

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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**PRIDE ON DISPLAY**  
Buffalo Grove holds Pride Drive.  
Tim Carroll Photography



8

**SECOND CITY**  
Charges of racism spurs change at top.  
PR photo of new Second City Interim Executive Producer Anthony LeBlanc

16

**'WIRE' LOVE**  
Gerber/Hart celebrates classic women's music/culture journal.  
Courtesy of Toni Armstrong Jr.

9



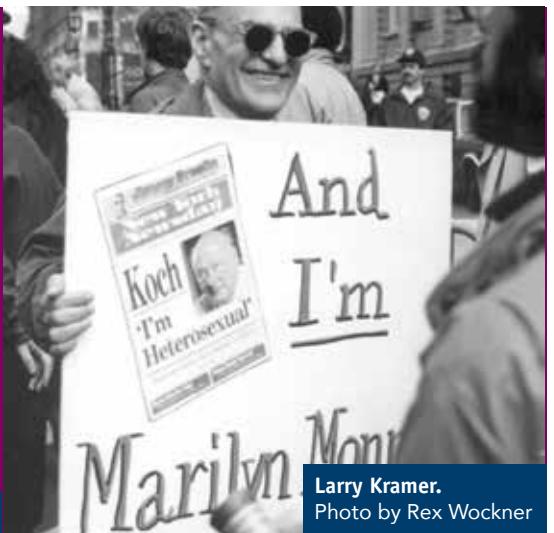
**The issue of race drives protest at LGBTQ pub**

PAGE 4

# FRONT AND CENTER

**LARRY KRAMER**  
The outspoken activist is remembered

PAGE 13





Howard Brown  
Health

The U.S. Census happens only every 10 years. It counts everyone in the United States and uses that information to determine how many members of Congress represent your community and how federal funds are spent. Completing the census is one more way we can help each other. When you fill out the census, you help amplify the LGBTQ community's voice and ensure federal funds go to critical services like schools, libraries, nutrition and health programs, roads and much more.

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# WINDY CITY TIMES

## INDEX

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### UPCOMING 2020 WINDY CITY TIMES PRINT DATES:

June 24, 2020	Aug. 19, 2020	Oct. 14, 2020
July 8, 2020	Sept. 2, 2020	Oct. 28, 2020
July 22, 2020	Sept. 16, 2020	Nov. 11, 2020
Aug. 5, 2020	Sept. 30, 2020	Nov. 25, 2020

online exclusives at  
[www.WindyCityTimes.com](http://www.WindyCityTimes.com)



### A MATTER OF SURVIVAL

Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison (left) hosted a panel on domestic-violence and child-abuse survivors.

Photo courtesy of Morrison's office

### DO THE MATH



French actress Ariane Labed talks about her role as a woman in a thruple in the series *Trigonometry*.  
 Photo courtesy of the BBC

### EVENT HORIZON

Find out about events that have been cancelled or postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

### THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Ruby Rose, The Village People and civil-rights films.

plus  
**DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

### NEWS

Activists protest pub over racist messages	4
Buffalo Grove hosts Pride Drive	8
Gerber/Hart celebrates Hot Wire	9
Passages: Mowery, Ratner	10
COVID-19 Trans advocates outline challenges	10
Affinity names new executive director	11
LETTERS Black Lives Matter	12

### ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS

THEATER: Remembering Larry Kramer	13
Streaming theater reviews	14, 16
Pride in Place Festival	14
Second City co-owner exits after racism charges	16
DRAG: Talking with Miz Cracker	18
NIGHTSPOTS	19
Classifieds	21
Calendar	22

When A Great Deal Matters, Shop Rob Paddor's...

**Evanston Subaru in Skokie**

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'20 Kia Soul LX	Manual, 8K, Cherry Black, P6475	\$14,995	'15 Forester Prem.	Automatic, Sunroof, Heated Seats, Silver, 23349A	\$15,995
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'16 Honda Fit EX	Automatic, Moonroof, 13K, Black, 24485A	\$13,995	'10 Forester Ltd.	Automatic Sunroof, Leather, 56K, Red 24497A	\$10,995
'17 Hyundai Elantra Value Ed.	Automatic, Blind Spot, Black, 24367A	\$12,995	'09 Forester XT Ltd	Automatic, Sunroof, Leather, Green, 24391A	\$8,995
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'16 Mazda 3i Sport	Automatic, Bluetooth, Keyless Black, 22277	\$7,995			
'15 Kia Soul	Manual, Full Power, Alien2, 21917A	\$7,995			
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Automatic Sunroof, Leather, Silver, 23651A

Automatic Sunroof, Leather, Silver, 24102A

Automatic Sunroof, Heated Seats, Silver, 23349A

Automatic, Sunroof, Leather, 56K, Red 24497A

Automatic, Sunroof, Leather, Green, 24391A

#### SUBARU OUTBACKS / CROSSTREK / ASCENT

Automatic, Sunroof, Eyesight, 4K, Grey, P6528

Automatic, Sunroof, Eyesight, Alloys, White, P6554

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## Activists protest Spyners Pub over owner's racist post, past comments

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Over 100 Spyners Pub patrons and community members gathered June 4 in front of the pub, 4623 N. Western Ave., to protest against owner and general manager Maureen Sullivan's racist Facebook posts and past racist comments toward numerous bar patrons.

Sullivan, who deleted the racist posts, also blocked access to her Facebook page on the evening of June 3. When this publication checked the page June 4, her renovations (where the screenshot of her original deleted racist post was shared by a number of people) and apology posts were deleted.

The Facebook posts were filled with hundreds of comments from patrons and members of the public who called for a boycott, with some speaking about the racist comments they said they received in her pub.

Sullivan's post was shared via screen shot by multiple people on her May 13 Facebook post about her bar's renovations. Stated verbatim, it read:

"I sent this to my friend Perkins. I would like you to read it. Perkins it's this mentality repeated over and over by liberals marching for black lives. The demonstrators were primarily of all other races except for black. The blacks dominated

the looting and destruction of our streets. The statement Black lives matter annoys the shit out of me. Everything and EVERYONE including animals, plants and the entire environment matters. Making that black lives matter statement sounds exclusive and privileged. Witnessing over 85 percent of looting by blacks and destroying businesses in there communities has defeated the entire protest. Your cousin lives in fear because people are afraid of this violence and entitlement black men display to the country.

"We are not dealing with Martin Luther King protestors who we were respectful and had a cause of civil rights. We heard enough from the protestors now let them go back to the communities they helped destroy clean them up and assist businesses who employed black men so we can get back to normal. This entire cause sickens me and they can all fuck off. I will be paying for it in the end. The looters will be sitting at home in their stolen gym shoes and Nike gear screaming oppression and racism. The cause was pointless and destroyed our great country. They have become domestic terrorists depleted our city's funds from the needy, sick and poor who need our help. They should be stopped and never allow to protest on our streets again. All protests should only be allowed in zoos because they act like animals beating up police, fire fighters city

personal and damaging anything they see. This is not social justice. It's anarchy!!!"

Sullivan also posted another statement (after getting some pushback) that was sent to this publication as a screenshot. It read, "Please do not try and shame me!!! Firstly I am not a racist. I am a humanitarian. People unfortunately get killed everyday by criminals. We need our police department. The police have saved Women, men, and children from our community and put their lives on the line. Black men are not the only ones who suffer the injustices of humanity. Women, men and children are sex trafficked, murdered and raped all around the world. Most rape victims, sex trafficker victims never see justice. Criminals work against our society and the police department. We must agree the police and civil servants are not abusing people like criminals. I agree that small percentages slip between the cracks. Perhaps, those few officers suffer from work frustration and abuse by protestors and the enormous disrespect displayed daily. However ...."

She later apologized, posting, "Hello Everyone, I received many texts, messages and comments regarding the comment I made to my friend Perkins. In rereading the message I sent to her, I realize it was extremely insensitive. For this I am deeply sorry. I can see how my words impacted many as demeaning and insulting. I am deeply regretful for my words. Many have commented, that I am racist and a bigot. I promise that this is not true. In my reflection, I see how hard everyone has worked for this cause to improve the lives for Black Americans. I wrote and made statements not walking in the shoes of Black Americans. I spoke from watching the city being destroyed and as a small business owner I tried to protect my community from plunder. Many people suggested, I should claim my FB account was hacked to prevent negative social media and backlash. I have refused to do that, because I am not a coward and I recognize I was wrong. I was offensive and insensitive to the Black Lives Matter Movement. I want to own it and reassure my intentions were never to harm or hurt anyone. I believe all people should be treated equally and justly and our fight should never stop until this is accomplished. I know it's impossible to unring a bell, I also understand the backlash that will be attached to my previous comment, I understand some will forgive me and some will not. My deposition is never to hurt, harm or dehumanize any person or group. MY DEEPEST APOLOGIES Maureen."

Sullivan's apology received mixed responses, with some defending it while others further denounced her comments—and with some fights breaking out between these two groups.

The June 4 protest was one of many taking place worldwide in support of #BlackLivesMatter in recent days with attendees, who were mostly white, calling for Sullivan's pub to have its license revoked and be shut down.

For two hours, protestors peacefully stood at all four corners of the intersection of Western and Eastwood avenues, displaying signs while chanting slogans as most of the cars that passed by honked and cheered them along.

Chants included "No justice, no peace," "Don't support Spyners," "Hey, hey, they racists cops have got to go," "George Floyd, say his name"

and "Breonna Taylor, say her name."

During the protest, Heart of Lincoln Square Neighbors Association Co-Founder and Outreach Committee Head Paige Worthy told Windy City Times, "This time—when we are all a little raw from shelter-in-place and then the protests started happening—this, more than any other time people's true colors have started coming out.

"What could have just been a frustration spiraled into a racist tirade by Maureen that got spread around. She got caught, wrote a fake apology and thought she would get off scot-free. The community here does not tolerate this kind of behavior or beliefs. I am really heartened that so many folks from our community and other neighborhoods came out to join this protest and say this is not okay."

Heidi and Cindy Schuman, who are raising two Black children, were also at the protest.

"As a community we are happy to be out here together to stand up against hate," Heidi told Windy City Times. "We have supported this bar for years and years and to not only see the words she wrote that she copied and share with another person and then sent out on her Facebook page and then hearing stories from our close friends who have actually experienced hate and racism in this bar from her is very upsetting."

"The fact that we did not hear these stories until now, her asking people of color to leave the bar because she did not want their kind there or that they were stealing tips off the bar just because of the color of their skin is terrible. We are here to make a stand and say that her words and actions are not okay."

"It is disheartening and sad that she is a gay lady who made that racist statement saying they are going to loot and destroy property and that Black people are animals," said Cindy. "What does that say for my how she perceives my family?"

"I am sad that I did not know that racism was going on here and that my Black friends could not tell me what happened to them here. Also, the fact that she has sponsored many of my CMSA teams and there are trophies inside her bar with my team names on them makes me angry because of the message that sends."

Another protestor, Lori (who asked that her last name not be used), told this publication, "On Mardi Gras this year, I was hanging out with some new friends at the bar and Maureen's partner came up out of nowhere and said 'Get the eff out of here. I'm sick of people coming up to me and complaining about you,' and at that point I was, like, 'I just moved here this past September, so what?'" She said made no sense.

"Another day, I was walking from the 7-Eleven back home. I crossed the street and ran into a friend outside the bar when Maureen's partner came out and said, 'You need to get the eff out of here; I am going to call the cops on you.' I told her, 'This is a public sidewalk and you cannot do that.' She said, 'You do not need to be here' and called me names, so I exchanged names as well. It was a very infuriating moment and I remember her saying I was loitering for cigarettes but I had literally just come from the 7-Eleven with cigarettes and wine in my bag. As a Black bisexual woman, I felt racially profiled and targeted, and it was infuriating."

Turn to page 5

## CMSA refusing future dollars from Spyners after racist message

Two days after the owner/general manager of Lincoln Square spot Spyners received major pushback on social media for what many said was a racist message, a local LGBTQ sports organization condemned the post—and said it will not accept future donations from the bar.

Moreover, the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) announced it will donate past sponsorship funds from Spyners to the South Side LGBTQ organization Brave Space Alliance.

The letter—from CMSA President Matt Herk to the organization's 3,000 members—is as follows:

*Dear CMSA community,*

These past days have brought into sharp focus the overt and covert racism that exists in our society. As much as many of us would like to believe CMSA is above these behaviors, the unfortunate truth is that we are not.

Earlier this week, the owner of Spyners, a longtime sponsor of our sports, expressed thoughts on social media that were inexcusable. The words that were chosen were repugnant.

Upon reviewing Spyners involvement with CMSA during the 2019-20 seasons, we found that they sponsored a team in one of our sports. The board of directors has elected to immediately donate these funds to the Brave Space Alliance—the first Black-led, trans-led

LGBTQ center located on the South Side of Chicago. The board has also decided to supplement these funds for a total donation of \$1,000.

CMSA will not accept future sponsorship dollars or hold official events at Spyners. The board is considering additional actions as well.

We cannot allow these actions to be the last word on addressing racism within CMSA. Many of us are aware of times in the past where members of color were made to feel unwelcome or unsafe participating in our leagues. We have worked to resolve many of the incidents that were brought to our attention, but it is a fair criticism that our resolutions have at times been inconsistent.

As we begin charting our return to the fields, we will address more than the health and safety concerns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We will create a proactive plan to provide resources, training, and standards that create a welcoming and safe environment for all athletes, but especially athletes of color.

This will be challenging and take time. We will work to get it right, and we may have some missteps along the way. We welcome our membership to hold us accountable by letting us know where we are falling short now and where we have fallen short in the past.

Finally, for those times that any member of CMSA has felt unwelcome, unsafe or attacked because of who you are—we are sorry. We will set a higher standard for our board of directors, our sport leaders and our athletes in the future.

Ultimately, there is more in a human being to celebrate than to disparage. Our goal is to prove that.



[www.windycitymediagroup.com](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com)

## SPYNERS from page 4

In a moving moment near the end of the protest, Andersonville resident Nicole "Nic" Lawson called on participants to sit down in silence with their hands raised for eight minutes and 46 seconds—the amount of time white now-former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin had his knee on Floyd's neck. Chauvin has since been charged with second-degree murder, and three other officers have also been charged.

Lawson—who said she is both Native American and Black but passes as white—called on everyone to contact Ald. Matt Martin (47th Ward), who she said did not respond to her queries about this situation, and demand action on his part. She also told the white members of the crowd they had blinders on due to their privilege. Lawson called on them to chant "Black Lives Matter," "No Justice No Peace" and reminded them that Taylor's birthday would have been June 5, and to say her and Floyd's names.

Additionally, Lawson said this injustice is white people's fault, and it is incumbent on them to educate their fellow white people about racial justice.

Lawson asked who in the crowd was LGBT; many

people clapped in the affirmative. Lawson then said they owe their freedom to love to Black and Brown trans women who led the fight for LGBT liberation.

As Lawson was talking, a young Black person said "I deserve to be here," eliciting cheers from the crowd. He also told the crowd that he appreciated everyone coming out in support of his community.

Throughout the protest, six Chicago Police officers stood along the side of the 7-Eleven across the street and two Chicago Police Department vehicles (one featuring the rainbow Pride flag colors) were parked on Western Ave. under the nearby Brown Line L stop.

All protestors practiced social distancing and wore masks due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Water and snacks were also provided by a few protestors.

They also protested June 5.

See [windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Spyners-Pub-owner-posts-racist-screed-on-Facebook-apologizes-later/68662.html](http://windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Spyners-Pub-owner-posts-racist-screed-on-Facebook-apologizes-later/68662.html) and [windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/CMSA-refusing-donations-from-Spyners-after-racist-message-/68664.html](http://windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/CMSA-refusing-donations-from-Spyners-after-racist-message-/68664.html).

## This Week's Featured Properties



Serene oasis on a 57'-wide lot: stunning historic all brick home overlooking 37' yard.

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East Lakeview



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**2727 N. Seminary St.**  
**COMING SOON**

Lincoln Park



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Brad Lippitz has supported and contributed more to LGBTQ causes and candidates over the years than any other real estate broker in Chicago. And Brad's team happens to be in the top 10 in all Chicago with over \$80 million sold in 2019. If you need to choose a real estate broker, why wouldn't you choose a community leader who consistently gives back year after year? Brad looks forward to working with you!

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### **IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT DESCOVY (des-KOH-vee)**

This is only a brief summary of important information about taking DESCOVY for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis). This does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your medicine.

#### **MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT DESCOVY FOR PrEP**

##### **Before starting and while taking DESCOVY for PrEP:**

- **You must be HIV-negative.** You must get tested for HIV immediately before and at least every 3 months while taking DESCOVY. If you think you were exposed to HIV, tell your healthcare provider right away. They may want to do more tests to confirm that you are still HIV-negative.
- **Many HIV tests can miss HIV infection in a person who has recently become infected.** Symptoms of new HIV infection include tiredness, fever, joint or muscle aches, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, night sweats, and/or enlarged lymph nodes in the neck or groin. Tell your healthcare provider if you have had a flu-like illness within the last month before starting or while taking DESCOVY.
- **DESCOVY does not prevent other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).** Practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to reduce the risk of getting STIs.
- **DESCOVY by itself is not a complete treatment for HIV-1.** Do not take DESCOVY for PrEP unless you are confirmed to be HIV negative.

##### **DESCOVY may cause serious side effects, including:**

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV. If you have HBV and stop taking DESCOVY, your HBV may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking DESCOVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check or give you HBV medicine.

#### **ABOUT DESCOVY FOR PrEP**

DESCOVY for PrEP is a once-daily prescription medicine for adults and adolescents at risk of HIV who weigh at least 77 pounds. It helps lower the chances of getting HIV through sex.

##### **DESCOVY for PrEP is not for everyone:**

- It is not for use in people assigned female at birth who are at risk of getting HIV from vaginal sex, because its effectiveness has not been studied.
- You must be HIV-negative before and while taking DESCovy for PrEP.

To help determine your risk of getting HIV-1, talk openly with your healthcare provider about your sexual health.

##### **Do NOT take DESCOVY for PrEP if you:**

- **Already have HIV infection or if you do not know your HIV status.** If you have HIV-1, you need more medicine than DESCOVY alone to treat HIV-1. If you have HIV-1 and take only DESCOVY, your HIV-1 may become harder to treat now and in the future.

#### **POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF DESCOVY FOR PrEP**

##### **DESCOVY can cause serious side effects, including:**

- Those in the “Most Important Information About DESCOVY for PrEP” section.
- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure. Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with DESCOVY. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking DESCOVY.
- Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis), which is a serious but rare medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, stomach pain with nausea and vomiting, cold or blue hands and feet, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or a fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Severe liver problems, which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.



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#### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF DESCovy FOR PrEP (cont'd)

**Common side effects** in people taking DESCovy for PrEP include diarrhea, nausea, headache, fatigue, and stomach pain.

These are not all the possible side effects of DESCovy. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking DESCovy for PrEP.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.FDA.gov/medwatch](http://www.FDA.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

**Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with DESCovy for PrEP.**

#### BEFORE TAKING DESCovy FOR PrEP

##### Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- Have or have had any kidney or liver problems, including hepatitis.
- Have any other medical conditions.

##### Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with DESCovy for PrEP.

#### HOW TO TAKE DESCovy FOR PrEP

- Take 1 tablet once a day, every day, not just when you think you have been exposed to HIV-1.
- Do not miss any doses. Missing doses may increase your risk of getting HIV-1 infection.
- Get tested for HIV-1 at least every 3 months. You must stay HIV-negative to keep taking DESCovy for PrEP.

#### HOW TO FURTHER REDUCE YOUR RISK

- Know your HIV status and the HIV status of your partners. If your partner is living with HIV, your risk of getting HIV is lower if your partner consistently takes HIV treatment every day.
- Get tested for other STIs. Some STIs make it easier for HIV to infect you.
- Practice safer sex by using latex or polyurethane condoms.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about all the ways to help reduce HIV risk.

#### GET MORE INFORMATION

- This is only a brief summary of important information about DESCovy for PrEP. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- Go to [DESCOVOY.com/prep](http://DESCOVOY.com/prep) or call 1-800-GILEAD-5
- If you need help paying for your medicine, visit [DESCOVOY.com/prep](http://DESCOVOY.com/prep) for program information.

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Harlet Wench and Luna Eclipse perform in front of the Silgalis family home.

All photos: Tim Carroll Photography



The Juliani family.



Molly and Carolyn Pinta.



Above: Dancers and Queen Sophia Quintanilla in front of the Eisenstot family home.

Below: Local Buffalo Grove churches come together to create this "Wizard of Oz" theme in front of the Johnson family home.



## Buffalo Grove holds colorful Pride Drive

BY TIM CARROLL

Even in the midst of a pandemic (as Illinois slowly reopens), the Buffalo Grove Pride Drive took place June 7.

In the first week of April, not wanting to put anyone in danger from the Covid-19 pandemic, Buffalo Grove and Aurora agreed in solidarity to cancel their Pride parades. Still, Carolyn Pinta's family wanted to celebrate Buffalo Grove Pride.

"I knew that no matter what, our family would

decorate our home and celebrate on our lawn on June 7," she told Windy City Times. "We decided to ask others to join us and, amazingly, we have ended up with 94 homes and many, many businesses and organizations contributing in many ways."

So was born the Buffalo Grove Pride Drive—in which participants decorated their front lawns as attendees drove by them.

One participant, Alexander Dungan, marched in his first Pride Parade last year with his church,

Kingswood United Methodist of Buffalo Grove. This year he wanted to participate again and decorated his home with an animal-and-water theme.

"I had a bit of experience with the water settings so that came together easily, and then I pretty much designed the rest around what animals were available, and what puns I could associate with different Pride Flags," he said. "For example, there [are] a 'Bisexu-owl' as well as a 'transgendeer.' I design puppets for Northwestern [University] sometimes, so it wasn't difficult to make things out of materials around the house, or employ some of the puppets I've built for past shows."

Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison also marched in the inaugural Buffalo Grove Pride Parade last year. This year he joined a family at

their home to bring a DJ and information about the census to the Pride Drive.

Before the event, he said, "My office is out here dropping bags with information about the 2020 Census which is vitally important to LGBTQ people. Historically, LGBTQ people have been considered hard-to-count and are underrepresented in the census. Because of that, we haven't gotten a true sense of the size and needs of the LGBTQ community. We will be out on [June 7] encouraging ALL residents, but especially LGBTQ people, to complete their census."

Music, flags, balloons, beads, buttons, bubbles and drag queens were all present.

The weather was beautiful as hundreds of families drove through Buffalo Grove, stopping, waving and honking their horns at decorated home after decorated home.

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Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison.



Coco Sho Nell performs in front of the LeVine home.

# Gerber/Hart celebrates Hot Wire: The Journal of Women's Music and Culture

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives hosted a look back at Hot Wire: The Journal of Women's Music and Culture with a panel, on May 27.

The journal grew out of Not Just a Stage, an organization Toni Armstrong Jr. formed. Armstrong had been publishing an annual directory of women's music resources since 1977. Eventually, with three other partners, Ann Morris, Etas Carria, and Yvonne Zipter, she formed Not Just a Stage, which published Hot Wire.

"The idea of it was to have a magazine that would represent our culture; a separatist magazine that would be by, for and about women, primarily focused on the lesbian culture, but always feminist and always women-identified somehow," said Armstrong—Hot Wire's co-founder, managing



Left: Jorjet Harper. Right: Toni Armstrong Jr.  
Photos courtesy of subjects

editor and publisher—during the panel. "So, not always lesbian. All the writers, photographers, we found a woman printing company, women who did everything. Everything was what we did."

During 1984-94, Hot Wire published 30 issues that were for women and by women. The publication covered all aspects of lesbian/feminist women's entertainment, while especially highlighting spaces in Chicago.

"All of us really felt that the time was right, in 1984, to make a bigger leap and bring together the industry," said Armstrong, also the founder of BLAST (Bi, Lesbian, and Straight Together) Women of the Palm Beaches and Empty Closet Productions." Up until that point it had been a lot of individual artists, a lot of individual producers, bookstores, radio shows—whatever was happening, but there wasn't anything that could



1977 listing : resources in women's music

1977 issue of *We Shall Go Forth*.  
Courtesy of Toni Armstrong Jr.

bring everybody together in one place, so that really was our goal."

Gerber/Hart Communications and Programming Coordinator Jen Dentel moderated the virtual panel, held on Zoom, which included Armstrong; Bonnie Morris, Ph.D., a women's history lecturer at UC-Berkeley; and Jorjet Harper, journalist and author as speakers.

The panel's overarching theme was the importance of Hot Wire and the women's music movement. Among the topics covered were festivals; published Hot Wire's creation, distribution, content and assembly; supporting women's music today and festivals to attend; We Want the Land Coalition; memories from working on Hot Wire; Women's Music Plus Directory (initially known as We Shall Go Forth); and the women/lesbian community and its spirit.

During the panel, each panelist detailed intricate facts such as the growing masthead throughout the years; the work done by young women who had full-time jobs somewhere else and worked on Hot Wire in their spare time from

## Democratic National Committee releases Pride Month statement

Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chair Tom Perez, LGBTQ Caucus Chair Earl Fowlkes, Treasurer Bill Derrough and Secretary Jason Rae released the following joint statement on the start of Pride Month:

"This year's LGBTQ Pride Month comes at a dark time for our country, and for many members of the LGBTQ community. The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and far too many Black Americans. The more than 100,000 Americans—disproportionately Blacks and Latinos—who have lost their lives in the fight against coronavirus. And the more than 40 million Americans whose livelihoods have been ripped away, with record unemployment in the Hispanic community. We are re-

minded each and every day of the pain faced by people of color in this country.

"This month we will remember all those we have lost to these epidemics. We will mourn and celebrate the lives of those who have left us. We will listen, speak out, protest, and share their stories. Pride is a time not just for celebration, but for reflection and appreciation of those who fought for the rights we enjoy today, and for the work that remains unfinished. 51 years after Stonewall, we will continue the legacy of Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, Stormé DeLarverie, and countless other activists and leaders.

"The rights of our LGBTQ brothers and sisters are under attack—both as members of our community and as people of color, immigrants, poor and working class Americans, and women. The Trump administration has rolled back or moved to roll back protections for LGBTQ students, families, patients, service members, inmates, people experiencing homelessness, and work-

ers. Trump has attacked LGBTQ health care, civil rights, and equal protections under law.

"We need political, moral, and empathetic leadership to begin to heal our wounds and move our country forward. LGBTQ discrimination and racism will not end in one presidency, but the difference between progress and losing even more ground has never been more stark. We need Joe Biden as president to champion LGBTQ rights at home and abroad. We saw what he was capable of as vice president: becoming the highest-ranking U.S. official to call for marriage equality, supporting the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' passing the Affordable Care Act with protections against discrimination, championing the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, and fighting for LGBTQ protections in the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization. As president, Joe Biden will move our nation closer to the full equality so many have fought and died for."

Armstrong's basement; the tone of the publication; and much more.

"It was nice that the first issue and the last issue were both comedians," Harper said. "I think that shows some of the spirit of what it was like. This magazine was a celebration. This magazine was a celebration of women's culture and initiator of women's culture because as the magazine went on, it created more and more of the women's culture that it celebrated. So, I am very proud to have been a part of all that."

Also mentioned in the panel was that in 2017, Morris got Hot Wire into the Library of Congress. It was an exhibit that was a timeline of women's music exhibit and that lasted for 10 weeks in the Great Hall in the Jefferson building; it went up the week President Trump was inaugurated. According to Morris, the exhibit led visitors from suffrage songs to more contemporary issues.

A Q&A session was held after the panel, so attendees could share their thoughts, experiences, love and ask questions.

"My big advice would be for someone in their 20s to start doing this again because there are definitely lesbian musicians out there and with social media, YouTube, all these different ways of doing ... Facebook Live...that we're seeing in the pandemic, all the different ways that performers can get in front of an audience," said Armstrong. "Wow! This whole thing could start up again. We did it from nothing, why shouldn't women in their 20s start it up again for themselves?"

In a breakout session with Windy City Times, while talking about drive, Morris shared the philosophy Armstrong used to describe herself when they were first getting acquainted, reciting "I don't feel like I'm a workaholic, I feel like I'm living up to my potential."

"Particularly in a time when the word 'lesbian' is maligned, disappeared, replaced or just disrespected without people who are criticizing us and our culture knowing anything at all about what we did," said Armstrong about where her drive came from. "Just rejecting us out of hand. I'm still in a good mood about what we did."

"Driven" is a word they use to describe themselves. Morris said when it comes to the work, life speeds up, describing that the team was always juggling projects and did the work that needed to be done.

"Sappho said, 'Someone in some future time will think of us,'" said Harper. "She said that 2,600 years ago ... and that's really what's going on here. This is what Gerber/Hart is all about. They're collecting things for someone in some future time. We don't know who that's going to be or where it's going to happen or anything like that, but I think it's a worthy goal, it's a worthy thing to do, to think about passing on these experiences."

For more information about Gerber/Hart, visit [GerberHart.org](http://GerberHart.org). For more information about Hot Wire, visit [HotWireJournal.com/hwmag.html](http://HotWireJournal.com/hwmag.html).



@windycitytimes

# Transgender advocates outline challenges during pandemic

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The coronavirus pandemic will likely intensify challenges experienced by transgender Americans, especially transgender persons of color, according to local advocates.

In a May 29 forum presented by Chicago House and Social Service Agency, transgender activists and organization officials weighed in on how both the health crisis, and the public and official responses, necessitate action from the transgender community and its allies.

"To speak about this pandemic solely in terms of virus transmission only scratches the surface," said Channyn Lynne Parker, Howard Brown Health's director of strategic partnerships, who moderated.

As the pandemic has unfolded, the community has gotten "a lot of energy from virtual community building, but the challenge is to make that last over the long run," said Ash Stephens, a policy coordinator at the Transgender Law Center.

Reyna Ortiz, who is a TransSafe coordinator at Chicago House, connecting the agency's clients with resources, spoke of the overall paucity of resources for trans people, and of the difficulty having to redirect those scant resources "without having physical contact."

Those difficulties are accelerated even further if a trans person is undocumented, said Tania Cordova, founder of the advocacy SER El Cambio. Those persons are now living with a fear of COVID, a lack of healthcare resources and a fear of detention and deportation, she added. Cordova emphasized, however, that even as the stakes for their survival recently shifted, undocumented trans persons are not only now waking up to their challenges: "This community has been organizing for years."

She further spoke of both the resolve needed for the community to claim its rights and resources, urging them not to be just in "survival mode," and the importance of acknowledging individuals doing activist work on the community's behalf, all too often without pay or even access to care.

"What our community needs is funding," Cordova added. "Our community has a lot of pride, but pride doesn't fill your stomach."

LaSaia Wade, executive director of Brave Space Alliance, spoke about added difficulties that Black transgender people face, noting, "People see my blackness when I walk into a space."

She spoke at length of the police violence that Black Americans have experienced at epidemic levels, portending the numerous protests in response to the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis that occurred in the days following the



Reyna Ortiz.  
Photo courtesy of Ortiz

May 29 forum.

COVID-19, Wade said, functions as "germ warfare on people of color." She said that she was nevertheless pleased that Brave Space Alliance was accelerating "levels of respect" from the community, and was receiving acknowledgement of its work from stakeholders and public officials. Wade also emphasized acknowledging contributions from trans men on the community's behalf.

## LGBT giant Larry Kramer dies at 84

The groundbreaking writer and outspoken LGBT- and AIDS-rights activist Larry Kramer died May 27 in New York at age 84.

His husband, David Webster, said Kramer died of pneumonia.

Kramer co-founded the Gay Men's Health Crisis (now known as GMHC), a provider of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and advocacy. Kramer also co-founded the direct action group ACT UP, which demanded an end to the tepid response to HIV treatment/research as the AIDS crisis worsened in the 1980s.

He was also a novelist and playwright, with one of his plays being the 1985 work *The Normal Heart*, which looks at the HIV/AIDS crisis in New York City in the early '80s. It was later a Tony-winning 2011 Broadway production; and re-worked as an award-winning 2014 TV drama film directed by Ryan Murphy and written by Kramer.

Windy City Times owner Tracy Baim interviewed Kramer in 2011 (at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/AIDS-The-angry-Heart-of-Larry-Kramer/31922.html>).

See much more about Kramer online at [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com) and read a tribute



Carl Mowery.  
Photo from Cremation Society of Illinois

## PASSAGES

### Carl Ross Mowery

Carl Ross Mowery, J.D.—a resident of Chicago's Lake View neighborhood who was born in Fairbury, Illinois—passed away peacefully May 30. He was 64.

After graduating from Illinois Wesleyan University and John Marshall Law School, Carl went on to specialize in compensation, benefits and human resources. He was most recently managing director and leader of the Chicago Human Capital Services practice at Grant Thornton LLP.

He was the beloved father of Ashley Lynne Mowery and Jacob Ross Mowery; and dear friend and former spouse of Sherry Keller.

Also, he was the son of the late Milton Leroy Mowery and Ethel Norine Mowery (nee Chaudoin); and brother of Ivan and the late Herbert ("Herbie"), Mary, and Duane ("Dewey").

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to the United Way (<https://liveunitedchicago.org>) or Lakeview Food Pantry (<https://www.lakeviewpantry.org>).

There will be a celebration of life at a later date.

Arrangements by Cremation Society of Illinois, 773-281-5058 or [Cremation-Society.com](http://Cremation-Society.com)

## PASSAGES

### Donald Ratner

Donald Ratner, a lifelong Chicagoan who was a leading figure in Chicago business and philanthropy, passed away Jan. 19, 2020 due to complications from prostate cancer. He is survived by his husband, Dr. Bruce Gober, with whom he spent 50 years, as well as a brother, Larry Ratner, and a cousin, Susan Eisner.

Born at Michael Reese Hospital in 1947, he grew up in Jeffrey Manor and attended Bowen High School and studied at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. He then earned an MBA at University of Chicago's Booth School of Business. During his long career, Ratner held

many positions, most recently serving as executive vice president and chief financial officer at the Terra Foundation for American Art, a position he held from 1999 until 2015. He also served as CFO and vice president of government relations of Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and worked for many years at Arthur Andersen.

One of the leading figures in Chicago philanthropy, Ratner was known for his tireless support of numerous arts organizations. A lifelong music, art and theater lover, he served on the boards of Steppenwolf Theatre and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (serving as treasurer for 18 years, during which the dance company made tremendous progress as an institution). He also volunteered for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fine Arts Building Foundation and Porchlight Music Theatre. Upon retirement, he volunteered to head a pilot project at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business to help struggling nonprofits streamline its back offices.

"Don's impact on the cultural vibrancy of Chicago is immeasurable and lasting," said Elizabeth Glassman, president and CEO of the Terra Foundation for American Art. "Don never shied away from large, complex projects that dramatically impacted an organization's ability to grow. This was certainly the case at the Terra as, among other important accomplishments, Don spearheaded the sale of our Michigan Avenue real estate, a multi-partner deal that brought much to the foundation's capacity for future grantmaking. Don was a man of many passions including opera, Broadway musicals and travel. Next time you visit the Lyric, look for Bruce and know that Don is there with him. Don's friends and colleagues know that he lived fully. He is a man who will be missed by all."



Donald Ratner.  
Crain's Chicago business file photo



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# Affinity names new executive director

The board of directors at Affinity Community Services ("Affinity")—a social-justice organization serving the needs of the Black LGBTQ+ community, with a particular focus on Black women—has announced the appointment of McKensie Mack as its new executive director.

Mack (who uses the pronouns they/them/theirs) is currently the managing director at Prax-

is Group and the founding partner of MMG—both of which are consultancies dedicated to building affirming cultures of repair, healing and accountability.

For almost 15 years, they have been an educator and organizer who has taught in the United States, France, Mexico, Germany, South Africa and Peru on identity, social justice, conflict man-

June 10, 2020

agement and relational repair. As a trilingual, award-winning digital organizer, entrepreneur, anti-oppression educator and researcher, they have worked at the intersections of racial justice, LGBTQ+ rights and gender equity for more than a decade.

Mack was the inaugural executive director of Art+Feminism, a nonprofit organization that tackles gender inequity on Wikipedia. Mack's past work has involved such organizations as the American Library Association, the Wikimedia Foundation, Broadway Youth Center, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Joyn, Enrich Chicago and Equity in the Center.

Originally from the South Side of Chicago (the city's Roseland and Chatham neighborhoods), they received their bachelors degree from the University of Chicago, in linguistics, and are currently pursuing a masters degree in social anthropology.

In a statement, Mack said, "I am excited to be joining one of the first Black LGBTQ+ organizations in the nation, working for Black LGBTQ+ people and communities on Chicago's South Side as it enters this new phase in the life of its 25-year legacy. In the face of COVID-19 and global protests against systemic racism, this is a pinnacle moment for us all, especially for us in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights for Black people."

"As a Black, queer, non-binary person, I am honored to be leading this organization into the next phase of its evolution. I express gratitude to all those who came before me and laid the groundwork for this organization, this community, and this legacy, including Dr. Chris Smith,



**New Affinity Executive Director McKensie Mack.**

Photo courtesy of Affinity

Imani Rupert-Gordon, Kim Hunt and countless others who have paved the way for this work to be done."

Affinity's board of directors expressed its gratitude to co-founder Dr. Christina Smith, who returned to Affinity to serve as interim executive director during this transition after Rupert-Gordon departed.

## CPD officer being investigated for homophobic slur

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) is investigating an officer who was recorded on cellphone video using a homophobic slur during downtown protests following the Minneapolis police killing of George Floyd, media outlets reported.

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability said in a statement that it recommended Supt. David Brown identify and suspend the officer in the video, as well as launch an investigation into the circumstances of the event recorded.

In a statement Windy City Times obtained,

Equality Illinois CEO Brian C. Johnson said, "We recently became aware of a disturbing video of a uniformed CPD officer calling a protester a 'f\*\*\*t.' We believe in keeping the focus on what the protests are primarily about: our society cannot tolerate police brutality against African-Americans, including queer and trans African Americans. But we want to add, unequivocally, there is no place for homophobia among those who are charged with protecting our city. This officer must be removed from duty."

"We applaud Mayor Lightfoot for her strong statement last night saying police using homophobic language will not be tolerated. ... We now call on Superintendent David Brown to swiftly identify this officer so that he can be removed from patrolling the streets."

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# letters

## Say their names

Dear community:

### SAY THEIR NAMES

Ahmaud Arbery.  
Breonna Taylor.  
Nina Pop.  
George Floyd.  
Tony McDade.  
Regis Korchinski-Paquet.

We know you are tired. We know you are hurting and filled with anger. We are tired of adding more names to the list of Black people murdered because of the racism embedded in our country. We refuse to give up on dismantling the system made to destroy our communities. We are angry that we are forced to choose between mourning and fighting for justice. For 25 years, Affinity Community Services has chosen to fight for justice and we are steadfast. We are here for you.

Our legacy within the Black queer community means that we are not strangers to what it means to be forced to grieve in silence. Affinity was created by a group of Black queer women who dared to fight against the systems that both silence and erase us. In honor of their legacy, we continue in that fight for Black people.

The murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Nina Pop, George Floyd, Tony McDade and Regis Korchinski-Paquet weigh heavily on our hearts. They are our siblings, our sisters, our brothers, and their lives mattered. The systemic racism that leads to police brutality and excessive force against Black people is not new to any of us—it is thoroughly woven into the fabric of this nation. And yet, in spite of our long history with anti-Black racism, we are still here. In spite of the countless reminders from this nation we built that it doesn't respect our humanity, in spite of the countless acts of violence we've experienced, in spite of the countless state-sanctioned killings gone unpunished, we will never normalize or accept racism.

We know you cannot rest until this nation no longer sees Black people as a threat. Affinity will not rest until the communities we serve can rest.

When the structures and systems of this country are rooted in white supremacy and racism, incidents like these occur far too often and go unpunished. Systematic racism breeds hatred and hatred breeds violence. You are fighting to be seen in a country that was not built to see you. Affinity sees you. Affinity was created to see you and to be here to offer space to heal, space to recharge, and space to be seen by each other.

Affinity recognizes the intersections of the com-

munities we serve and how heavy it is to be Black and queer in this country. That is why we offer community space to have authentic, open and honest conversations. In the midst of a global pandemic, we have created virtual spaces for healing and community because we understand that although our economy has paused—it doesn't mean racism, discrimination, nor hatred has paused.

History has shown us the power we yield as a collective.

You have us right here with you.

*Board and staff,  
Affinity Community Services*

## Black lives matter

Dear community:

Today and every day, Black Lives Matter.

Like so many of you, I am reeling after the last week and this weekend. WE ARE NOT OK. Our country, our city and many of us are not OK. In fact, chances are great that Black colleagues and friends are traumatized and exhausted.

Due to instigation, provocation and militarized law-enforcement responses, many of the recent peaceful protests meant to honor George Floyd's life and demand an end to racist police murders turned violent in cities across America. AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC) is in solidarity with those who protest and otherwise raise their voices against the racist systems that allowed George Floyd, Tony McDade, Breonna Taylor, Nina Pop, Sean Reed, Ahmaud Arbery and so many other Black people to die at the hands of police officers and white supremacists.

Many have used the damage to property as a way to detract from the meaning of these protests and to distract themselves from the truth we must reckon with: Injustice has been committed against our Black neighbors for far too long. Even the weekend of May 30, too many decisions were made by police officers and city leadership to disrupt demands for justice—including physically assaulting protesters, attempting to disappear people who were arrested, and trapping people in the Loop while also setting a curfew.

I urge Mayor Lightfoot to denounce the militarized and violent response of law enforcement, lift the restrictions on CTA transit, and ensure that any curfews or other restrictions are implemented throughout the city—not just on the South and West sides. Black people shouldn't be harassed, tazed, beaten, arrested or worse for speaking out against systemic racism, trying to get home, or for going about their daily lives. Chicago must not become a police

state—especially in response to demonstrations condemning state-sanctioned violence at the hands of law enforcement. Doing so would throw gasoline onto an already incendiary situation.

And there is a reason why this situation is so contentious. The uprisings we are seeing are a result of the violence that Black people have faced on this continent since the transatlantic slave trade. This is a country where Black people must question if the people tasked with protecting them will do so. This is a nation where Black parents must question expanding their families, knowing that childhood is not a shield from anti-Black violence. This is a democracy that Black people built, although it does not seem to cover my Black siblings the same way it covers me.

As a white person, I am often at a loss for words when I see racism. I'm afraid I'll say something wrong. But this is not a moment to "say nothing." White people, join with me in not only saying that Black Lives Matter, but also in examining our unconscious biases and actions that run counter to this statement. Tell your Black friends, loved ones and family you know they are hurting, without demanding any particular response, and without condemning responses that you may think are "too" anything. Black people are not being too loud, too angry, or too demanding—they are responding to centuries of racism that is ingrained in every part of this nation. The distress, rage, sadness, and fear they bottle up every day is both visible and theirs to own and express. Acknowledge their pain without policing their tone or behavior.

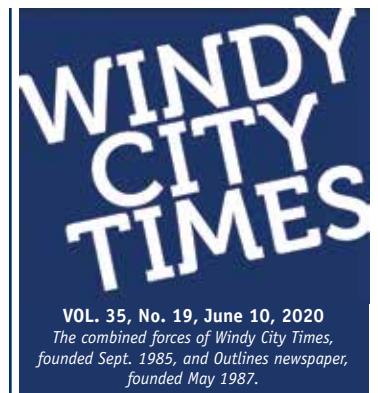
This is also a moment for white-led nonprofit organizations to be vocal in our solidarity and intentional in our actions in support of Black communities. Especially when much of our work must center Black people to truly achieve our missions.

The protests of the last week have also reminded me of the privilege I have as a white person. I can walk down the street or, lie in my bed without being worried I'll be shot. I can bird-watch, drive my car or go for a jog without fear—all things that Black people must consider. Every day.

I ask that we take time today and this week to grieve and care for one another. We are not OK, and we will not be OK for some time to come.

*In compassion and solidarity,  
John Peller  
President/CEO*

*P.S.: If you are someone living with or vulnerable to HIV, and in need of mental health services, emergency food, assistance with paying rent, medical care and other needs, call 844-HUB-4040 or learn more at <https://www.aidschicago.org/page/our-work/care-services/hiv-resource-hub>.*



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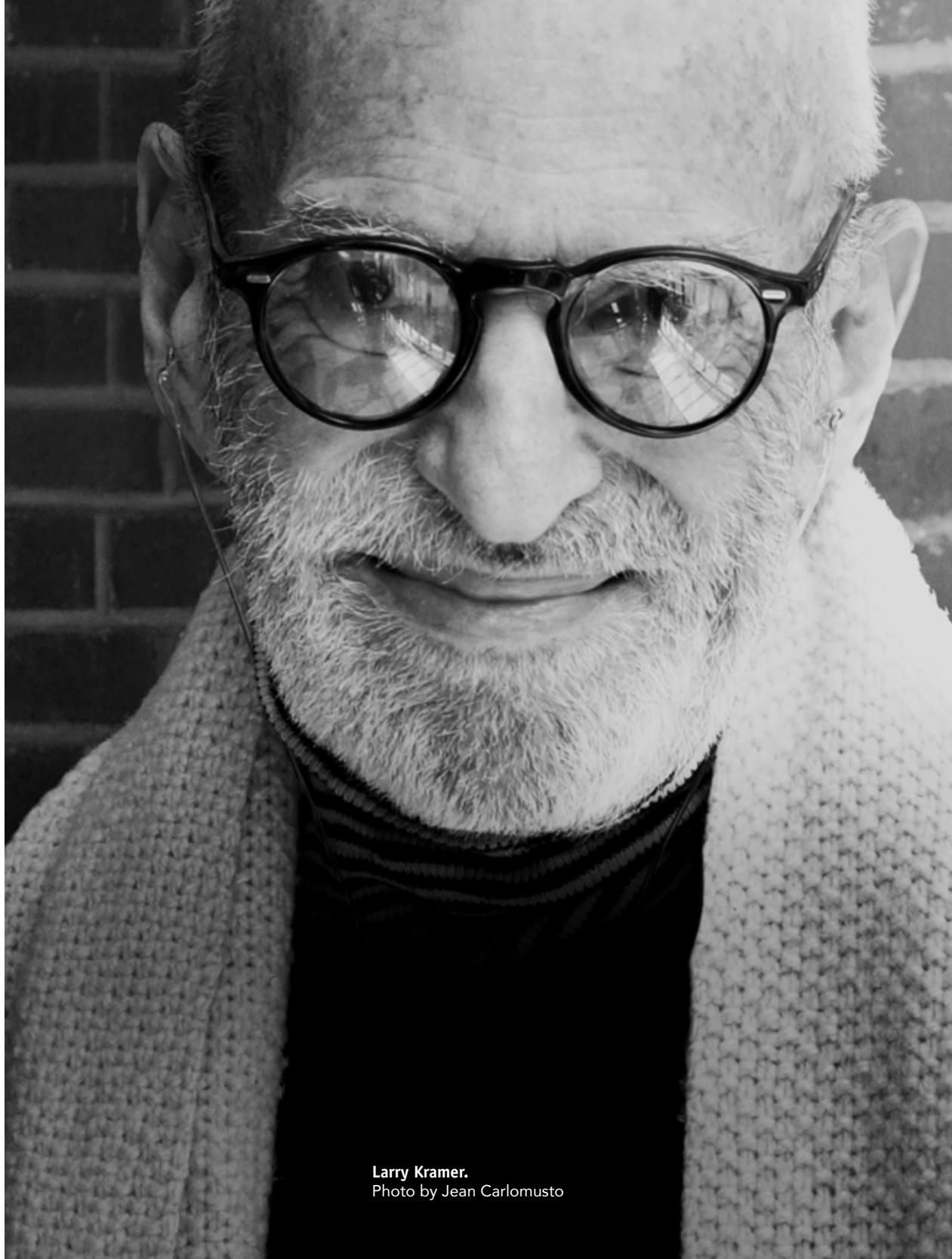
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# ARTS + THEATER



**Larry Kramer.**  
Photo by Jean Carlomusto

## Larry Kramer (1935-2020): Polemicist and playwright

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Larry Kramer was an angry man and he made sure people knew it. The language of his public discourse—the hundreds of articles he wrote and speeches he made, his novels and plays—drips with venom, insult, sarcasm, accusation, curse, self-righteousness, exaggeration, provocation and plea.

It's remarkable, then, that in private he could be exceptionally soft-spoken and self-effacing without any of the ringing rhetoric one associates with him. That's the way he was some years ago when I interviewed him in his hotel room—just the two of us talking and drinking tea without a publicist or handler. His intelligence and commitment were obvious, as were his passion and dissatisfaction with so much he saw around him. Yes, his anger was apparent, too, but it had a much more gracious face in our one-on-one setting and even came with kindness, smiles and generosity. You see, Larry Kramer was a professional polemicist and provocateur, and words were his skill set, his toolkit, his weapons—but they were not all of who he was.

AIDS made Kramer an activist, an organizer, a political figure, and a lightning rod for dissent, opposition and suasion. He gained the experience to do these things as a multitasking film writer and movie producer, which was his work in the 1960s and 1970s, and which made him financially secure. In part, his financial independence allowed him to dedicate his very considerable energy, drive and focus to the cause of AIDS activism. One facet of that activism was playwriting.

The critical reception for Kramer's early plays was checkered, and at one point in the 1970s he vowed he'd never write for theater again. However, the AIDS crisis changed his mind in 1984 and he remained devoted to the art form. He did not write the first play about AIDS (that honor belongs to the late Chicago/Milwaukee playwright Jeff Hagedorn and his play, *One*) but he wrote one of the first successful plays about AIDS, *The Normal Heart*, which opened at the Public Theatre in New York in May 1985, just weeks after William M. Hoffman's *As Is* also opened successfully off-Broadway.

These two works became the first widely produced dramas about the AIDS pandemic. They are successful because both Hoffman and Kramer wisely chose to frame their passionate political arguments (especially Kramer) in human terms. Both plays are structured around enduring gay relationships, and the loss and devastation wrought by AIDS.

*The Normal Heart* first was seen in Chicago in a brilliant 1986 production at the Next Theatre Company, in Evanston. The production won four Joseph Jefferson Awards, among them the Jeff for Outstanding Production. Eric Simonson—long before he won an Oscar and

**Turn to page 17**

**STREAMING  
THEATER REVIEW**
**Cymbeline: A Folk  
Tale With Music**

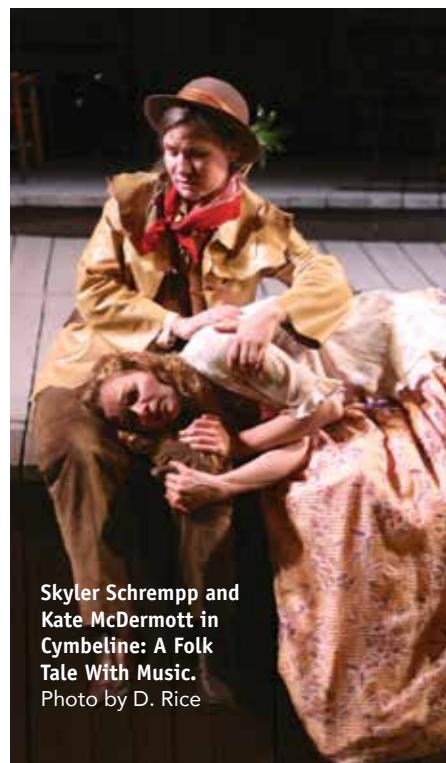
Playwright: William Shakespeare  
At: First Folio Theatre streaming  
online at [FirstFolio.org](http://FirstFolio.org)  
Tickets: \$20  
Runs through: June 14

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

If Shakespeare hadn't written it, would any theater still choose to grapple with the challenges presented by a story cataloguing its author's collection of twists and gimmickry?

It's an inventory encompassing contentious monarchs, runaway princesses, long-lost siblings, exiled courtiers, evil stepmothers, apothecarial mercenaries, dream sequences, purloined letters, fake death reports, eleventh-hour confessions, cross-dressing damsels, boastful swains wagering their sweethearts' chastity, and villains granted undeserved forgiveness (or a decent burial, at least).

How do you render this screwball—and nowa-



June 10, 2020

days disturbingly sexist—comedy appealing to playgoers of more emancipated sensibilities? Well, you can declare it a fairy tale, as most modern companies do, and proceed to drown its retro silliness in likewise retro spectacle, or you can adopt David Rice's solution to clearing away the narrative clutter, which is to relocate the action to surroundings immediately recognizable to his audiences—by virtue of Hollywood lore, if not personal memory.

The playbill now informs us that the year is 1863 and we are in West Virginia, where "King" Cymbeline reigns over his remote Appalachian empire, its isolation preserving customs largely unchanged from the England of Shakespeare's time. The unlikelihood of the events arising from the landowner's refusal to assist in the war effort—despite the exhortations of "Mister Lincoln"—and the machinations of his scheming wife can thus be attributed to the frontier morality reflected in that quintessential U.S. literary genre, the tall tale. Further familiarizing us with our dramatic environment is the score of ballads supplied by Rice and Music Director Michael Keefe, featuring lyrics based in the Bard's text and bluegrass-tinged melodies performed live on stage by a string band whose arrangements include such indigenous instruments as washboard

percussion and crockery-jug tuba.

The proximity of genuine flora and fauna provided by First Folio's site on the wooded grounds of the Mayslake Peabody estate proved a mixed blessing the night this production was recorded during the 2013 season. To be sure, no rain fell during the course of the two hour-plus evening, but evening breezes can be seen to set feathers to trembling, fabric to flapping and—that chronic hazard of outdoor theater—portions of speeches wafted away on air-currents. Mostly, though, the close-up videography facilitates an intimacy discouraging the propensity of Yankee patrons to sneer at characters whose accents too easily evoke xenophobic stereotypes. (Director Michael Goldberg and dialect consultant Jason K. Martin are both to be commended for individualizing the regionalisms to reflect the personality and status of the speakers.)

Just as no CD can replicate the actual concert experience, so are couches and laptops doomed to fall short of full pantheistic immersion, but those seeking to enhance their sensory perceptions can always move their television screens to the patio/balcony/backyard, light the citronella candles, and bask in the scent of DEET and taste of warm chardonnay.

**THEATER**

# Pride in Place Festival brings LGBTQ theater to stay-at-home audiences

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The upheaval of the Stonewall riots had barely settled before the weekend preceding Independence Day was set aside to honor the right of every citizen to love without outdated restrictions.

On that date ever since, Pride week has been celebrated with parades, pageants and joyful displays of unity. No one could have predicted that 2020 would usher in a return of the dark days when communal revels would once again be fraught with menace sourced, not in social reproach, but born of an airborne contagion even more wanton than that ravaging the LGBTQ community 40 years prior.

The creative minds keeping Chicago in the vanguard of artistic innovation have a long history of adapting to unforeseen circumstances, however, promptly turning to wireless computer technology to supply audiences confined to their homes with entertainment spectacle by means of "virtual" transmission. Pride Films and Plays takes this experience a step further with the Pride In Place festival—a selection of LGBTQ plays, scored as chamber readings and streamed on live-feed Zoom by actors secured in their own respective chambers, each performance to be followed by an interactive talkback giving audiences an opportunity to further engage with the play and to

talk with the cast.

Launching with Steven Dietz's *Lonely Planet*, the second entry on the bill is *A Late Snow*, Jane Chambers' groundbreaking 1974 account of a lesbian caught up in midlife crisis. Next were two plays authored by Jonathan Tolins—the 2013 solo show *Buyer and Cellar*, featuring Scott Gryder repeating his Jeff-nominated performance in Pride's long-running 2019 production. The shows that have yet to stream are *The Last Sunday in June*, Tolins' deconstructive 2003 homage to the "Gay Play" literary genre. Concluding the series is Brad Fraser's 1989 shocker, *Unidentified Human Remains* and the *True Nature of Love*.

This last play—featuring a plot revolving upon a serial killer preying upon sybaritic young urban hipsters—might seem an odd vehicle for congratulatory testimonials on the accomplishments of gender-fluid advocates, but director Jacob Van Hoorn disagreed, reminding us that the second half of the title is as important as the first.

As described by Van Hoorn, the characters are flawed individuals "coping with their own personal tragedies." After we have watched them behave terribly toward each other, though, they come to forgive one another, extend comfort to traumatized comrades, or discover the value in allowing themselves to accept proffered affection. "The last line in the play is 'I love you'—



David Zak.  
Photo by Bob Eddy

whether this constitutes the 'true nature' of love may be debatable, but the play certainly thinks so, and so we end on a note of hope"

All of the plays in the series were carefully considered before decisions were made, Artistic Director David Zak said. The Zoom format eliminates the visual element of physical action within a stage picture, limiting the actors' interpretive tools to voices, faces and upper torsos. "We were looking specifically for language-driven plays not frequently produced. *Buyer and Cellar* first came to mind, then David Lipschutz suggested *Lonely Planet* and Jacob [Van Hoorn] brought us *Unidentified Human Remains*."

How did the playwrights take to having their plays performed in window-frame configuration? "Before I even submitted Fraser's play for consid-

eration in the Pride in Place series," recalled Van Hoorn. "I reached out to ask whether he'd mind his play being presented on Zoom. He responded with a delightful message of support, saying that he loved the idea and it had his blessing going forward!"

"We now have people across the country working with us, including a collaboration with the Senior Theater Research project," added Zak. "It's all very exciting."

Remaining shows include *The Last Sunday In June*, which streams Sunday, June 28; and *Unidentified Human Remains* and the *True Nature of Love*, which streams Wed., July 1.

All shows start at 7 p.m. Visit [PrideFilmsandPlays.com](http://PrideFilmsandPlays.com).

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# Second City co-owner leaves after theater is charged with racism

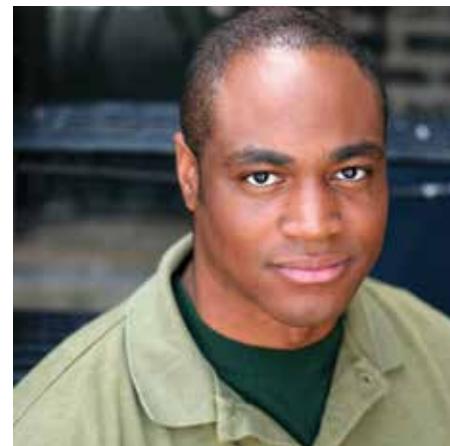
The Second City co-owner Andrew Alexander stepped away from the improv theater after charges of institutionalized racism were leveled against the company, The Chicago Tribune reported.

Dewayne Perkins, in particular, accused The Second City of racism. On Twitter, he criticized what he said was Second City's prior reluctance to fundraise for the Black Lives Matter movement without also financially supporting police-related causes.

"The Second City cannot begin to call itself anti-racist," said Alexander, 76, in a lengthy statement Windy City Times obtained. "That is one of the great failures of my life." He also said he had "failed to create an anti-racist environment wherein artists of color might thrive," saying he was "deeply and inexpressibly sorry," and adding that the next executive producer of the company would be a member of the BIPOC (Black, indigenous and people of color) community.

Second City announced June 6 that the company's new interim executive producer is Anthony LeBlanc, effective immediately.

Alexander also said, "After the fallout from the



**New Second City Interim Executive Producer Anthony LeBlanc.**  
PR photo

closure of the groundbreaking *A Red Line Runs Through It*, The Second City tried to begin to grapple with the institutionalized racism in our society and within our own walls that allowed such a traumatic event to fester and has created lasting pain for our employees and artists. However, we failed.

"There are so many things we didn't do, but one of the things we did do was to engage facilitators in the field of anti-racism. I bring this up to acknowledge that it didn't work. White employees of The Second City, myself included, participated in regular sessions taking place over months which outlined in detail the inherent biases in white society, and how those, consciously and unconsciously, oppress BIPOC. Two years ago, I learned about one of the pillars of what I understand to be central to the Black Lives Matter movement: it is not enough to not be a racist; you must be anti-racist."

In a separate statement sent to Windy City

June 10, 2020

Times, LeBlanc said, "While The Second City has sometimes made strides in the diversity of talent performing on our stages, we have grossly fallen short when it comes to supporting that talent—and diversity at Second City—as whole.

"We must face the reality of our failings as an organization and hear the voices of our BIPOC performers, alumni, staff, students, and audience. We need to do better ... because our community deserves better. I, along with the rest of the leadership of The Second City, are committed to making fundamental and long-lasting changes to our company and the many communities we touch. I look forward to being a part of those changes and helping Second City catch up to the present, and, in turn, move [toward] a better future."

The Second City will also begin its search for a long-term executive producer, as previously announced.

Alexander became owner of the Second City flagship in Chicago in 1985, serving as executive producer for hundreds of revues.

The Tribune article is at [ChicagoTribune.com](https://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/theater/ct-second-city-new-interim-executive-producer-20200606-story.html).



**Now-former Second City co-owner Andrew Alexander (with Erica Mann Ramis).**  
Photo courtesy of The Second City

## STREAMING THEATER REVIEW Improv House Party

**Playwright:** Second City ensemble  
**At:** Second City online, at [SecondCity.com](https://SecondCity.com)  
**Tickets:** Free  
**Runs through:** June 13

BY KAREN TOPHAM

All of Chicago's theaters, along with those across the rest of the country, remain shuttered due to COVID-19, but that doesn't mean there is nothing theater-related going on in the city.

Several companies have been creating original programming for online viewing, and one of the most prolific is Second City. A quick trip to [SecondCity.com](https://SecondCity.com) will provide information about several different improvised programs under the heading "Improv House Party." I've sampled a couple of them and, while (like just about all totally improvised shows) they are uneven, they remain fun (again, like just about all improvised shows) and more than worth your time.

It's difficult to provide a real assessment of any improvised program, as by their design they are



**Helter Shelter co-host Mary Catherine Curran.**  
Photo courtesy of Second City

completely different from week to week, but I'm impressed here by what Second City is trying to do. Renowned for its ability to be creative and inventive, the company has used every bit of that capacity to provide homebound viewers all around the country (and everywhere else, for that matter) with an evening of laughter in a Zoom-

oriented world.

On Tuesdays, Improv House Party presents "Girls Night Out," an hour-long audience-interactive sketch and game show featuring Carissa Barreca, Alex Bellisle, Ashley Comeau and Sayjal Joshi, and including other guests each week. On a recent night, after Barreca complained that "lockdown is making it nearly impossible to find my soulmate, and my boyfriend agrees," the group played a game called "Date Me." Spurred by suggestions made through the chat feature, they each took on the character of someone (or something—one woman became an apple) else and vied for the attention of the audience.

After a hilariously improvised "biopic" of a volunteer audience member, they moved to a tribute to the "Fierce Female of the Week," a (real) woman who is making a difference in these difficult times, before moving on to the "Wine O'Clock News." (Maria Randazzo made a guest appearance here playing Dawna, an anti-mask activist who got kicked out of Home Goods.) Another wonderfully fun game was "World's Worst," in which the audience suggested categories for the cast to play with. (In the "film genre" category they received the suggestion of film noir, which elicited the line, "He had legs that went all the way up to

## Red Stars part of Challenge Cup, which starts June 27

The National Women's Soccer League announced May 27 that the 2020 NWSL Challenge Cup, presented by P&G and Secret, will mark the return to action for all nine clubs, including Chicago Red Stars.

The 25-game tournament will kick off Saturday, June 27, at Zions Bank Stadium in Herriman, Utah. While spectators will not be in attendance, fans can catch all the action via CBS All Access, with the opener and championship game also airing live on CBS.

This tournament marks the league's first competition since the 2019 NWSL Championship which saw the North Carolina Courage defeat the Red Stars to become back-to-back NWSL champions. In addition to the tournament's presenting sponsors P&G and Secret, the league also announced a new multi-year partnership with Verizon.

The format of the tournament will feature the league's nine clubs each playing four games in the preliminary rounds to determine seeding. The top eight teams will advance to the quarterfinals, when the tournament becomes a knockout competition. The semifinals and Final presented by Budweiser will be played at Rio Tinto Stadium in Sandy, Utah, with the championship match slated for Sunday, July 26, when the tournament MVP Award, presented by Budweiser, will also be announced.

his knees."

Thursday night's offering, "Helter Shelter," is billed as a "live, satirical, and highly interactive comedy show." Hosted by Mary Catherine Curran, Nigel Downer and Alan Linic, the show features a weekly guest cast and lots of improvised silliness centered on a topic of the week. (The one I watched was "Cautious Optimism.") It included Curran's "interview" with a baby as well as a filmed bit by Adam Schreck as a furloughed Wrigley Field hot dog vendor desperately trying to sell his wares on a sparsely populated and socially distanced sidewalk, and a song by Tricia Black about having moved in too soon with her girlfriend and being stuck in quarantine together. The improv highlight of the evening was an "Isolation Idol" hosted by "Bryan Seacrest."

These offerings (along with Saturday night's "Scriptless" and a family-friendly Thursday-morning program called "The Really Awesome Improv Show") are not at all the polished, professional entertainment that you'd find on a Second City stage, but they don't have to be. They are hugely successful at their *raison d'être*, which is giving us all a break from the overbearing news of the world. Until such a time when we can reopen our theaters, this is exactly what we need.

**KRAMER from page 13**

became a Steppenwolf ensemble member—was the director.

Kramer wrote three more plays revolving around the AIDS crisis in various ways, of which *The Destiny of Me* (1992) was the most widely produced and successful. He was working on a new play at the time of his death, *An Army of Lovers Must Not Die*, a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. If the work was far enough along, one hopes the text might be published, so we can see if Kramer's approach to a different pandemic is equally as political and personal as his AIDS-related plays.

Here's the thing: Every social or political movement needs—no, requires—polemics and at least one incredibly skilled polemicist, because the political needle never moves without pushing, shoving, shouting and influencing. Think of how Tom Paine's *Common Sense* seeded the American Revolution, or Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* supported the Abolitionist Movement. Larry Kramer held everyone's fingers to the fire—even his own—and justifiably so. He greatly inspired a generation of younger writers who followed, with Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*) perhaps chief among them.

Larry Kramer wrote only six plays, one of which never has been produced. We can only speculate and wonder how many more plays, novels and films this gifted wordsmith might have spun if writing fiction had been all he had on his mind.

## Non-Equity Jeff Awards postponed

The 2020 Non-Equity Jeff Awards program was postponed.

Originally scheduled as a virtual gathering for June 8, the organization that promotes and recognizes theater excellence has joined other arts industry groups to pause events during this time of unrest throughout the country. Plans for rescheduling will be announced at a later date to celebrate productions of the 2019-20 season.

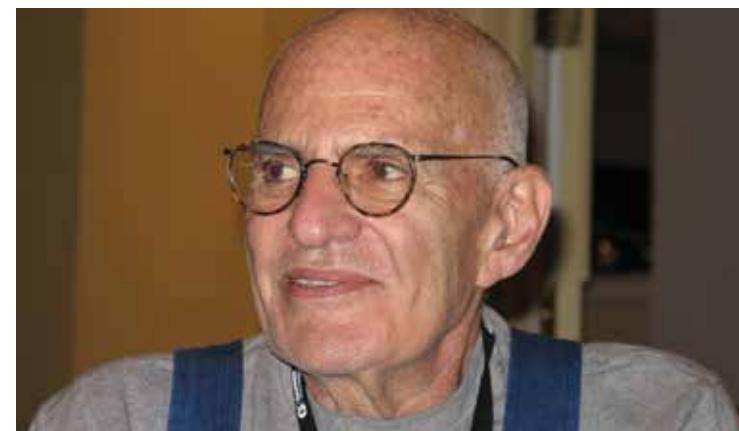
The organization also said in a statement, "The Jeff Awards stand with our colleagues in the Chicago theater community struggling through the impact of COVID-19 and the rising voices calling for an end to racial injustice. We support and promote inclusivity in the arts, business and everyday life. As the storytellers, we know what an important role theater plays in bringing diverse perspectives to life and helping people better understand each other's journeys. Black lives and opportunity, and those of all people of color, matter."

This year, the works of 31 non-Equity theater companies are showcased, with 44 productions receiving one or more nominations.

Promoting excellence in Chicago theater, The Jeff Awards began its annual recognition program in 1968. In 1973, it expanded its scope to establish the Non-Equity Wing to celebrate outstanding achievement in non-union theater.

In the end, though, writing was not his purpose but only a means; his art was subsumed by his mission. We are richer for that, and the world has changed because of his loud, constant, often shrill voice. Sometimes that's how you have to be, and what you have to do in order to move the needle. The LGBTQ world as it exists today would not be the same without Larry Kramer, who took upon himself the task of being Our Voice for 40 years. No, we didn't appoint him to the job, but it doesn't matter. He spoke Truth to Power, which we always must cherish, especially now when it's becoming a rare commodity.

Jonathan Abarbanel is *Windy City Times'* theater editor and a member of the American Theatre Critics Association.



Larry Kramer in 2007.  
Photo by Rex Wockner



# WINDY CITY TIMES

congratulates

## PUBLISHER TERRI KLINSKY

Terri joined our company in 1995 as a sales representative. She is now publisher of *Windy City Times*. She has worked tirelessly for 25 years as part of the *Windy City Media Group* family.

on her  
**25TH ANNIVERSARY**  
with our company.

Drag personality Miz Cracker drove into the spotlight by placing fifth on the 10th season of RuPaul's Drag Race. The race continues with the recent announcement that Cracker is a contestant on the fifth season of RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars.

Before the persona of Miz Cracker came along, Maxwell Heller was born in Seattle before moving to New York City. Bob the Drag Queen took Cracker under his wing and YouTube videos began spotlighting Heller's humor. The producers of Drag Race noticed, then made Cracker an international sensation from the hit reality show, bringing her brand to a major global audience.

**Windy City Times: How does it feel to be on RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars?**

**Miz Cracker:** Walking into the All Stars Werk Room, I felt like I finally had a chance to show the world what I can do. I've been waiting and it means so much.

Now it's all about the anticipation. Did I prove myself? Did I defeat my inner demons? It's exciting because I'll find out alongside everyone else.

**WCT: What can you tell our readers about All Stars?**

**MC:** Well, of course, I wouldn't want to give anything away, but I think it's safe for me to say that this is an action-packed season.

I'm talking about explosive drama on all sides. Everyone fighting tooth and nail for the crown. There's not a single quiet moment.

**WCT: How much more challenging was All Stars compared to a regular season on Drag Race?**

**MC:** When you're on All Stars, you're competing with the best of the best. Every single girl has a superpower. So you have to be at your best, all the time, without ever taking a breath. The battle isn't just on the main stage, it's in the Werk Room, too.

**WCT: How was Ricky Martin as a guest judge on All Stars?**

**MC:** Well, of course, Ricky Martin is unbelievably gorgeous. His presence in the room turned everyone into a silly mess.

**WCT: Do you speak Spanish?**

**MC:** Let's just say you're going to have to tune in to see!

**WCT: Your new tour is traveling all over the world in 2021 after being postponed?**

**Miz Cracker:** Yes. I [had] done Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Scotland, Norway, Finland and Sweden before the pandemic.

**WCT: How are fans in other areas of the world compared to the United States?**

**MC:** Much more polite! [Laughs]

**WCT: Because they keep their hands to themselves?**

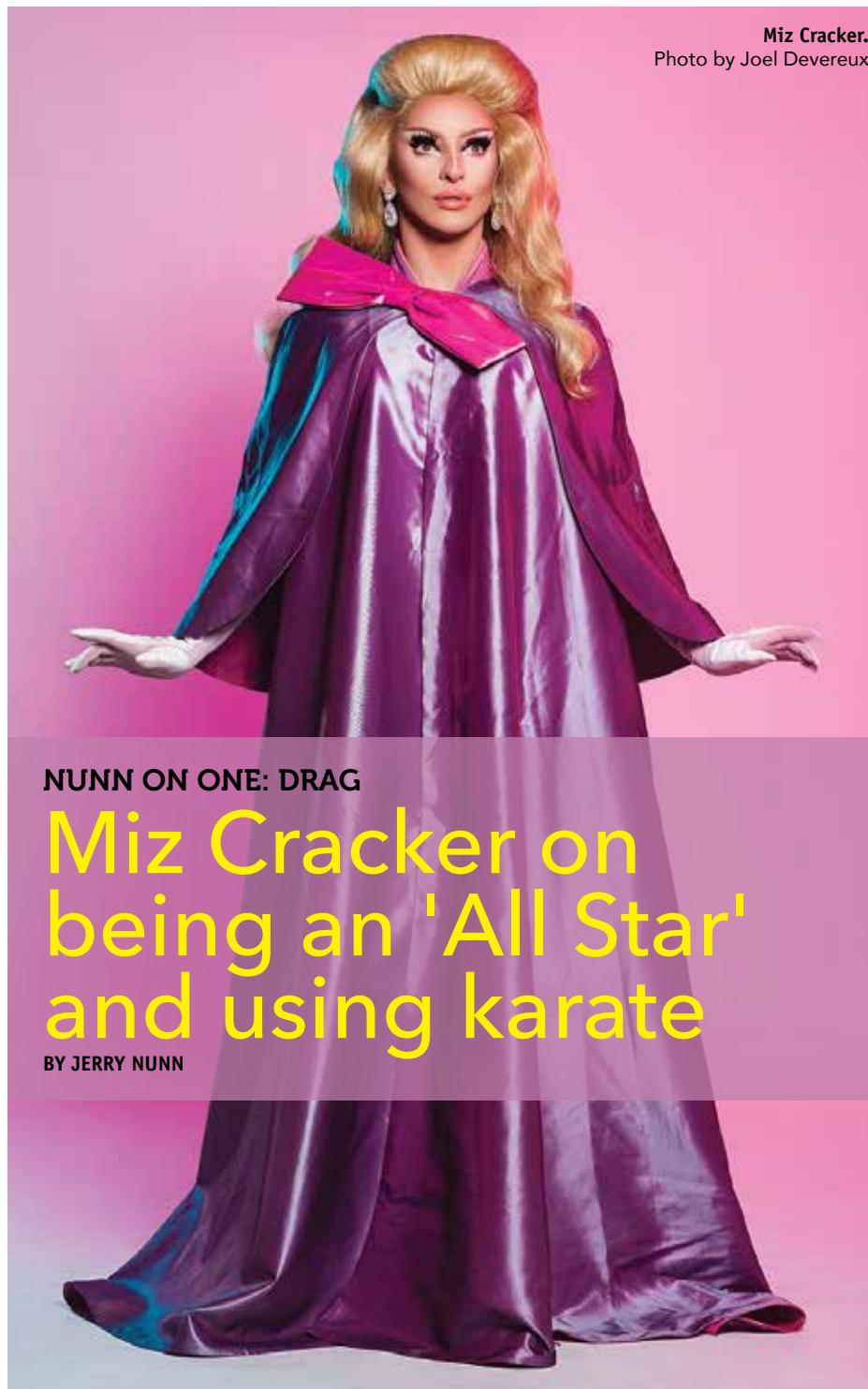
**MC:** Exactly.

**WCT: Why do people think they can touch drag queens?**

**MC:** Because we look so soft and touchable. We are padded like furniture so...

**WCT: How was putting together the show American Woman?**

**MC:** The show came together because I was in Liverpool doing a meet and greet. I stepped out of line to see who was coming to see me. It was ninety percent women. I realized I was doing my numbers and jokes for gay men like I'm in a gay bar. I'm in the international drag scene and that



**Miz Cracker.**  
Photo by Joel Devereux

**NUNN ON ONE: DRAG**

# Miz Cracker on being an 'All Star' and using karate

BY JERRY NUNN

is not my audience anymore. I needed to make a show for women. I did a bunch of research and this is what came out of that.

It's a show about what we can do to be better allies to women right now.

**WCT: Is the Lenny Kravitz song "American Woman" in the show?**

**MC:** No. I left it out of it because I often get introduced by other drag queens who do numbers before the show. I left that number for them to do.

**WCT: What songs are you doing?**

**MC:** "God Is a Woman," by Ariana Grande, and "Woman's World," by Cher, launch the show. The songs after that are less literal and explore a

huge range of issues.

**WCT: Are you talking throughout the show about feminism?**

**MC:** It's not me mansplaining feminism, but I do talk about the mistakes I have made to women and make fun of myself for it. I don't want people to repeat my mistakes.

It's about 50-percent standup comedy, 20-percent stories from my life and the rest is big-energy dance numbers.

**WCT: Any special guests for American Woman?**

**MC:** No, there's not because I have this weird thing that none of my sisters share with me. When I do a solo show, I do it alone!

**WCT: What new video projects do you have?**

**MC:** We are going to start Review with a Jew again for season 12. Hopefully, we are going to do more Bon Appetit videos because they are part of the Cracker presence in the world.

**WCT: Do you have time to work on videos while on the road?**

**MC:** No. I am working all the time on tour. I have a landmark photo series where I take pictures in front of landmarks all over the world. I have done 30 landmarks in the United States. When other people are sleeping on the bus, I get up early, put on makeup and go meet fans. If there is one thing Miz Cracker is, she is a campaigning queen!

**WCT: Drag Out The Vote continues to be a big cause for you?**

**MC:** Yes, but I am not a political queen. I am a queen that talks about personal issues from own life. People can read that as political, but it's not. I don't have a political stance to try to get people on one side or the other. I am trying to get people to think about what matters.

I think Drag Out The Vote is a great thing because it's encouraging people to vote, not to vote one way or another. People need to care and just show up.

**WCT: Did you learn karate so you could protect yourself in a fight?**

**MC:** Yes, and it was something my dad wanted for me. I started when I was five and I competed internationally until I was 20 years old. I did it for fifteen years about six hours a day. I was a black belt and national gold medalist as well.

**WCT: When you were robbed in Dublin, why didn't you use karate on the thief?**

**MC:** I wanted to, but I was in heels! [Laughs] I started off running after the guy, but I had six-inch heels and the cobblestones were so deep that it was all over.

**WCT: I went to Dublin recently and had a great time.**

**MC:** Oh, they were so sweet and very apologetic for that happening to me.

**WCT: Do you keep in touch with any cast members from your season of Drag Race?**

**MC:** Absolutely. I was just talking to The Vixen yesterday. We talk pretty much every day.

**WCT: How do you compare New York drag queens to Chicago drag queens?**

**MC:** New York drag queens will give up any accessory to perform comfortably. In Chicago if they can't move, it's fine. They are going to wear that look.

I think when the two come together, that's when it's beautiful. You will have the looks and the performance at the same time. The two cities really challenge each other in that respect. New York and Chicago are the two drag powerhouses that I love the most.

**WCT: What was your takeaway from RuPaul's Drag Race, overall?**

**MC:** Don't be afraid, because fear is going to get in your way. Usually what you are afraid of is not as bad as fear itself. I wanted to let go of being nervous and afraid, so here I am again!

RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars is currently airing on VH1. Miz Cracker's American Woman is currently postponed until winter 2021 with up to date ticket information at Cracker2020.com.

## Artists unveil mural honoring LGBTQ people

Chicago artists Andy Bellomo and Sandra Antongiorgi virtually unveiled a new mural that highlights queer artists of color who use their life's work to improve community well-being and create social change.

"Rebirth" is the second of a collaborative mural series representing people who are uplifting the LGBTQ community in unique ways.

"Rebirth" honors Sky Cubacub, a past Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honoree and founder of Rebirth Garments—a clothing line aimed at creating gender non-conforming wearables and accessories for people on the full spectrum of gender, size and ability. Cubacub—a nonbinary queer and disabled Filipinx—creates handmade garments that allow people to confidently express their individuality and identify while feeling comfortable in their own skin.

The work consists of paint, spray paint and non-woven media.

The new mural is on exhibit at Flood's Hall, an independent, volunteer-run nonprofit in Hyde Park dedicated to supporting civic-minded groups, artists and organizers on the South Side. Flood's Hall provided funding for the mural. See a virtual tour of "Rebirth" via Instagram @andybmix and @santongiorgi.



"Rebirth" mural, with Andy Bellomo (left) and Sandra Antongiorgi.  
Photo courtesy of Tiger Hodge



## BILLY Masters

"Alone we can achieve so little; together we can achieve so much." —**Tiffany Trump**. Actually, the Trump spawn was quoting Helen Keller—because, when I think of one, I automatically think of the other. Tiff's tweet had the hashtags #Blackout-Tuesday and #JusticeForGeorgeFloyd. It's a lovely sentiment, but bear in mind she also retweets her dad's posts.

For years, people have whispered that **Lindsey Graham** is gay. I can't say he is or isn't—I never fucked him (but that's hardly a litmus test). The Republican senator from South Carolina was the target of claims initiated by **gay porn star Sean Harding**: "There is a homophobic republican senator who is no better than Trump who keeps passing legislation that is damaging to the lgbt and minority communities. Every sex worker I know has been hired by this man. Wondering if enough of us spoke out if that could get him out of office?" Sean then tweeted, "I cannot do this alone. If you'd be willing to stand with me against LG please let me know." LG stands for "Lady Graham"—allegedly the nickname hookers use for Lindsey. Harding added that every news network wants to interview him, and high-profile attorneys are offering their services. If Sean offers his services, I'm in!

Why is this all happening now? I don't believe it's Graham's support for El Presidente. Nor do I think it's his seemingly racist views. I believe it's because, for the first time since becoming a senator (in 2003), he is in danger of losing his job. Many polls predict that a young, Black Democrat could beat Lindsey in November. Days after this column comes out, South Carolina will have its primary. When the dust settles, **Jaime Harrison** will likely be the Democratic nominee. Some suggest this would not be the first time Graham would be up against a young, Black man—but to make such a claim would be beneath me. It also may not be the first time Graham was beneath a young, Black man!

Then there's **Lea Michele**, who I always heard



Andy Cohen (above) and Anderson Cooper didn't have all the answers, according to Billy.  
Photo courtesy of Fox

was "difficult." Then we heard from **Samantha Ware**, who appeared on Glee. In response to a tweet Lea made last week about standing with the protesters, Ware wrote (in all CAPS, which I will change): "Remember when you made my first television gig a living hell? Cause I'll never forget. I believe you told everyone that if you had the opportunity you would 'shit in my wig' amongst other traumatic microaggressions that made me question a career in Hollywood." Similar stories were shared by **Amber Riley**, **Melissa Benoist**, **Alex Newell** and **Willam Belli**.

Michele's response? "Whether it was my privileged position and perspective that cause me to be perceived as insensitive or inappropriate at times or whether it was just my immaturity and

me just being unnecessarily difficult, I apologize for my behavior and for any pain which I have caused. We can all grow and change and I have definitely used these past several months to reflect on my own shortcomings." This sounds kinda like an apology I once gave to a close friend: "I don't know what you're angry about, and I don't think I did anything wrong. But I'm sorry you're upset." Thanks ... no thanks.

I suspect we'll hear more about Lea this week on "Billy Masters LIVE!." On Thursday, June 11, we'll be celebrating LA Pride 50. Momma will be co-hosting with me, since we co-hosted the festivities in West Hollywood for years. We'll be joined by many people who worked with us both onstage and behind the scenes—including the aforementioned Willam Belli. And on Tuesday, June 9, #BMLive will be celebrating the life of Joan Rivers. Many people who worked with Auntie Joan will be sharing anecdotes—including Charles Busch and Jackie Beat. Tune in on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com)/TV.

Continuing our celebration of Pride Month, last week was a dragapalooza on Billy Masters LIVE! Over our two shows, we had **Frank DeCaro** discussing his book *Drag: Combing Through the Big Wigs of Show Business*, and four of the greatest exponents of the art form—**Lady Bunny**, **Lypsinka**, **Simply Barbra** and **Jimmy James**. And, for the first time in 16 years, I publicly celebrated my anniversary to **gay porn legend Kurt Young**. You can see all of those shows on our website or on our YouTube channel, **Billy Masters TV**.

**Anderson Cooper** and **Andy Cohen** were responsible for two of the most enjoyable hours of television I had in a long time. The duo appeared on the finale of *Celebrity Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*. First Cooper was in the hot seat, aided by Cohen. Then they switched positions—which is a recurring fantasy I have about one of them. Anderson walked away with \$500K going to provide Kevlar vests for police dogs, while Cohen only made \$32K for Planned Parenthood. In his defense, all three of us got that last question wrong.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Gary in Maine. "Did you see **Jason Derulo** as Spider-Man? What is it about him and his penis? Why is he always showing it off?"

If you had Jason Derulo's penis, wouldn't you

be showing it off? In the video, Jason is winched into a snug Spider-Man costume, which features something Tobey Maguire never had—a large, cylindrical mass cutting across his nether regions. Perhaps we should feel sorry for Derulo. Maybe he's one of those guys who is simply always hard. I've known men like this—such a burden, as you'll see on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

When Derulo is shooting something other than spider webs, it's definitely time to end yet another column. What is that milky white substance? Check it out at [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com)—the site that is lactose-free. However, we're not fun-free. On Mondays, this column comes out. Then we have new episodes of "Billy Masters LIVE!" every Tuesday and Thursday. Plus you can see all of the past episodes if you subscribe (for free) to **Billy Masters TV** on YouTube. You want more? No problem. Just send a note to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com), and I promise to get back to you before Lady Graham decorates her office to resemble *Downton Abbey*! 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

### Less is more for out chef Art Smith during pandemic

BY ANDREW DAVIS

When life hands you lemons, you make lemonade. Just ask Art Smith.

During the coronavirus pandemic—the culinary expert who has cooked for luminaries such as Oprah Winfrey, the Obamas and Nelson Mandela—has employed a healthful plan that has resulted in him losing 80 pounds in four months.

The weight loss is due to a change in dietary habits and workout routine—implemented by trainer/rugby player Lucas Cancelier, who stopped by the Florida home of Smith and his family (including husband Jesus Salgueiro) months ago. Cancelier has ended up being quarantined with the Smith/Salguero household since then.

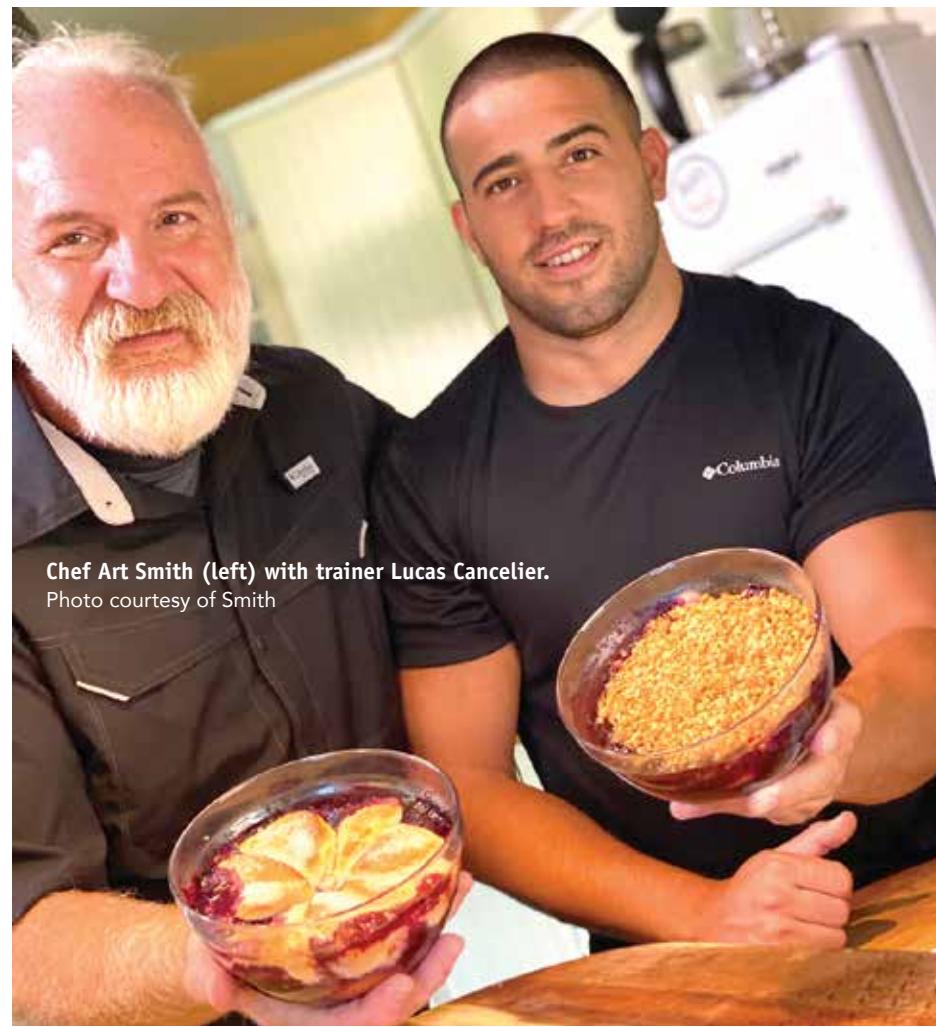
And so that others can become more healthy, Smith has an Instagram cooking show (*Healthy Comfort*—the same name as his 2013 book) and Cancelier has posted workout routines on his Instagram account. (Their accounts are @thechefartsmith and @iamdapower, respectively.)

"It's time to show multiculturalism, how people can come together and make delicious food," Smith told Windy City Times. "I think the message should be loud and clear."

Smith's weight-loss journey started when Cancelier stopped by from Spain on his way to his native Argentina. However, the visit coincided with a pivotal (and depressing) point in Smith's life: He had just turned 60.

"I was just at a point," he said. "But the way you feel about yourself is the way you see the world."

However, this recent weight loss is not the first. A few years ago, Smith lost more than 100



Chef Art Smith (left) with trainer Lucas Cancelier.

Photo courtesy of Smith

pounds.

"After that weight loss, I got a show after appearing on *Top Chef Masters*," Smith said. "Then, I filmed 18 episodes—but it turned out they didn't like the new skinny Art Smith, and cancelled the show." That, Smith added, resulted in him basically eating his feelings—and eventually putting on the weight he had dropped.

Then he was offered another show—this time with him and singer Toni Braxton cooking together. However, that project fell through as

well.

However, Smith is back on a healthful track. Regarding the *Healthy Comfort* show, people can watch Smith (and also learn) to cook dishes like salmon croquettes as well as shrimp and grits. "It's part entertainment, but people are learning to make dishes. People send me photos of the dishes and share memories. [Cancelier] also loves to cook, but he does healthy versions."

Smith's workout regimen consists of light daily workouts, Cancelier said. "You only need about

### Dance for Life going digital Aug. 10-15

Chicago Dancers United (CDU)—which works to improve the lives of dance professionals through holistic wellness programs and provide financial support to those diagnosed with critical health needs—announced that Dance for Life 2020 will shift from a live performance to a digital event due to social distancing guidelines from the state of Illinois and the city of Chicago.

The event takes place Aug. 10-15 through CDU's website, [ChicagoDancersUnited.org](http://ChicagoDancersUnited.org). All donations will be welcome.

"Dance for Life 2020: United as One" will feature works archived from Dance for Life performances during the past 29 years, including the annual Partner Dance Companies—Giordano Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and The Joffrey Ballet—as well as Hanna Brichtson and Dancers, Chicago Dance Crash, Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater, Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Theatre, Luna Negra Dance Theater, Muntu Dance Theatre, River North Dance Chicago, Thodos Dance Chicago, Visceral Dance Chicago, and a collaborative work by Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Ensemble Espanol and Trinity Irish Dance Company.

The culminating event—featuring live remarks by CDU representatives and a world premiere choreographed by Hanna Brichtson in response to COVID-19, with dancers from throughout the Chicago area—will take place Saturday, Aug. 15, commemorating the originally planned date for the 29th anniversary of Dance for Life at the Auditorium Theatre. People can see it will be available for a minimum donation.

All programming is subject to change. See [ChicagoDancersUnited.org](http://ChicagoDancersUnited.org).

Dance for Life.  
Photo by Todd Rosenberg



30 minutes a day—but that goes by so fast," he added. "After training, you feel better. People have told me how much better they feel after two weeks."

Smith also talked with Windy City Times that he's had women mentor him his entire life, including his mother, Leela Curry (who Smith said "raised him as a child") and Winfrey. Curry "would see the riots in the late '60s and say, 'People have got to learn to love.'" Winfrey, Smith said, told him to "look and see how fortunate" he was.

As for the protests that have swept the world over the past days, they also weighed on his mind. "Sometimes it takes horrible things to get people to pay attention," he said. "Gay people have [also] been used to drama—but it's like Michelle Obama says: 'When they go low, we go high.' If we stay in that place where nothing is accomplished, then nothing gets better. Someone said to me, 'Pride is a protest, and it started with a protest—the Stonewall Riots.' It's about equality for everyone."

"The Florida town I live in has a very diverse population, but 30 percent lives in poverty. So it's me, Jesus and the four kids living in this rural town. The only way to get people around the table is to feed them, you know? During the civil-rights era, you had the church women who fed all those people. I always say, 'There are no angry people—just hungry people.'

"I have something to say. It just involves feeding people."

Shifting to dining spots, he said, "With these small restaurants, it's like you're reopening them. You have to train staff. But so many communities have been created or improved by having small restaurants there. That's why we need to keep them. They're like churches or sporting events, where people come together."

And don't worry about Smith losing his Chicago connections. He and Salguero still have their Kenwood home, and Smith is still involved with Gold Coast spots Blue Door Kitchen and Chicago q. However, he ended things on a tantalizing note: "I have another restaurant coming to Chicago—and it's a big one."

To see two recipes Smith exclusively provided to Windy City Times, visit [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

## BAMtheatre holding virtual classes

In response to the stay-at-home and social distancing orders implemented by the COVID-19 pandemic, BAMtheatre has reimagined its musical theatre-focused programming through a host of virtual master classes, workshops, choirs and other activities to keep students connected.

This new sector of programming is called **BAM @ a Distance** and has been in operation since March. BAM has announced four new classes for summer called **BAM @ a Distance – School's Out Edition!** The new line-up includes:

—Broadway Masters: Every Monday at 6:30-8:30 p.m. CT, BAMtheatre presents Broadway Masters, five master classes with industry-leading professionals including Broadway stars and New York casting directors. Each class also includes a seminar led by Chicago actors Ryan Naimy and Patrick Hill on how to best prepare for the professional theater industry.



Benton Whitley.  
PR photo

Teachers will include Benton Whitley (Stewart Whitley casting director, on June 15), Corey Cott (Jack Kelly in Broadway cast of *Newsies*, on June 22), Christy Altomare (Sophie in original Broadway cast of *Mamma Mia!*, on June 29) and Holly Buczek (Wojcik | Seay casting director, on July 6).

—Broadway Choreo Spotlight: Every Tuesday through July 7, 7-9 p.m. CT, students will learn choreography from Broadway's hottest shows virtually. This five-week dance intensive is taught by Chicago choreographer and actor Isaiah Silvia-Chandley.

—Improv Electric: Every Wednesday at June 10-July 8, 4-5 p.m. CT, Improv Electric will solidify students' improv skills. This class will be co-taught by Claire Drews and Jim Mourey, who both received their training through Second City's Conservatory program.

—Virtual Show Choir: BAM's final program in the new edition of **BAM @ a Distance** is a Virtual Show Choir will be led by music director Peter Bromann. One of the first virtual show choir programs to hit the nation, this class will meet on Fridays on June 12-July 10 at 4-5 p.m. CT. Over five weeks, students will learn the music and choreography for two show choir numbers. The final performance will be live streamed for friends and family to watch.

See [BAMtheatre.com](http://BAMtheatre.com).

June 10, 2020

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@windycitytimes

# Drag community to march in solidarity with #BlackLivesMatter movement

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Chicago's drag community will hold a protest march, "Drag March for Change," in solidarity with the #BlackLivesMatter movement Saturday, June 14, at 5 p.m. The march will step off at Belmont Avenue and Halsted Street and end at Grace Street and Halsted, in Chicago's Boystown neighborhood.

Organizer Jo MaMa aka Joe Lewis has called on the entire drag community and their allies to join the march. Among the speakers scheduled to participate are RuPaul's Drag Race veterans Dida Ritz and The Vixen as well as local drag personality Lucy Stoole.

"I would like everyone to know that this is a peaceful march in support of the #BlackLivesMatter movement and that all Black trans lives matter," Lewis told Windy City Times. "This is a protest, not a parade, and only together can we spur on lasting impactful change to end the plague of racism that has infected our world."

Lewis also said that attendees will not need to be dressed in drag. However, he urged everyone to wear a mask due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to de-escalate any situation that might arise to ensure that the protest remains peaceful.

Lewis added he didn't want to get into specifics about the march's goals because things are changing every day.

Jo MaMa (aka Joe Lewis) at June 1 #BlackLivesMatter North Side Chicago march. Photo by Steven M. Koch



# WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

## Wed., June 10

**Virtual Therapy Group** Therapy group for trans, gender non-conforming and nonbinary people. [behavioralhealth@centeronhalsted.org](mailto:behavioralhealth@centeronhalsted.org) 4 and 6 p.m. By phone 773-472-6469, ext. 460 <http://centeronhalsted.org>

**Andersonville Farmers Market ordering opens** Shopper pick-up Wednesdays after ordering online on Fridays using the hosting platform WhatsGood. Market through Wed., Oct. 21 3:00pm - 7:00pm On Catalpa Avenue between Clark Street and Ashland Ave <http://Andersonville-Market.org>

## Thursday, June 11

**SAGE webinar: Programming for LGBT Elders: COVID-19 Challenges and Solutions** Learn how national and local



### FEST CASE SCENARIO June 20-21

A virtual version of Chicago Pride Fest will take place.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

## June 10, 2020

experts are rising to the challenge of providing programming and meeting the needs of LGBT elders during the pandemic and beyond. Free. 2 p.m. ET 1:00pm Online <http://bit.ly/2X8k204>

## Friday, June 12

**Chicago Gay Men's Chorus ABBA and Beatles shows online** Watch 2010 spring show ExtrABBAganza and/or 2013 production of All You Need Is Love through June 28. Donate to view. 6:00pm Online at <http://www.cgmc.org/watchourshows/>

**Home: A Midsommarfest Experience & Fundraiser virtual event** Andersonville Chamber of Commerce (ACC) has officially canceled the postponement of Midsommarfest previously rescheduled for the weekend of Aug. 21-23 and replaced it with an online event. 16 Candles and The Voice finalist Katie Kadan, host Molly Callinan of the local band Catfight. Pre-show 6 p.m. Full program at Andersonville at Home: A Midsommarfest Experience & Fundraiser on Facebook 6:00pm Online at <http://andersonville.org/midsommarfest>

## Saturday, June 13

**Chicago Alternative Comics Expo POSTPONED CAKE** proposed date June 2021. Also postponing 2020 CAKE Art Auction fundraiser until a time when it is safe to gather, later in 2020 10:00am - 6:00pm

Broadway Armory, 5917 N Broadway <http://www.cakechicago.com/blog/cake-2020-postponed>

**Can't Stop Our Pride: One Day One Illinois** Equality Illinois statewide Pride broadcast. LGBTQ people everywhere in the state can celebrate Pride together during a statewide Pride celebration broadcast. Interfaith service, family story hour, cooking and mixology classes led by LGBTQ chefs and bartenders, performances from local LGBTQ artists, and interviews with national LGBTQ and allied leaders, like U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, former presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg and leaders in Bloomington-Normal, Carbondale, Champaign-Urbana, Chicago, Peoria, the Quad Cities and Springfield. \$25 12:00pm Online Tickets: <https://www.equalityillinois.us/2020/05/cant-stop-our-pride-one-day-one-illinois>

**Mandala Makers Festival** South Asian Performing Arts showcase emerging artists working within and beyond South Asian traditions and culture. Rehearsal footage, testimonials, short films and live collaborations, talk-backs 7:00pm - 9:00pm Online <http://mandalaarts.org>

## Sunday, June 14

**Drag March for Change** Participants will lead a peaceful (non-violent) protest march in support of Black Lives Matter and demand justice for victims of police

brutality and excessive force. People do not need to be in drag to attend. People are urged to wear face masks. Questions [jomamasayshi@gmail.com](mailto:jomamasayshi@gmail.com) or "Drag March for Change" on Facebook 5:00pm - 7:00pm Starting at the corner of Halsted St. and 800 W. Belmont Ave.

## Monday, June 15

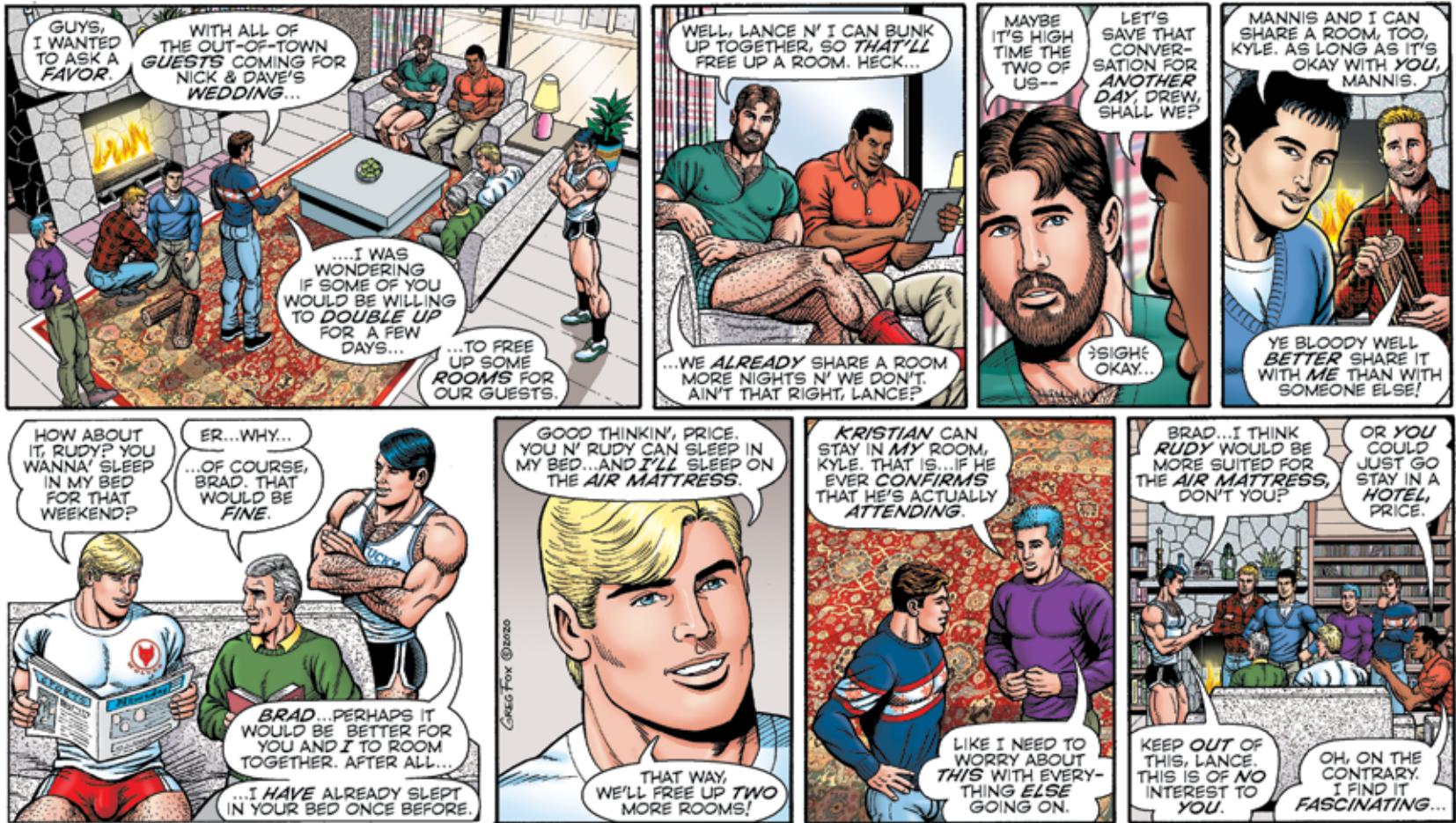
**Bi Movie Night: The Cakemaker** Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago Meetup. After the death of his Israeli lover, a cakemaker flies to Israel to comfort his lover's wife, only to fall in love with her. Link to film on Netflix Chrome will be provided as the date approaches. 10:00am - 12:00pm Online <http://meetup.com>

## Saturday, June 20

**Virtual Chicago Pride Fest** Northalsted Business Alliance brings Boystown to the world with a virtual streaming Chicago Pride Fest® celebrating the love, life and diversity of Chicago's LGBTQ+ community. Live streaming Twitch event will feature a full line-up with entertainment, activism, greetings and more. Donations during the streaming will benefit the Center on Halsted and Howard Brown Health. 7:00pm - 9:00pm. Online at <http://virtualchicagopride.com>

# KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



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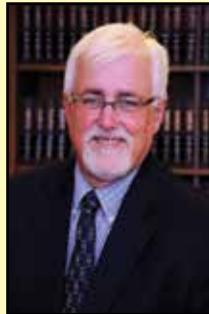
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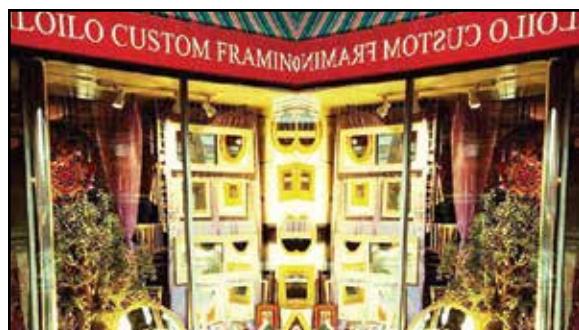


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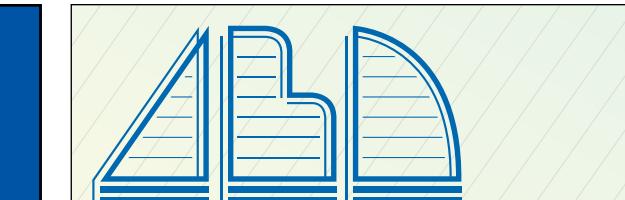
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