and south curb lanes from Broadway to Clark); Sunnyside Ave. from Broadway to North Sheridan Rd. and North Sheridan Rd., between Montrose and Wilson.

ROUTE: Step off from the Broadway/Montrose corner, proceeding south on Broadway; then south on Halsted; then east on Belmont; then south on Broadway; then east on Diversey to Cannon Drive.

CONTENT & DESCRIPTION:

The parade will feature 150 registered entries, including floats, decorated vehicles, performance groups, a marching band and walking contingents.

The entries represent community organizations, businesses, governmental officials and individual community members. Crowd estimates each year are in the hundreds of thousands. So the plans are to line the parade route with barricades on both sides of the street from beginning to the end of the parade route. Spectators will be required to remain behind the barricades. (Only parade registrants traveling down the middle of the street, police officers, other city

officials, security staff, parade marshals and credentialed media reps will be allowed in the street). In recent years, the City of Chicago has required that several large city parades, including the Pride Parade, line their parade routes with barricades at our own expense. Police officers and parade marshals will be stationed at various points on the street in front of the barricades along the parade route.

Police officers will also be in the area surrounding the parade. In addition, PRIDEChicago (parade coordinators) are providing a security team to supplement the police presence along and surrounding the parade route.

\$1000 FINE FOR PUBLIC ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION:

The parade will have more security and a tighter rein on public alcohol consumption. In addition to the large number of police officers who staff the event, PRIDEChicago (parade coordinators) are providing a security team to supplement the police presence. Penalties include, but are not limited to, \$1000+ tickets being issued and/or the immediate disposal of open containers of alcohol into trash receptacles.

Public urination is also grounds to receive a ticket.

PARADE DAY HEALTH/SAFETY:

Bring plenty of bottled water, sunscreen and a hat or other head covering, and dress lightly because parade day is usually hot and sunny.

STREET CLOSURES: (on parade day, Sunday, June 30) include:

ASSEMBLY AREA: Tentative time: 10:30 a.m.

PARADE ROUTE: Rolling closing times. Cross streets will close as the parade travels south down the route. The parade starts at 12 Noon at the Broadway/Montrose corner proceeding south on Broadway; then south on Halsted; then east on Belmont; then south on Broadway; then east on Diversey to Cannon Drive. **For updates:** www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

NO PARKING: Both the Assembly Area and Parade Route (listed above) will be posted with temporary signs indicating "NO PARKING ON SUNDAY JUNE 30, 2019, FROM 5:00 am TO 8:00 pm. - Both sides of the street, unless otherwise indicated." Due to the volume of vehicles involved, the issuing of parking violation, citations, and towing will start at 5 a.m. promptly.
Montrose Ave. - Greenview Ave. to Hazel St.

Broadway - Leland Ave. to Grace St.

Sunnyside Ave. - Broadway to North Sheridan Rd.

Halsted St.* - Grace St. to Belmont Ave.

Belmont Ave. - Racine Ave. to Broadway

Broadway - Melrose Ave. to Diversey Pkwy.

Diversey Pkwy. - Broadway to Cannon Dr. (Sheridan)

Cannon Dr. - Diversey Pkwy. to Fullerton Pkwy.

Addison St. - 736 W. Addison St. to Sheffield Ave.

Waveland Ave. - Halsted St. to Broadway

Grace St. - Halsted St. to Fremont St.

Clifton - Montrose Ave. to Sunnyside Ave.

N. Sheridan Rd. - Sunnyside Ave. to Buena Ave.

Buena Ave. - Sheridan Rd. to Broadway

Wellington Ave. - Clark St. to Sheffield Ave.

N. Sheridan Rd. - Montrose Ave. to Wilson.

* Please note that parking on Halsted and Belmont will be restricted until 4 a.m.

Monday, July 1

For updates and corrections: www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

TOWING: Begins at 5 am. Due to the volume of vehicles involved, the issuing of parking violation citations and towing will start at 5 am - Promptly. **For updates:** www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

CROSS STREETS: Rolling closing times. Cross streets will close as the parade travels south down the route. After stepping off at Noon, the parade will take approximately two and one-half hours to finish crossing the Broadway & Montrose corner. After this time, the floats will still be winding their way to the end of the parade route at Diversey & Sheridan. This year there will NOT be a Buffer Zone on Halsted Street after the parade ends. Police will work to re-open the streets to vehicular traffic as soon as cleaning crews are finished and the streets will not remain open to foot traffic. **For updates:** www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: From the Red Line: Wilson, Sheridan, Addison or Belmont all provide access via a short walk to the parade route.

PLEASE NOTE: The Belmont station (and

the surrounding area) tends to become the most crowded, so you are encouraged to consider watching the parade from the other parts of the route, including areas toward the start of the route—such as Broadway, south of Montrose—which are served by both the nearby Wilson and Sheridan stations on the Red Line. In addition, a number of lakefront bus routes including the 146 and 151 provide convenient access from the north, the Gold Coast/North Michigan Ave. and downtown to areas east of the parade route.

Extra service will be provided on the 'L' on parade day to accommodate the large numbers of people who attend the parade. Due to the increase of local traffic and a number of bus reroutes, potential parade spectators are advised to make use of the L or the various bus routes.

BUS REROUTES:

8 Halsted, 22 Clark, 36 Broadway, 76 Diversey, 77 Belmont, 78 Montrose, 151 Sheridan, 152 Addison.

Also see CTA web site or call them for updated information concerning the train and bus routes. CTA: 1-312-836-7000 www.transitchicago.com

Other information on public transportation: 1-312-322-6777 www.metrarail.com. **For updates:** www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

PEDESTRIAN CROSS-OVER STREETS:

For updates: www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

There will be at least nine cross-over streets:
Montrose Ave. at Broadway
Irving Park Rd. at Broadway
Grace St. at Halsted St.
Addison St. at Halsted St.
Roscoe St. at Halsted St.
Wellington Ave. at Broadway

Aldine St. at Halsted St.

Cornelia Ave. at Halsted St.

Oakdale Ave. at Broadway

At each corner of the streets listed above there will be police officers assigned to assist pedestrians to cross the parade route. **For updates:** www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

NEEDS AND SPECIAL NEEDS:

1. Portable Restrooms - are stationed along both the parade line-up street and the parade route. Included at several locations are restrooms for the physically challenged.

2. Physically Challenged Area/Wheel chair Accessible Area/Seniors - for people who need or want more space: the sidewalks of W. Diversey Pkwy. (near 600 W. Diversey). Traditionally this area of the parade route has fewer spectators than other sections of the parade route. Spectators in these areas generally arrive there early on parade morning to secure their viewing spots. Included there are restrooms for the physically challenged.

3. Seniors (outdoor) - The area mentioned above in #2 (600 W. Diversey sidewalks) is a designated OUTDOOR area for seniors. Spectators in this area generally arrive there early on parade morning to secure their viewing spots. Included there are restrooms for the physically challenged.

4. Cooling Busses:

Halsted, south of Belmont; Addison, west of Halsted; Belmont, east of Broadway; Wilton, north of Belmont

5. Chicago Fire Department First Aid Stations: **For updates:** www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

901 W. Addison St.; 765 W. Roscoe St.; 3165 N. Halsted St.; 561 W. Surf St.; 802 W. Roscoe St.

For changes or updates after this publication went to press:
www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org

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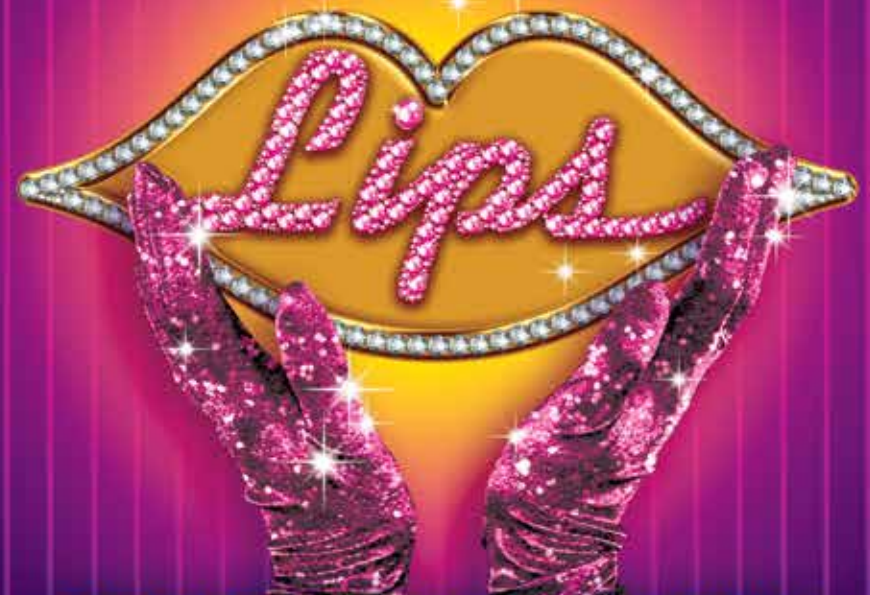
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Photo © Todd Rosenberg Photography, Dancers: Ari Israel & Greg Matthews.
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Midsommarfest encourages attendees to shop locally

Attendees were greeted with a variety of options at the annual Andersonville Midsommarfest on the weekend of June 7-9.

Midsommarfest is a street festival running down Clark Street between Catalpa and Foster avenues. (The Andersonville Chamber of Commerce presents the event.)

Combining musicians, vendors, food and Swedish traditions, Andersonville Midsommarfest featured more than 75 merchants and artisans, such as Degenerate Art, Brain Fruit and Alma Deco. Nonprofit organizations such as the Human Rights Campaign, Proud to Run and Equality Illinois had booths. Just for Dogs and Urban Pooch booths covered animals' needs for shoppers, and restaurants sold delicious bites in tents in front of their brick-and-mortar establishments (e.g., Hamburger Mary's, Andies Restaurant and Reza's Andersonville).

A \$10 donation was requested at all entrances to the festival to support the programming and events for the surrounding community. Sponsors included the Swedish American Museum, Fifth Third Bank and Alamo Shoes, among many others.

Popular local cover bands like Catfight and 16 Candles headlined the North Stage, while drag shows and Broadway star Anthony Rapp highlighted the Balmoral Pride Stage over the weekend. Five stages throughout the festival brought entertainment and a VIP area was offered once again at the North Stage—complete with elevated viewing, a private bathroom and discounted beer.

Family activities were encouraged at the street fest, with a special family stage area and activities throughout the weekend such as face-painting for kids. A drag-queen story hour, a sing-a-long Merry Music Makers presentation and an Orange Shoe Personal Fitness Orange Show for children were all part of the fun.

Visitors were encouraged to shop locally and were offered a free beer ticket after presenting a receipt of \$30 or more from surrounding businesses over the weekend.

Visit Andersonville.org for information about the festival.

Text and photos by Jerry Nunn





BILLY Masters

"Gay liberation? I ain't against it. It's just that there's nothing in it for me!"—**Bette Davis**

Picture it—Dallas, sometime in the late '90s. A lithe, energetic, naturally blond Billy was cavorting in Dallas' Oak Lawn gayborhood. After winning an amateur strip contest at Big Daddy's (I believe one of the prizes was an hour or so with porn superstar Karl Thomas), I found myself next door at JR's. I took a shine to a bartender named Scott and spent the rest of the week with him—a pleasant enough time, except I had to repeatedly explain that there was only so much I could do with his penis, which just happened to be shaped like, well, like the unnatural part of Captain Hook's anatomy. Frankly, it wasn't worth getting carpal tunnel over.

This stroll down Memory Lane is apropos of a news story that the manager of JR's Bar & Grill was fired after refusing to serve a transgender woman. Unlike my Dallas encounters of yore, this one was captured on video, which led to the termination. The owner stated, "While our employees take every measure to ensure the safety of both staff and patrons, any actions that are deemed contra to our beliefs and values as a company will not be tolerated. After reviewing the situation and gathering statements from the parties involved, the company has chosen to terminate the employee in question effective immediately." I do hope my dear Scott is no longer in the picture. I'm sure in the past 20 years, he's moved on. He's probably a plumber. After all, he already had the snake.

A former member of the Indiana House of Representatives has attacked **Mayor Pete Buttigieg** for possibly being "too gay." Don Boys' post, called "Pete, Since You Brought It Up, How 'Gay' Are You?," says that for Buttigieg to be a legitimate candidate for president, he must first denounce both fisting and rimming. Is that in the job description? 'Cause I'm curious what Trump has denounced. (Water sports spring to mind.)

Boys went further by stating, "Voters should know that a homosexual president may not live to finish his term." I've got news for him—a few heterosexual presidents didn't finish THEIR terms! Boys continues, "Moreover, 70 percent of homosexuals admit to having at least one STD plus they are infected with other contagious diseases such as tuberculosis, pneumonia, etc. About 20 percent of homosexual men are infected with HIV and about half of them do not know it. Don't voters have a right, even an obligation, to know a candidate's health status since the candidate's health is always an issue? Is a homosexual candidate an exception? If so, why?" While I certainly cannot speak for the candidates, I'd venture to guess that Mayor Pete will allow an STD screening if Donald does. Although, Trump may get a bit too excited at the thought of Pete peeing!

I went to several Pride-related events in Hollywood, including a book signing for **Frank DeCaro's** encyclopedic volume, *Drag: Combing*



Mayor Pete Buttigieg (left, with husband Chasten) has been requested to do something ... different.

Photo courtesy of Mike Kuby

Through the Big Wigs of Show Business. What an entertaining and informative book—certainly a "must" for anyone reading this column. Why, it is simply staggering the amount of information you learn. In addition to the current drag divas, I was interested in reading about the people who paved the way—because, we all know that without drag queens, we'd have no Stonewall. The event I went to at Barnes & Noble at The Grove was standing room only and featured the grand dame of Los Angeles drag, Momma. On the dais we had Bruce Vilanch (who apparently is the go-to when it comes to writing material for men in drag on television), Alaska Thunderfuck, and the reigning Best in Drag, Reba Ariba. The panel discussion was fascinating (I'll link to it on BillyMasters.com) and special celebs like Jack Plotnick, Melissa Peterman, Tom Lenk, Drew Droege, Carolyn Hennesy, and others made it truly a celebration. Go out and buy Frank's book NOW!

Do you remember Bicentennial Moments? They were little PSAs that ran on network TV. I don't remember exactly when—I believe it was sometime in the mid-'70s. Anyhoo, here's your Gay Pride moment. Didya know actor **Michael Gross**—yes, Michael J. Fox's dad on *Family Ties*—made his Broadway debut in the original production of *Bent*? And in drag? Gross was also at DeCaro's book signing, and we had a long conversation about him getting the role of Greta. The story is included in Frank's book.

Let me take a moment to applaud **The View** for their LGBTQ+ Pride Month FYI. Each day in June, we learn about notable members of our community—just like they do during Black History Month. The more you know...

Lily, Dolly and Jane still plan on reuniting for a 9 to 5 sequel. Last week, Dolly told CNN's Robin Meade, "We've got two scripts and we're waiting for the last rewrite. So as soon as we all sign off

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on that, I'd say in the next few months we'll be in production." A few months ago, Jane Fonda said the same thing. "Right now, Dolly, Lily and I are all intending to be in it." Fingers crossed.

Could it be that a network star is itching to come out? So say people in the know who tell me that the campy, coy cutie planned to say he's family once he left a certain professional obligation behind. Since that has been delayed about a year, he's biding his time. What hasn't changed are plans for Halloween 2019 in West Hollywood, which will be a very big night for him and his buddies. After all, he'll be out ... and legal.

When it doesn't take a genius to solve a blind item, it's definitely time to end another column. For something a bit more titillating, check out www.BillyMasters.com—the site that could lead to hysteria and horniness. If you have a question, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I book a flight back to Dallas! Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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the DISH

Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR Cebu; Rooh

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The restaurants profiled this week are considered two of the hottest new spots in the city—but do they live up to the hype?

Cebu (2211 W. North Ave.; <https://cebuchicago.com/>) is one of the very few authentic Filipino restaurants in Chicago. (The spot is named after a southern province of the Philippines, and reflects more of a Chinese influence.)

Drinks are inventive. The Weng Weng incorporates cognac, vodka, rum, tequila, Scotch and rye along with grenadine and juices. And the Average Joe is anything but, with its heady mix of citrus vodka, persimmon liqueur, passionfruit syrup, fresh lime and pineapple juice.

If your idea of exotic food is shrimp-fried rice, this might not be the right place. However, for the adventurous, there are rewards.

The egg rolls (lumpia) were as good as any I've had, and the chicken adobo (chicken thighs marinated in soy, vinegar, peppercorn, garlic, lemon juice and coconut milk) may not have looked like much, but it was very tasty. However, the paksiw (pork lechon) sliders were merely okay—and we found the Cebu lechon belly (divided into layers of well-cooked meat, pork fat



Cebu's halo-halo.
PR photo

and crispy skin) both wonderful and frustrating. (Thankfully, a large knife was provided, although knives are not part of the usual cutlery at Cebu, reflecting tradition.)

Regarding desserts, my friend and I were split. She preferred the calamassi tart—but I absolutely love the halo-halo, a compendium of Filipino tastes and flavors that was worth the price of admission alone, as they say. There's no question that the Tans (who own Cebu) know their way around Filipino cuisine—and this place warrants (re)visiting.

One other thing: This place might actually want to look into a dance area. The music was energetic enough to make you want to work off that halo halo.

Rooh

And then there's **Rooh** (736 W. Randolph St.; <https://www.roohchicago.com/>), a progressive Indian spot in the trendy Restaurant Row. Rooh, with its location and cool decor, will surely draw the crowds.

My friend (who happens to be Indian, and who has been with me to a lot of spots) was impressed with Rooh—right down to the menu, which is on the most luxurious paper ever. Cocktails are divided into several categories, including pungent and astringent (!)—but were pretty appealing.

Appetizers and entrees looked promising (with the top half of items on the area of the print menu devoted to vegetarian dishes). And, indeed, we enjoyed several of the items. For example, the green pea-and-goat cheese kulcha (flatbread) was absolutely delicious, as well as the butter chicken and the avocado-and-edamame pappi chaat.

However, as polished as Rooh looked, there were multiple signs that it's the new kid on the block. Some dishes misfired, such as the shamefully dry duck shami kebab. Also, on at least two separate occasions, the wrong items were brought to our table—and my friend almost accepted an incorrect drink on one occasion because we waited so long for our actual orders. (Our server was friendly enough, and there are obviously some things he couldn't control—but it even took him a while to break a \$20 bill and, even then, he brought 20 one-dollar bills.)

Also, take it as a sign that (at least when I looked on the website) there are no prices next to the items online. Entrees cost anywhere from \$20 to \$36 each—but, with the jackfruit fritters, for example, there were only three small items for \$24.

So, I'd (marginally) recommend Rooh. However, you may want to give the spot a couple weeks to get its act together.

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



NAME

"It's a twist on 'a regular girl,' and it's a little bit of toilet humor, too. I love what 'irregular' can mean—different, special, odd. I try to do performances that stand out and I wanted my name to reflect that!"

FIRST DRAG PERFORMANCE

"I started doing drag around two years ago. I was living in New York and I went out with a lot of people that were connected to the queer scene. I noticed that a bunch of drag queens got bottle service and free drinks and I said to myself, 'Well, I want free drinks!' So I bought a \$10 wig, some cheap makeup and I haven't looked back since. Drag obviously means a lot more to me now—it's a place to express and explore my gender (I identify as a trans woman). My first performance was to 'MANICURE' by Lady Gaga for a cycle of Crash Landing. It was a hot mess, but I had a blast."

DRAG INSPIRATION

"My biggest inspirations are other fabulous queens from Chicago—I look to Bambi Banks-Coulee, Chamilla Foxx, Lila Star and Lucy Stoolie—people who have a whole image and brand, and who have high-energy performances. Outside of Chicago, Envy Peru, Queef Latina, Miss Toto, and a bunch of other girls inspire me."

GO-TO NUMBER TO SLAY A CROWD

"Lately, my favorite number to do has been either 'Unlock It' by Charli XCX or 'Drops of Jupiter' by Train."

FUN FACT

"I've made a deliberate move away from doing only comedy numbers, and trying to rebrand to be a little sexier. Irregular is an all-around angel and she pulls sexy as quickly as she can pull a gag."

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Every second and fourth Wednesday: Regina's Bebidas, and then DURO at Berlin
Every 3rd Friday: FKA at Burlington
Every third Wednesday: Reggie's Roundup at the Hideout

SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram: @imirregulargirl



New Madge, who dis?: Madame X release party.
Joseph Stevens Photography



WINDY CITY TIMES

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., June 19

2019 Trans Ice Cream Social Trans community socializing on the rooftop deck. Music from Lakeside Pride. Complimentary ice cream. Free. 5:30pm - 7:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/transicecreamsocial?erid=9953039&trid=3414edf0-a7d2-47d9-a86d-7e657022d1ba>

Robert W. Fieseler author Tinderbox: The Untold Story of the Up Stairs Lounge Fire and the Rise of Gay Liberation Reconstructs the 1973 fire that devastated New Orleans' subterranean gay community. Buried for decades, the Up Stairs Lounge tragedy has only recently emerged as a catalyzing event of the gay-liberation movement. Author in conversation with Owen Keennen 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>



JAY PRIDE

Thursday, June 20

Lesbian poet e nina jay will perform at Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St. Photo by Liz Baudler

Thursday, June 20

Film/discussion: Dear Fredy True story of Fredy Hirsch, an openly gay Jewish athlete who brought hope, comfort, and inspiration to thousands of children and young people during the Holocaust. Post screening discussion on Upstanders within the LGBTQ+ community. Free with museum entry. Reserve your spot. 6:30pm - 8:30pm Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center 9603 Woods Dr. Skokie, IL 60077 <http://18161.blackbaudhosting.com/18161/page.as>

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e nina jay performance and signing Black lesbian poet in live performance, book signing with special guests songstress Nikki Patin and emcee Kru Maekdo. \$15/\$40 with book. Advance tickets strongly recommended 7:00pm - 9:00pm Mary's Attic 5400 N Clark Chicago <http://bricksbloodwater.bpt.me/>

Darius Bost, author Evidence of Being: The Black Gay Cultural Renaissance and the Politics of Violence Washington, D.C.'s, gay Black community in the 1980s, ravaged by AIDS, the crack epidemic, and a series of unsolved murders, seemingly abandoned by the government and mainstream culture. 7 p.m. Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St.; <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Friday, June 21

The Breakers Annual Pride Party Friends, family, refreshments, entertainment. Free parking. RSVP by phone 2:00pm - 3:30pm The Breakers, Showroom, 3rd floor, 5333 N. Sheridan Rd. 773-878-6039 <http://www.seniorlifestyle.com>

Tony Bennett headlines his 40th Ravinia Concert Legendary interpreter of American Popular Song. Pavilion \$146./\$135.00. Lawn \$49. Gates 5 8:30pm Ravinia Festival 418 Sheridian Road Highland Park, IL 60035 Tickets: <http://www.ravinia.org>

Summer Solstice Comedy Spectacular Unity Park Advisory Council offers a free event featuring Jess Martinez, Victoria Fombelle, Liz Getty, Audrey Jones and Janice Rodriguez. More at facebook.com/UnityParkAC 9:00pm Unity Park, 2636 N Kimball <http://www.unitypark-chicago.org>

Saturday, June 22

Chicago Pride Fest 2019 Two-day street event with live music on the three stages, food and drinks, over 100 craft vendors, dancing, pet parade, drag shows. Concludes June 23. \$10 11:00am - 10:00pm Boystown on Halsted Street from Addison to Grace St. <http://northalsted.com/pridefest/>

Out of the Closets and into the Streets:

Power, Pride & Resistance in Chicago's Gay Liberation Movement Exhibit continues through Sept. 19, free. Check site for hours. 10:00am - 4:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.gerberhart.org>

Cradles to Crayons Proud Families and Allies Proud Families and Allies welcome LGBTQ families to experience Cradles to Crayons, providing service and everyday essentials to local children in need. Food and mimosas. 10:00am - 12:00am The Giving Factory, 4141 W. George <http://www.cradlestocrayons.org/>

Queer Womyn + Allies Beach Fun Hang on the beach in a womyn-forward LGBTQ+ space. 10 a.m. walkers walk and runners run. 11 a.m. beach fun. Feel free to arrive early to claim and set up space and drop off food. Volleyball and bring games like cornhole, frisbees. Find Queer Womyn + Allies Beach Fun on Facebook 10:00am Kathy Osterman Beach

Sunday, June 23

United Airlines Drag Queen Brunch Brunch, drinks, epic performances from Elektra Del Rio, Veronica Pop, Kim Passable 10:00am - 12:30pm The River Kitchen and Bar 2909 N Sheffield Ave. Tickets: <http://exclusives.mileageplus.com/Listing/Details/6141216>

Reader Pride Party Marz Community Brewing Co. LGBTQ+ artist and organizations. All ages. \$10 1:00pm - 9:00pm Marz, 3630 S. Iron St. <http://Chicago-Reader.com/pride>

Tuesday, June 25

City of Chicago Salute to LGBTQ Veterans Speaker Tatyana Moaton, Howard Brown Diversity and Inclusion Service Co-coordinator and transgender veteran. The event is hosted each year by

the American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) Chicago Chapter and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations. Questions can be directed to Jim Darby at jamesdarby@aol.com or 773-752-0058. Free. Public is encouraged to attend. 12:00pm Daley Center Plaza 50 W Washington St Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/AVERChicagoChapter/>

Two Fridas film screening Maria de Me-deiros (Pulp Fiction) plays Judith Ferreto, Frida Kahlo's personal nurse during Frida's final years, in this surreal biopic where past and present, memory and the imagination meld in one continuous reverie. 6:00pm Instituto Cervantes 31 W Ohio Chicago <http://latinocultural-center.org/programs/the-reel-film-club/>

Wed., June 26

30 Under 30 Awards Windy City Times marks Pride Month by honoring thirty people under 30 for substantial contributions to the Chicagoland LGBTQ community, in entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, sports or others. 5:30 p.m. reception before program. Questions to Windy City Times Managing Editor Matt Simonette at matt.simonette@gmail.com 6:00pm - 7:30pm Polo Cafe and Catering, 3322 S. Morgan St.

C. Heike Schotten, author Queer Terror Critique of U.S. settler-colonial empire that draws on political, queer, and critical indigenous theory to situate Bush's either/or moralism and reframe the concept of terrorism. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

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