

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

VOL 35, NO. 22

JULY 22, 2020

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BUFF CARMICHAEL

WCT series with the activist concludes.

Photo photo courtesy of Carmichael



4



FOLLOW THE 'LEADER'

Local activist Wanda B. talks about new book, *Leader by Fault*.

Photo courtesy of Wanda B.

18

'HALL' OF FAME

Personality Jaida Essence Hall on upcoming "Drive 'N Drag" show.

Photo courtesy of Brandon Voss



13

TPAN

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Chicago House



AIDS
FOUNDATION
CHICAGO

IN THE MIX

WCT surveys LGBTQ+ groups on areas of inclusion, change

PAGE 8

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INDEX

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NEWS

Buff Carmichael talks downstate activism	4
MWRD passes inclusive policies	5
Obits: Weeks, Zumstein, Oliver	6
AIDS conference on link between HIV, COVID-19	7
SPECIAL: Diversity in local LGBTQ organizations	8
Ex-enlistee claims anti-trans discrimination	10
Petition urges Boystown name change	11
Mark S. King; letter	12

ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS

Drag personality Jaida Essence Hall	13
Caroline Aaron; 'Chechnya' talk; GLAAD index	14
THEATER review: Groups of Ten or More	15
SPORTS: Amazin LeThi's show of strength	16
BOOKS: Wanda B.; review of Mary Trump book	18
NIGHTSPOTS	19
Classifieds	21
Calendar	22

UPCOMING 2020

WINDY CITY TIMES PRINT DATES:

Aug. 5, 2020	Sept. 30, 2020	Nov. 25, 2020
Aug. 19, 2020	Oct. 14, 2020	Dec. 9, 2020
Sept. 2, 2020	Oct. 28, 2020	Dec. 23, 2020
Sept. 16, 2020	Nov. 11, 2020	

online exclusives at
www.WindyCityTimes.com



SYSTEM OF HATE

A WCT piece looks at the biases and anti-LGBT zones in Poland.

Photo of activist/journalist Andy Harley (left) courtesy of Harley

FAMILY TIES



Esther Manewith (above) writes about her fond remembrances of her Uncle Charley—who chose to be himself when it was dangerous to do so.

Photo courtesy of Manewith

EVENT HORIZON

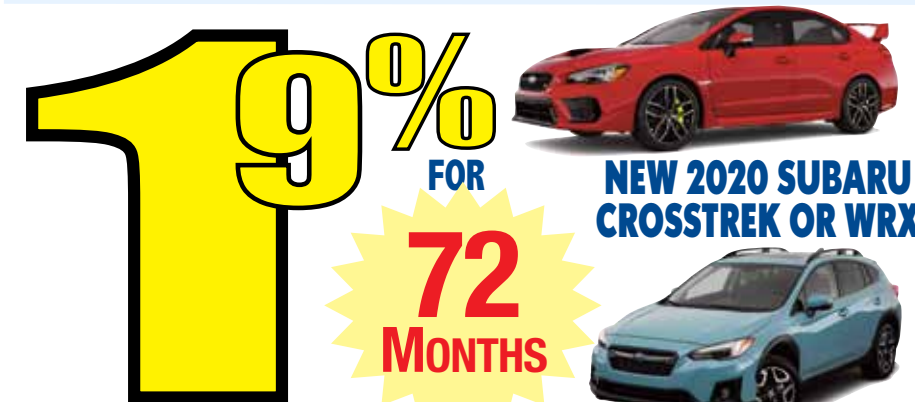
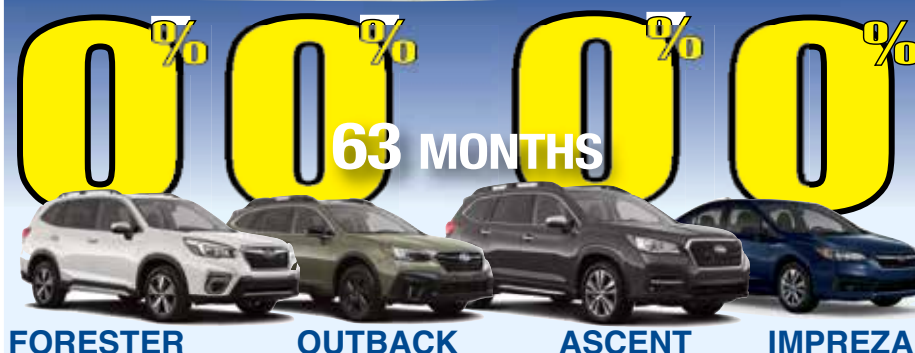
Find out about events that have been cancelled or postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Jeffrey Star, Charlize Theron and the show Survivor.

plus
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'13 Honda Civic EXAutomatic, Sunroof, 50K, Black, 24520A\$9,995	'18 Outback Prem.Auto., Eyesight, Alloys, Grey, 24634A\$22,995
'08 Honda CR-V LX AWD	Automatic, Full Power, Green Tea, 24630A\$8,995	'17 Outback Prem.Auto., Eyesight, Alloys, Silver, P6593\$20,995
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'15 Kia SoulManual, Full Power, Alien2, 21917A\$7,995	'19 Crosstrek Prem.Automatic, All-Weather, Grey, 24646A\$18,995



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Buff Carmichael talks downstate activism

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Windy City Times has been featuring remembrances by longtime Springfield-based activist Buff Carmichael, who is also the former publisher of the Prairie Flame newspaper.

In this final segment, Carmichael discusses why he was attracted to death penalty-reform work as well as his contributions to the push for marriage equality in the early 2010's.

Windy City Times: Besides LGBTQ-rights, you also have been advocating against the death penalty. How did that come about?

Buff Carmichael: I grew up in Texas. My father read the newspaper cover-to-cover, and we talked about current affairs at the breakfast table.

We were poor folks, so we didn't have summer camp. Every church in the neighborhood had "vacation Bible school." When I was five, we had talked at the breakfast table about a pending execution in Texas, and I went to vacation Bible school and they were talking about the Ten Commandments. They said, "Thou shall not kill," and I asked, "Well, what about this death penalty?"

They said, "Well, that's different. That's okay. That's a bad person that did something bad and they don't deserve to live."

That's not what the Bible says. The Bible says, "Thou shalt not kill." ... So I maintain that I started my campaign against the death penalty at age five.

When I moved my family to Dallas, it was the first time I'd lived someplace that had more than three churches. We started to look at all the things we could be involved in that you could not be involved with in a small town. I quickly found myself involved in every worthy cause in the world. I finally decided to limit myself to two causes. Those were LGBT rights and criminal-justice reform.

WCT: When did you become involved with marriage equality as a cause?

BC: In the newspaper, it was a topic that kept coming up. When Illinois was considering changing their constitution to avoid having same-sex marriage, our newspaper covered that. Anything the newspaper was covering I would up becoming involved in. I remember the morning that the Massachusetts ruling came in, I was at the printing office, getting the papers printed.

The papers clearly said that no decision had been made yet. While the papers were running, the decision was announced. Being a monthly paper, I was a month late with the news. That's the way it happened sometimes. One time I endorsed a candidate, and by the time the paper came out, he had been denounced as a spousal abuser and was not even running anymore.

I never put full-time [activism efforts] towards gay marriage until [Windy City Times owner] Tracy Baim called me and said that she was putting together a group of people to stage a march on Springfield.

At the time, I had signed on with Equality Illinois to be a field representative for the summer,



Buff Carmichael.
Photo courtesy of Carmichael

to promote people writing their legislator. All of a sudden I found myself wearing two hats that could have been a conflict of interest, because Equality Illinois was not necessarily in favor of the March on Springfield. I had to discuss that with my two groups without making the other side mad, and we worked that out. So from the summer of 2013 on, my top activism priority was marriage equality. ... Until November of that year, I ate, drank and slept marriage-equality.

WCT: What was the March itself like as an experience?

BC: There were 13 co-chairs. All of them served a function. I happened to be the only one that lived in Springfield, Illinois. ... I felt like I had an awfully big load to carry. Every time a permit needed to be filed, or a fee needed to be paid, I was the one who had to run down to the courthouse and take care of it. I was very busy in getting ready for it. I was down here by myself trying to cover all the bases.

WCT: What was the actual day of the march like?

BC: It was very interesting. We had the march on Springfield Oct. 22, and I was so dead tired that once the march started, I went home and went to bed. Once we got the rally over with, I

didn't stay for the march itself.

That week, my ISP went out of business, while I was getting 300 emails a day, so I was setting up a new email address and getting a new provider. At the same time, we had a very old dog that we had decided to let die at home. We had decided against medical care for him because he was old and tired.

We had a neighbor file a complaint against us, saying that we were starving him. He was losing weight but he was eating. So the county told me that I had 10 days to get him to the vet and get a report that said he had had medical care and that there was nothing we could do but put him down. So we had him put to sleep, as I was trying to coordinate with 12 other people about putting on a march on Springfield. It was a very hectic, tiring and tough week.

WCT: Were you there when the bill passed in the house the next month?

BC: Absolutely, and I was invited when Gov. Quinn signed it into law. I had my train ticket purchased and I woke up that morning just deathly ill. I wasted the price of ticket and I did not go. I deeply regret that.

WCT: How long before you and Jerry married?

BC: We could not marry until the following June 2. Sometime in the vicinity of April or May, we got around to considering it. So many people were going to go down and get married that first

day, and we decided that we didn't want to be a part of that. We wanted to do it the right way. We realized that the anniversary of the day we met, Sept. 20, was a Saturday that year, so what better day than our anniversary.

We almost immediately remembered a favorite campsite that we had gone to, where there was an amphitheater. ... We drove over there, looked at it again and talked to the officials at the park. We had a very nice wedding—it's on Youtube and I go back and watch it periodically.

WCT: What do you think are the most pressing concerns for LGBT folks who live downstate?

BC: Closets. What I was told when I moved to this state, I have found to be so true. I have seen so many people badly treated and harassed because they were living a lie. They weren't being harassed because they were gay, they were being harassed for living a lie. As I mentioned earlier, a man here told me that if I was honest, people would always love me.

I married a man who was from a town of 400 people. He told me that if I had moved there myself, my house would have been burned down that first weekend. But if we moved there together, we would have been just fine. They don't like queers, but he was their queer and they loved him.

It seems to me that the biggest mistake that we make is trying to hide who we are.

Affinity ED steps down shortly after being named

Effective July 9, Affinity Executive Director McKensie Mack is no longer with the organization, a press release stated.

In June, Mack was named as the new leader of Affinity, a social-justice organization serving the needs of the Black LGBTQ+ community, with a particular focus on Black women.

The release said, "It is important that we acknowledge that during McKensie's time with the organization, they expressed serious concerns about interactions with individuals associated with the organization. We extend our deepest and sincerest apologies to McKensie.

"Furthermore, we strengthen our commitment to welcome, affirm, and educate others on the identities of all individuals and ensure best practices by our representatives and agents. As an organization, we are taking time to reflect on and identify our next steps to continue our progress."

During their tenure, Mack led a campaign for Affinity's 25th-year anniversary that raised significant funds for Affinity in a short period of time, and they increased the organization's donor base by more than 500 individuals.

Affinity's board of directors will begin a search process later this month. During this time, the board will maintain operations through a shared leadership model.

For information about the upcoming job search or any of Affinity's programs, email info@affinity95.org.

Rev. Stan Sloan to leave Family Equality

The Rev. Stan Sloan—who, at one time, led the local organization Chicago House—will step down as CEO of the national group Family Equality after four years at the helm.

Sloan will leave by Thursday, Oct. 1.

A letter on the organization's website read, "Family Equality shares the news that Chief Executive Officer Stan Sloan has determined that having led the organization through a period of sustained growth in the past four years, it is the right time for him to move on to his next professional challenge."

Sloan made the following statement:

"I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work with Family Equality over the past four years, and I couldn't have asked for a more talented, enthusiastic team to tackle the challenges facing LGBTQ+ families in our country. I'm proud of the growth we've accomplished together, and believe Family Equality is poised for even stronger growth and greater impact in the years ahead.

"Family Equality has grown and evolved dramatically over the past four years: We expanded our focus to encompass LGBTQ+ family building, and will continue ramping up our capacity to serve our community with significantly expanded online resources.

"Our understanding of Family Equality's mission has also grown. It is increasingly clear that our goal of full lived and legal equality for LGBTQ+ families cannot be realized without also addressing the combined challenges of racial justice, economic justice, and gender justice."

MWRD passes policies that include LGBTs, people with disabilities

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) Board of Commissioners unanimously approved policies to assist LGBT-owned and -operated business enterprises (LGBTBE) as well as those owned and operated by persons with disabilities (BEPD) July 16 during the commissioner's monthly meeting.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the nine-to-zero vote took place virtually. MWRD President Kari K. Steele, Vice President Barbara J. McGowan and commissioners Frank Avila, Cameron Davis, Kimberly Neely Du Buclet, Marcelino Garcia, Josina Morita, Debra Shore and Mariyana T. Spyropoulos were in attendance.

The vote was the result of about a year's worth of work by Shore and Garcia to include LGBT and people with disabilities small business owners to the list of groups that already includes people of color, women and veterans.

According to the MWRD press release sent to this publication, LGBTBE and BEPD small businesses "will have the opportunity to attend MWRD vendor fairs, events, meetings and other activities that foster business opportunities."

Additionally, the policies state that MWRD will reach out to LGBTBE's and BEPD's and collect data on them as well as explore a certification process for these small business vendors from the district. The MWRD serves 10 million people daily and encompasses 882 square miles of Cook County.

"As a public agency, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District has an obligation to ensure equity and fairness in all of its operations, including procurement," said Shore in the press release sent to this publication. "This policy will improve outreach to the LGBT business community, and it will give us the information we need to ensure that all businesses have a chance to

compete on a level playing field."

"Today's action by the MWRD Board of Commissioners marks a continuation of MWRD policies toward inclusion and opportunity," said Garcia in the press release sent to this publication. "We are not only establishing new LGBTBE and BEPD policies, but we are also setting up the framework for data collection to ensure we can build a solid policy that creates future generations of opportunity for small business owners looking to join us in protecting our water environment."

"The LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois is incredibly proud of the leadership shown by President Kari Steele and the MWRD," said LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois Director Jerome' Holston in an email statement to this publication. "With their unanimous vote, this simple yet significant move expands access to business opportunities for both LGBTQ+ and disabled owned businesses. As small businesses continue to bounce back from COVID-19, we are excited to partner with MWRD and the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce in implementing a successful program, and working to create a process that will create equity and transparency in MWRD's outreach and spending in diverse communities across Cook County."

"Thank you to Commissioners Marcelino Garcia and Debra Shore for their courage and willingness to stand up for LGBTBE and BEPD business owners. Additionally, thank you to our members Roxanna Daniels, Allison Stutts and Richard Sypniewski for their advocacy efforts in championing the many diverse voices that make up the LGBTQ+ business community."

For more information, visit MWRD.org/doing-business and MWRD.org/affirmative-action.



Back row (from left): MWRD commissioners Mariyana Spyropoulos, Marcelino Garcia, Debra Shore, Josina Morita, Kimberly Du Buclet and Cameron Davis. Front row (from left): Barbara McGowan, Kari K. Steele and Frank Avila.

Photo by Dan Wendt

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COMPASS



William "Bill" Weeks.

Photo courtesy of Cremation Society of Illinois

PASSAGES

William 'Bill' Walter Weeks

William ("Bill") Walter Weeks passed away suddenly June 29.

Bill was a lifelong resident of Chicago and preceded in death by his father, Walter H. Weeks and mother, Louise J. Weeks (Devlin). He was also the beloved brother of Victoria C. Weeks, of Savannah, Georgia; Ronald B. Weeks, of Des Plaines, Illinois; and Patricia A. Weeks-Stork, of Frankfort, Illinois. He was the fond uncle of Nicole, Brian and Matthew Weeks, a great-uncle to six and a dear friend to countless others.

Bill received his bachelor's degree from Illinois State University and a master's degree from Florida State University. He was a residence hall director at Florida State and Loyola University Chicago, as well as the director of residential life at University of Illinois at Chicago. He then moved into his career as a high school teacher. An eclectic life-long learner, he continued taking courses in education, but also took classes and workshops that ran the gamut from the history of the Irish in Chicago at the Newberry Library to the art of making classic cocktails at Cindy's Rooftop Bar.

Bill worked in the Chicago Public School system for 25 years as a teacher, dean of students and, always, an educator. He worked at Jacqueline Vaughn Occupational High School, School of Entrepreneurship at the South Shore campus, Al Raby School for Community and Environment, Prosser Career Academy, and Foreman College

and Career Academy. He was instrumental in establishing Service Learning Programs, and was known for his monthly weekend conservation service learning treks with his students in the local wetlands. But he also gifted his students with field trips that allowed them to experience the city's ethnic diversity, cultivate an interest in the arts and appreciate the beauty of nature. "Mr. Weeks" was much loved by students and respected by colleagues.

Throughout his life, Bill was a passionate activist for the LGBTQ community. He was a past director of Horizons Youth Services, and facilitated LGBTQ programs and plans for the Illinois chapter of the ACLU. His volunteer service was extraordinary. Besides his service on the board of the Chicago chapter of the Gay Alliance Against Defamation, he served for 10 years as the political liaison for Chicago with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). For six of those years, Bill served on HRC's National Board of Governors. Following his service at HRC, Bill served on the board of The Civil Rights Agenda.

Bill was dedicated to advancing equality for the LGBTQ+ community and lobbied tirelessly to local, state and national representatives. He advocated for the marriage initiative in Illinois, the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and for countless hate crimes and employment-protections legislation. Bill volunteered his time to support numerous political campaigns, including both of President Obama's elections as well as those of Hilary Clinton, Jan Schakowsky and Tammy Duckworth. He gave generously of his time for the rights of all, and not only talked the talk, but literally walked the walk. His life was about service to others.

He was a world traveler, never letting a school break or summer vacation go by without exploring somewhere new. He had a National Parks "Passport," a goal being visiting all of them.

Bill's generosity and kindness knew no bounds. For decades, he hosted a holiday Friendsgiving for family and friends where he could put his exemplary culinary skills on display. All were welcome—especially newcomers.

There are not enough words to describe Bill Weeks: teacher, educator, activist, environmentalist, change agent and, most of all, friend. He was wicked smart, empathetic, big-hearted and beyond funny. Bill appreciated and accepted everyone he encountered, for who they were, never passing judgement and making everyone feel valued. A considerate, unselfish, loving man, he truly was one of a kind.

A celebration of his life will be held at a future date. Donations in his memory can be made to:

The Field Museum
1400 S. Lake Shore Dr.
Chicago IL 60605
Fieldmuseum.org

Human Rights Campaign
1640 Rhode Island Ave. N.W.
Washington D.C. 20036
www.hrcchicago.org

Mikva Challenge
200 S. Michigan Ave.
Chicago IL 60604
Mikvachallenge.org



Josef Zumstein (right) and partner Paul A. Moebius.

Photo courtesy of Cremation Society of Illinois

PASSAGES

Josef Nicholas Zumstein

Josef Nicholas Zumstein—a longtime service professional at Chicago's Mid-America Club, formerly of Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood—passed away peacefully at his home at Liberty Court Assisted Living in Dixon, Illinois. He was 82.

Born and raised in Lungern, Obwalden, Switzerland, Josef was a bakers' apprentice before being trained in the food service industry. He worked as a restaurant waiter in Geneva, London and Rio de Janeiro before coming to Chicago in 1968.

He was preceded in death by partner of 33 years, Paul A. Moebius. He is survived by siblings Walter, Antoinette ("Toni") and Robi Zumstein; and goddaughter of Cacilia, all of Switzerland; as well as devoted friend Kevin Considine, of Chicago and Dixon. Josef was also preceded in death by siblings Marily and Albert Zumstein and parents Josef and Serafina (*nee* Amschwand) Zumstein.

Interment of cremated remains will take place Thursday, July 23, 10:30 a.m., Rosehill Cemetery, mausoleum terrace. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to the Alzheimer's Association. Please scroll down to "memorials" and click "enter website" to donate.

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

Howard Brown reveals \$1M gift to start fund

Howard Brown Health announced a \$1 million gift from George and Juanita Shapen to establish the Gregory Shapen Public Health Fellowship Endowment Fund.

The largest private gift Howard Brown has received in its 46-year history, the endowment fund will support the Gregory Shapen Public Health Fellowship within Howard Brown's Center for Education, Research and Advocacy.

PASSAGES

Raymond Oliver

Ray Oliver passed away April 19 following a long illness. He was 56.

A private service was held in late April.

Born in Oak Lawn, Ray had many jobs in security and hospitality over the years but he will always be remembered in the community as the longtime doorman at the Jackhammer nightclub, where, for many years, he welcomed late-night revelers to an evening of fun and frolic.



Raymond Oliver.

Photo courtesy of Harold Stephens

A kind and gentle man, Ray had an almost encyclopedic knowledge of old Hollywood and U.S. history. He was a reader, a fine cook and loyal friend.

He is survived by a brother and a sister, many nieces and nephews, countless friends and his longtime partner, Hal Stephens.

Anyone wishing to make a donation in Ray's honor could direct one to the American Heart Association, Howard Brown Health or WTTW.

Shapen was a Howard Brown employee who died of AIDS-related complications 30 years ago. His parents, George and Juanita, wanted to ensure that their son's contributions were remembered, and so established the endowment and fellowship to keep the memory of their son alive in perpetuity.

The Shapen Fellows program will start the summer of 2021 and will support six fellows from underrepresented populations, with a focus on LGBTQ students of color, providing summer employment and learning in order to encourage students to pursue careers in public health or community medicine.

AIDS 2020: INTERNAT'L AIDS CONFERENCE

Experts say HIV research is informing COVID-19 vaccine development

BY EMILY REILLY

Journalist Lisa Ling hosted the second-season premiere of "The Road to a Vaccine," which was a part of AIDS 2020: The 23rd International AIDS Conference. Panelists discussed how efforts for an HIV vaccine have assisted the current work on a COVID-19 vaccine.

The episode featured speakers such as Laverne Cox, Dr. Macaya Douoguih, Dr. Paul Stoffels, Jennifer Vaughan, Charles Sanchez and Tiko Kerr. Ling took questions from the livestream on Facebook, LinkedIn, J&J.com and Twitter.

The conference began with Stoffels—the chief scientific officer at Johnson & Johnson, and someone who has years of experience working with HIV vaccine development and is currently leading Johnson & Johnson's efforts to develop a COVID-19 vaccine. He talked about the latest developments in a COVID-19 vaccine as well as his personal experience working on an HIV vaccine.

"We learned to work fast because we were saving lives, and in COVID now, we do exactly the same," said Stoffels. "We have to work extremely fast to save lives, but the environment is there now on which we can build on what we learned of those last 30 years."

Cox, an actress and advocate for the trans community, spoke next about the parallels that she's observed between the HIV crisis and the current pandemic. She also spoke about how both viruses stigmatize different populations of people and how it affects their mental health.

"In the early days of HIV/AIDS, it was LGBTQ+ community, mainly gay men, who were deeply stigmatized by this," said Cox. "We cannot allow ourselves to stigmatize certain populations in this moment, and stigma is so insanely isolating. It's the sense of being unworthy of love, unworthy of connection, and it's so detrimental to our sense of well-being."

She also spoke about the importance of a government action in testing, tracing and responding to a virus as well as the importance of transgender inclusion in HIV research.

Vaughan and Sanchez, who both live with HIV, spoke in short pre-recorded clips about their experiences.

"The only way to deal with this is through education," said Vaughan. "It starts in the schools, national campaigns, movies, commercials, you name it. Make 'HIV' a household word that isn't taboo and it will reduce stigma."

Ling introduced the next segment called 'vaccines 101' which included the basics of vaccine development from leading scientists. Douoguih, a doctor head of clinical development and medical affairs at Janssen Pharmaceutica, spoke about why the development and why they could move the vaccine timeline up.

"Both our discovery and manufacturing teams have a process they go through, and the steps are sequential, and what they manage to do is some of those sequential steps in parallel without compromising the integrity of the vaccine,"

Douoguih highlighted the technicalities of vaccine trials, the scientific relevance of having diverse studies, and how the company will scale up production to meet the demands of a vaccine.

Kerr, a Canadian visual artist and survivor of HIV, spoke about his experience with HIV medications as well as how his fight with HIV fueled inspiration for his self-portraits.



Journalist Lisa Ling and visual artist Tiko Kerr. Screen shot by Emily Reilly

"In case I was to die of AIDS, I wanted to document what I was going through—that is all a byproduct of my therapies," said Kerr. "So, they're pill bottles, injections with vials and syringes and

that sort of thing. In one particular painting, you can see I look very angry, and it was that anger I credit to my survival through those dark days." The conference took place July 6-10.



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Local orgs tackle challenges of diversity

COMPILED BY EMILY REILLY AND MATT SIMONETTE

Windy City Times recently surveyed a number of local organizations about the diversity of both their board leadership and their organization's staff and employees.

For the purposes of this survey, we were most interested in a snapshot of how well the organization reflects the constituency it serves, so questions focused in large part on how well overlooked parts of the LGBTQ community—who are quite often transgender/gender non-conforming/intersex individuals and bisexual/pansexual individuals—are represented in leadership and staff roles. Windy City Times intends to look at other equally or more vital aspects of representation, such as racial and economic diversity, in board leadership roles in future issues.

We also tried to get a sense of how organizations thought about discrimination in their midsts. While LGBT-rights or LGBT-health organizations would certainly have robust anti-discrimination policies, the potential for discrimination is just as insidious as it would be elsewhere. Our pages are rife with anecdotes about transgender people discriminated against by cis-individuals, or bisexual people who find themselves equally misunderstood and mocked by both gay and straight people.

Board service means different things for different organizations; some appointments bring with them great prestige and are highly-coveted. Other boards struggle to find members and enthusiastically welcome anyone willing to put in the work and time, with the only reward being the smoother operation of the organization. As such, committing to diversity is exceptionally difficult, especially as thinking about racial-equity has changed dramatically in recent months.

Nevertheless, every organization will have to think through these issues. We asked several organizations of varying sizes, missions and constituencies to describe their leadership structure and how they are doing this work internally. Among the orga-

Turn to page 11

	ACLU of Illinois	Equality Illinois/ Equality Illinois Institute	Gerber/Hart Library and Archives
# of Board Members	44	20	4
Frequency of Board Turnover/Terms	Three-year terms	One-year terms	Three-year terms
Frequency of Board Meetings	Quarterly	Six times a year	Monthly
# of Staff Members/Employees	43	5	Three part-timers
What considerations do you make in persons whom you invite to the board? Do you give weight to a prospective member's sexual orientation or gender identity in making such decisions?	"Demonstrated commitment to civil liberties principles, special skills, willingness to serve as an ambassador for the organization, diversity, including sexual orientation and gender identity, are all factors that are used to consider nominees for the ACLU board."	"We look at three factors: 1) Does the person bring an expertise or perspective that is needed? 2) Is the person a #1 or #2 person in their organization, field or community? 3) Collectively, when we look at the Board as a whole, does our Board reflect back to our community our full diversity?"	"Key considerations are the prospective member's engagement with the mission of the organization, which is an LGBTQ-focused archives/library/cultural center, and their commitment to help keep it afloat financially."
# of LGBTQ Board Members	3 (including board president)	16	4
# of TGNC**/Intersex Board Members	0	2	0
# of Bisexual Board Members	0	"We have not tracked this information but will do so in the future"	0
# of LGBTQ Staff Members	12	4	"2 out of 3 for sure, but possibly all 3.
# of TGNC**/Intersex Staff Members	1	1	"I don't think so."
# of Bisexual Staff Members	0	"We have not tracked this information but will do so in the future"	"I don't know."
Has your board had conversations about its diversity and how well its makeup represents the constituency the organization serves? If so, what do you see as the key challenges to achieving such representation?	"Yes; Identifying nominees for the board who have time to serve, who bring community contacts, lived experience, experience with non-profit management, and familiarity with the broad array of ACLU issues."	"We do. Our Board charges the CEO with developing a Board prospect pool that has strong representation among women, people of color, TGNC individuals and people living outside Cook county. From that prospect pool, the Board selects the strongest fits for Board membership."	"Gerber/Hart has recently been going through a strategic planning process and the issue of diversity in all aspects—patrons, content of collections and exhibits, board and staff, volunteer pool—was a priority that was affirmed centrally."
Have your organization's principals had conversations about the organization's staff's diversity and how well its makeup represents the constituency it serves? If so, what do you see as the key challenges to achieving such representation?	"Yes; Job recruitment and marketing"	No answer	"Until very recently, Gerber/Hart has been entirely volunteer run. Hired a first part-time staffer in 2017, I think; a second early in 2019, and a third later in the year. Taken together, their hours do not even equal one full-time employee. Because of the limited hours and pay, our jobs do not attract a lot of candidates."
What policies and procedures does your organization have in place to guard against discrimination on the basis of gender-identity or sexual-orientation?	"ACLU of Illinois has a respectful workplace policy that spells out the core values and expectations of staff, board and volunteers."	No answer	"A basic non-discrimination policy. As an organization that is, in essence, an LGBTQ organization, discriminating on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation would be absurd."
**TGNC=transgender, gender-nonconforming			

AIDS Foundation of Chicago	Howard Brown Health	Center on Halsted	Chicago House & Social Service Agency	TPAN
27	17	21	16	9
Two-year terms	Three-year terms	Three-year terms	Three-year terms	Two-year terms
Six times per year	Monthly	Six times per year	Six times per year	Quarterly
128	540	65	85	37
"AFC considers a variety of criteria, such as commitment to the organization; connections to the communities that AFC prioritizes (young Black gay and bisexual men, transgender women of color, Black women living in high-incidence areas and Latinx gay and bisexual men); the demographics of the candidate and the board as a whole; and the candidate's knowledge and expertise about issues related to HIV; the ability to connect AFC to supporters, potential corporate partners, legislators and other key community leaders."	"The Board's Governance Committee develops a call for candidates each year that articulates the priority skills, experiences, and backgrounds desired among highly rated candidates for that year's recruitment cycle."	"Center on Halsted takes many factors into consideration when providing invitations to join the Board of Directors. All factors take into account the individual's ability to help hold the agency accountable and to move the organization forward in meeting its mission."	"Yes—both sexual orientation and gender identity are considered when evaluating prospective Board members. Additional considerations are: geography, sexual orientation, gender identity, profession, connection to HIV/AIDS, previous non-profit Board experience."	No answer
65 percent openly LGBTQ	16	17	15	5
0	1	1	1	0
4%	1	0	1	0
Does not collect info*	"The vast majority"	51	"majority of staff"	15
"At least two"	Dozens of staff members openly identify as TGNC"	5	Yes, but exact number not given 0	
Does not collect info*	"We have not polled staff on bisexual identity"	3	Yes, but exact number not given	1
"Yes. Over the past five years, AFC has prioritized representing the community we serve with a focus on recruiting diverse members."	"The Board's Governance Committee develops a call for candidates each year that articulates the priority skills, experiences, and backgrounds desired among highly rated candidates for that year's recruitment cycle."	"Yes, our COH board has had extensive conversation regarding its diversity and client representation which was further facilitated by an outside DEI consultant, Inca Mohamed, in 2019."	"Yes. The key challenge is balancing the terms served by current members with the need/desire/passion/urgency around expanding the diversity on the board with an emphasis on race and gender. The board of trustees is committed to diversity now and the years ahead."	Yes. [See response to next question for explanation]
"AFC prioritizes diversity, equity and inclusion among staff and strives to achieve racial equity."	"The proportion of staff who are Black and/or Latinx exceeds the proportion of patients who are Black and/or Latinx. Notwithstanding, diverse representation lags among directors and managers. At senior management, 7% are Latinx as compared to 22% of patients. Black executives comprise 29% of senior management and 23% of patients. Seven percent of senior management identifies as TGNC as compared to 15% of patients."	"Yes, our Senior Leadership and Human Resources department consistently strive to monitor and make progress in maintaining a diversified staff and leadership at COH. We manage this by actively recruiting in minority professional circles and strategically partnering with think leaders such as #Hire TransNOW. While COH does have a relatively diverse staff and leadership base already, we recognize the continued importance of improving the organization from not just a diversity perspective but also from an equity and inclusion perspective."	"Yes, the full Chicago House team is diverse and reflects the makeup of our program participants. However, the key area of opportunity is diversity among the leadership team. With 12 members on the leadership team, 2 are people of color, 2 are transgender, and 5 identify as female."	"For questions 14 and 15 TPAN hired the Morten Group and is in the middle of an agency and board wide DEI Assessment and Training. From that training, a committee will be formed with support from the Morten Group, and areas of bias and areas requiring improvement will be highlighted, as well as a DEI Strategic plan. That started in March of 2020 and will be over in September 2020."
"To support and solidify our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, AFC has developed and adopted [several] policies and procedures"	"LGBTQ liberation and racial equity principles are two of six frameworks adopted by Howard Brown Health as fundamental approaches pursued through all of the agency's work and practices. Its Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, and established values bar gender-identity and sexual-orientation discrimination among other forms of oppression as part of a commitment to an equitable and just workplace."	"COH does not allow for any discrimination against an individual because of gender identity, including transgender status, or because of sexual orientation. Discrimination because of sex is in violation of Title VII. Our policies parallel U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission language forbidding discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment."	"Chicago House has HR policies in place that guard against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation. The organization also offers trainings on how to work through a trauma-informed lens as well as trainings on harm-reduction."	"TPAN prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, spiritual beliefs, sex (with or without sexual conduct), sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, childbirth, protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the statutory complaint process) or other characteristics protected under federal, state or local law."

Former state National Guard enlistee alleges anti-trans discrimination

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Former Illinois Army National Guard enlistee Liam Papworth has filed a complaint with the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) against Dr. Lawrence Gottlieb and UChicago Medicine, alleging anti-trans medical discrimination.

Papworth told this publication in an email statement that he was denied phalloplasty surgery by Gottlieb after he provided the doctor with what he said was the proper documentation during his Jan. 28, 2020 consultation appointment. He added that this documentation included letters from the required two separate therapists that he got through the Gender Affirming Letter Access Project.

The IDHR complaint that Papworth faxed on July 9 (signed and dated July 8) was also provided to this publication.

Papworth stated in the complaint, "My surgery was denied in violation of state policy despite my being a perfect candidate for the surgery."

Additionally, the complaint stated that another transgender man had a consult scheduled with Gottlieb for phalloplasty surgery and that person received a phone call stating that his consultation appointment was canceled and Gottlieb was no longer performing this surgery. Papworth told this publication in an email statement the above information about the other patient.

The complaint also alleges PTSD discrimination against Gottlieb and stated the following, "I have a PTSD DX on paper. Dr. Gottlieb made an allegation against me [that] I would kill myself after surgery because of the diagnosis."

Prior to filing the IDHR complaint, Papworth received a letter dated June 17 from UChicago Medicine's Department of Legal Affairs Professional Liability Plan Executive Director and Associate General Counsel Catherine L. Garvey that stated, "You presented to Dr. Gottlieb on 1/28/2020 for consultation for consideration of elective phalloplasty surgery. During that visit, Dr. Gottlieb obtained a history and physical examination of your forearm. Of significance, you reported active and ongoing symptoms of PTSD as a result of your time in the military and trauma as a child.

"You reported that you were self-medicating with cannabis to treat these symptoms, and you advised Dr. Gottlieb that you were not receiving ongoing mental health care to treat the PTSD. Dr. Gottlieb told you that without established and regular mental health treatment for this condition, you would not be not an appropriate surgical candidate. He also referred you to Dr. Richard Carroll at Northwestern, a psychiatrist to whom he has referred similarly situated patients for



Liam Papworth.
Photo courtesy of Papworth

over 25 years, for assessment of the appropriateness of phalloplasty surgery. We understand from your voicemail that you did not seek treatment from Dr. Carroll. As you know, you have not been seen by Dr. Gottlieb at any time before or after your single visit on January 28, 2020."

The letter also confirms what Papworth told Windy City Times about the two letters from licensed professionals referring him for surgery and stated "during your consultation visit in January, Dr. Gottlieb declined to approve and schedule the requested surgery based upon his clinical assessment at that time. In his professional judgment, you were not an appropriate surgical candidate for this elective procedure for the reasons stated above, which were discussed with you during your consultation."

In the IDHR complaint, Papworth stated that he also filed multiple complaints with Garvey's office and that the above quoted letter contains "a falsified statement of the events that occurred at the consultation. When I tried to contact them and get them to understand that falsifying a medical record is not only a felony, but I can prove they falsified it, they [would] not even reply to my calls or emails."

When Windy City Times reached out to UChicago Medicine about Papworth's allegations against Garvey, UChicago Medicine Communications Executive Director Lorna Wong emailed the following statement. "While HIPAA prevents us from discussing contents of the letter, we deny

Mr. Papworth's allegation."

The IDHR complaint contains a question about mediation as a remedy. Papworth checked the "yes" box stating that he would like to pursue that option with the other party.

Papworth also provided this publication with proof of his medical cannabis card and the doctor's authorization letter. He stated in an email that this "disproves the claim from UChicago Medicine that I am 'self-medicating' with cannabis. These documents show that my primary care physician is approving and monitoring my cannabis consumption as a PTSD patient. My ID card shows the card was issued on 8/22/2019. I have also included the receipt showing proof I legally paid for my cannabis card."

This publication reached out to UChicago Medicine with the following questions: Why did the letter say the phalloplasty surgery was elective when that is not the case for transgender patients who are seeking gender confirmation surgery? Why did Dr. Gottlieb require Liam to see a psychiatrist when he already had the required

letters from two different therapists to proceed with the surgery? Why did Dr. Gottlieb say Liam was not an appropriate candidate for this surgery? UChicago Medicine officials sent back the below email response on behalf of the hospital:

"We are unfortunately unable to discuss the specific details of Mr. Papworth's care due to patient privacy. The University of Chicago Medicine is committed to providing the best possible care to transgender and gender-nonconforming patients. We have been repeatedly recognized by the HRC Foundation as a leader in health equality for our treatment and inclusion of LGBTQ patients, visitors and employees. Dr. Gottlieb has performed phalloplasty surgery at UChicago Medicine for over 30 years.

"UChicago Medicine adheres to the standards of care set by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH). To that end, the decision to perform surgery on any given patient involves the medical judgment of the surgeon after careful consideration of the patient's individual history and medical conditions."

COVID-19

Lightfoot, others to re-tighten city restrictions

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) announced a re-tightening of COVID-19 restrictions for bars, restaurants, gyms and personal services as a precautionary move in response to a recent increase in community cases of the virus.

The reinstatement of certain restrictions will go into effect Friday, July 24, at 12:01 a.m., in order to allow businesses time to prepare. Restrictions will include:

—Bars, taverns, breweries and other establishments that serve alcohol for on-site consumption without a retail food license will no longer be able to serve customers indoors.

—Maximum party size and table occupancy at restaurants, bars, taverns and breweries will be reduced to six people.

—Indoor fitness class size will be reduced to a maximum of 10 people.

—Personal services requiring the removal of face coverings will no longer be permitted (shaves, facials, etc.).

—Residential property managers will be asked to limit guest entry to five per unit to avoid indoor gatherings and parties.

As CDPH recently announced, the city is back in a high-incidence state under Centers for Disease Control guidelines after topping 200 cases per day on a 7-day rolling average. That increase has been driven in part by rising cases among young people 18-29 years old as the city has seen more social activity and interactions in bars, restaurants, parks and the lakefront. Chicago has also seen an increase in

its percent positivity rate—the percentage of people tested who are positive for COVID-19—after weeks of decline.

To prepare all business owners for the new guidance, the BACP will be hosting a series of webinars this week. See [Chicago.gov/business-workshops](https://www.chicago.gov/business-workshops).

Civil-rights icon Congressman John Lewis dies at 80

Congressman John Lewis—who rose from humble beginnings to become an iconic politician and civil-rights activist—has died of pancreatic cancer at age 80, media outlets reported.

He died on the same day as civil rights leader the Rev. Cordy Tindell "C.T." Vivian, who was 95.

Lewis—a Democrat who served as the U. representative for Georgia's 5th Congressional District for more than three decades—was widely seen as a moral conscience of Congress. By his count, Lewis (a colleague of Martin Luther King Jr.) was arrested at least 40 times for protesting against racial and social injustice.

Lewis was also an outspoken advocate for LGBTQ rights, having co-sponsored measures such as ENDA, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act; the Early Treatment for HIV Act; the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act; and the Uniting American Families Act, among others. In October 2016, on National Coming Out Day, Lewis tweeted, "It doesn't matter if we are straight or gay or transgender—we are one people, we are one family, we are one love. #NationalComingOutDay"

In 2011, Lewis was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama.



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Survey open for potential Boystown name change

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Northalsted Business Alliance is asking for the public to weigh in on the “Boystown” moniker.

The Alliance has published a survey asking community members’ opinions on the Lake View neighborhood, which was officially designated an “LGBTQ+ community” by Mayor Richard M. Daley in 1997; its rainbow pylons received historical landmark designation in 2019.

But for many years, exactly how welcoming the neighborhood actually is for some community members has been called into question, with many people of color, transgender persons and youth saying that they’ve been made to feel unwanted in Boystown in recent years. Activist Devlyn Camp recently started an online petition demanding that the neighborhood be designated

with a new, more inclusive name.

The Alliance’s new survey asks participants how often they visit Lake View, whether the Boystown name makes them feel uncomfortable, and solicits suggestions for a new name, among other questions. The survey will be active through Sept. 14 and can be taken at <https://northalsted.com/survey/>.



Devlyn Camp.
Photo courtesy of Camp

ORGS from page 8

organizations whom had not replied by publication time were Affinity Community Services, Asians and Friends Chicago, Brave Space Alliance, Chicago Black Gay Men’s Caucus, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago, Lambda Legal and Victory Fund.

Windy City Times will have a feature article exploring our findings in-depth in our next issue.

Note: For responses marked with an asterisk (*), see the complete response at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/How-community-organizations-tackle-diversity-Complete-responses/68913.html>

The Crib, Night Ministry move to Bucktown

Nine years after it began operations in the basement of Lakeview Lutheran Church, The Crib—The Night Ministry’s overnight shelter for young adults—has reopened in a larger, enhanced space on the first floor of 1735 N. Ashland Ave., The Night Ministry’s new headquarters in Bucktown.

On July 13, The Crib’s program specialists and members of The Night Ministry’s Youth Outreach Team, who provide case management services at the shelter, were on hand to provide tours, discuss expectations for use of the space, help guests settle in, process the transition and make the place feel like home.

While Lakeview Lutheran Church has been a welcoming host for the shelter over the past decade, the strategic plan The Night Ministry embarked on in 2017 called for addressing facility challenges The Crib faced at the site—where sleeping, eating and hosting events all took place in the same 900-square-foot room, while guests slept on mats on the floor, and washroom and shower facilities were limited, a statement said.

Among the amenities at the new space are a multi-purpose room that can be used for dining, group activities and recreation; a

dorm room with beds; multiple showers and washrooms; a large kitchen outfitted to cook breakfast and dinner for more than 20 young people; laundry facilities; and a lounge with computers.

See TheNightMinistry.org.



Night Ministry Manager of Youth Engagement Services LaShaunda Battie (right) chats with a guest of The Crib during dinner.

Photo courtesy of the Night Ministry

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viewpoints


**Mark S.
KING**

'All Boys Aren't Blue' is the audacious memoir of a Black queer man

George M. Johnson could not have known about this moment in history when he wrote his memoir, *All Boys Aren't Blue*, but for this white male reader, the sounds of courageous protestors in our streets were never far away.

Johnson provides us an intimate, deceptively simple journal of his childhood and family, all while negotiating the world as a young Black man who doesn't check off the boxes of masculine traits our society expects (Johnson prefers "queer" rather than "gay" to describe himself). His recollections are filled with familial love, adolescent angst, and the fears and insecurities of growing up with a secret that mustn't be told.

There are so many universal truths in *All Boys Aren't Blue* (the realizations that gay boys have about our bodies and sexuality, the treacherous terrain of playgrounds and classrooms, the welcome embrace of unconditional love from family members) that it was easy for me to be purely entertained and soothed by their familiarity—until the dividing line of race provided a reality check.

A story about "the talk" with dad isn't about sex—it's about being Black in this world, and its dangers. A history lesson about Abraham Lincoln reveals a

man unlike the Honest Abe of my childhood. A remembrance of splashing in a pool provides the jarring factoid that Black men and women are more likely to drown because, among other things, post-segregation pools in Black communities were closed or cemented over.

Johnson is a well-regarded activist and writer, and while he keeps this memoir focused on family matters and his own coming of age, his social critiques are razor sharp. He eviscerates the feel-good campaign meant to inspire LGBTQ youth, "It Gets Better," with a withering observation. Calling the campaign "a fable," Johnson points out that the campaign doesn't explain how to make lives better.

"The how comes in being willing to take a chance on yourself," Johnson writes, "and create the support system you wish to have. I would also tell you to reclaim that campaign slogan and use it from a place of power. Tell folks, especially those who are non-queer and non-Black, to 'Make It Better.' Something getting better doesn't happen without action, and you have every right to ask for that."

The current reckoning around race in this country reverberated and amplified Johnson's stories for me, and perhaps in ways he never intended. *All Boys Aren't Blue* isn't an act of clairvoyance, though, written for this moment. Black writers and activists have been telling us these things, writing and painting and filming and performing these truths for many, many years, long before mainstream/white media deemed them leading news. What is different, for me at least, is a willingness to listen in a way I was unwilling to listen before.

And yet, my "white gaze," as Toni Morrison would say, isn't the important viewpoint here. The gift of *All Boys Aren't Blue* is that a memoir has been written from a proud Black man about his childhood struggle with issues of masculinity and sexuality. That's plenty.

else's. Theirs are only the latest names to be added to a grim and ever-growing list of people of color killed by the police: Eric Garner and Laquan McDonald and Alton Sterling and Sandra Bland and Tamir Rice and Philando Castile and Michael Brown and Amadou Diallo, and on and on. No other major country loses as many of its citizens to police violence as ours does.

As a person of faith, I condemn without hesitation this vile act of racism on our brothers and sisters. It should be a wake-up call for all of us who believe in human dignity, life and the common good. The LGBTQ community must pray on this and must say no to the racism in the face of white privilege. We can no longer be silent when some in our community promote racism in the guise of comfort and white privilege.

I know because of my faith that God's breath is the origin of life. Also, George Floyd is a child of God,



It might seem audacious for a man in his thirties, as Johnson is, to call his book "a memoir-manifesto" on its cover. But the insights and hard-won self-confidence contained within its pages taught me lessons, again and again.

Johnson can call his book whatever he likes. It is triumphant.

Mark S. King is a GLAAD Award-nominated blogger (MyFabulousDisease.com) and AIDS activist diagnosed with HIV in 1985.

and he and his wonderful family will not be silenced.

We must challenge racism anywhere it raises its ugly head, especially within the celebration of LGBTQ Pride, I call on our religious, political and cultural leaders to find courage and speak out as you did when you spoke out in support of LGBTQ Marriage.

In closing; Archbishop Wilton Gregory, head of the archdiocese of Washington, D.C., said "The horror of George Floyd's death, like all acts of racism, hurts all of us in the body of Christ since we are each made in the image and likeness of God, and deserve the dignity that comes with that existence."

My prayers are with the Floyd family.

*Joe Murray
Executive Director
Rainbow Sash Movement (LGBTQ Roman Catholics)*

letters

Taking a stand

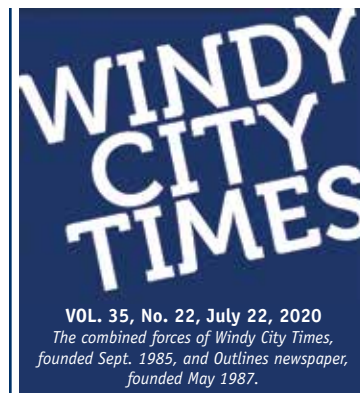
Dear community:

We must stand opposed to racism, whatever the cost.

The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis was not just a case of excessive force or brutality. It was a murder—plain and simple. Police officer Derek Chauvin asphyxiated Floyd to death by kneeling on his neck for nearly nine minutes, while three other officers watched and did nothing to stop him. Chauvin could see that his actions were being recorded by a bystander and did not seem to care. He looked blankly into the camera as Floyd died underneath him.

Breonna Taylor was shot to death in Louisville by cops who had mistaken her apartment for someone

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Letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.**



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Windy City Times Biweekly; Deadline every

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Jaida Essence Hall.
Photo courtesy of Brandon Voss



NUNN ON ONE: DRAG

'RuPaul's Drag Race' winner Jaida revs up for a drive-in performance

BY JERRY NUNN

Jaida Essence Hall (real name: Jared Johnson) won the twelfth season of RuPaul's Drag Race. America's current drag superstar is from Milwaukee and began performing in the early 2010s. Her drag family includes mothers Tajma Hall and Prada Diamond with her drag sisters being Mercedes Iman Diamond, Dida Ritz and Kahmora Hall.

Winning multiple pageants and a lively halftime performance at a Milwaukee Bucks game in 2019 were all part of Hall's accomplishments before landing Drag Race in 2020. On the hit reality show, she won three main challenges before beating out the final contestants for the crown virtually from home due to COVID-19.

Hall—along with other RuPaul stars such as Asia O'Hara, Gigi Goode and Vanessa Vanje—is among those scheduled to perform in Chicago for a Werq the World Drive 'N Drag show. This three-day event, with two shows each night at Soldier Field's South Parking Lot, comes complete with Jumbotron LED screens, a light show and gourmet food trucks.

Windy City Times: I heard you were at Hamburger Mary's recently when you used to work in Milwaukee.

Jaida Essence Hall: Yes. I am so glad they are opening back up—slowly, but surely.

WCT: Are you originally from Wisconsin?

JEH: Yes. I was born and raised in Milwaukee.

WCT: I knew your drag mother, Tajma Hall. [Editor's note: Hall, who was based in Chicago, died in 2014.]

JEH: She was the sweetest.

WCT: How did you become her drag daughter?

JEH: I was doing a competition for the second time for Miss Wisconsin USofA. She came to the pageant and I was nervous because she was there. After the performances, she said she thought I should have won. I told her how I wanted someone like her to mentor and guide me. She told me to come on and she would be my mother. I learned so much from her.

WCT: Where did the name "Jaida" come from?

JEH: My friend named me. We were just driving around and she introduced me to her friends as Jaida. That made sense, since it is similar to Jared.

WCT: Do you have a preference about pronouns?

JEH: In drag, "she" is fine; out of drag, it is whatever. Anything is fine with me!

WCT: Have you ever performed at Chicago Pride Fest, as Taj did in the past?

JEH: No. I have never performed at Chicago Pride, which is crazy. I have done Milwaukee Pride many times. I did Black Girl Magic at Roscoe's and people called me their Chicago queen for season 12. I was very grateful to hear that.

WCT: Talk about your upcoming drive-in performance.

JEH: I am super-excited about the drive-in. Chicago has always been a second home for me, being from the Midwest. It's a hop, skip and a jump away. To do things in Chicago has always been major for us in Milwaukee. It has been a dream of mine to do Werq the World. Soldier Field is the best spot. Beyonce sold it out! Hopefully, we can sell it out even under different stipulations like COVID.

This show still gives people the opportunity to see drag in person. It's a big event where people can come out and get that taste of drag they have been looking for. They get to see me, so hopefully they have been looking forward to that!

WCT: Will it be challenging to hold an audience's attention at a venue like this?

JEH: I think it can be, but Werq the World events always have a top-tier performance.

Turn to page 17

TELEVISION

Caroline Aaron: Social justice, podcasting, 'Marvelous Mrs. Maisel'

BY EMILY REILLY

Caroline Aaron is known for her many captivating roles in film, TV, Broadway and, most recently, as Shirley Maisel on the award-winning show *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*.

Talking with *Windy City Times*, Aaron described the values and commonalities that she shares with Maisel, the title character's mother; as a married Jewish mom on the show and in real life, Aaron said she feels that those attributes are easy for her to relate to.

"That was part of building the character for Shirley, but I had certain things I wanted to bring to the character, like how she's crazy about her husband," said Aaron. "It's the first time I've ever played a character that I think is truly happy. She really loves her life, which is a fun thing to play."

Aaron described Shirley as ahead of her time, considering the time period of the show. Rather than being a "decorative" wife and mother who surrenders to the standards of the time she feels she can bring her own sense of strength to her role.

"When you have this kind of writing and you're

playing the game with these kinds of people; everywhere you look there's always an A+ person," said Aaron. "They always say, 'If you want your tennis game to get better, play with people who are better than you.' And that's the way I feel—like I'm constantly improving just based on having to raise my bar based on who I'm around, which is really wonderful."

The *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* has become relevant during the #MeToo movement and satirizes 1950s conservatism. Aaron's take on human-rights issues is deeply woven into her life. She spoke reverently of her late mother, who marched on Selma alongside Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil rights movement.

"I was talking to a friend about how my mother would be so sad right now—it feels like CandyLand, when you draw a card and move down to the bottom of the mountain. She worked so hard," said Aaron. "But I think this period of time has created activists out of people who were not activists before. I was always well-informed and always voted, but to actually get out there and knock on doors and to understand politics at the local level is so important."

Aaron co-hosts a podcast with Steve Saporito



Caroline Aaron.
Photo by Todd Williamson

called *Angst & Daisies*, which discusses activism and relevant stories on what's happening in government and society.

One story from the podcast dives into the riveting world *The Lincoln Project*, which involves ex-Republicans strategizing and speaking out against President Trump.

"We were listening to them speak about what they can do—that this is no longer their party. It's been hijacked, and they would do anything in their power to make sure the democratic candidate won," said Aaron.

The episode features guest speaker Ron Stelow, a young LGBTQ+ man who co-founded *The Lincoln Project*. They spoke to him about the project, and the intersectionality between his sexual orientation and his fundamentalist family. Other stand out stories include discussions about the front lines of the detention camps at the bor-

der and podcasting in the age of social distancing. She continually emphasizes the importance of activism and making one's voice heard.

"We're all like children in that we want our parents, ie. the government or our elected officials, to make the world right and we can't rely on that," she said. "We have to do it ourselves. If we see injustice, we have to make noise and try and fix it in any way we can."

Aaron spoke of her great-aunt Caroline, the woman she is named after, who continuously wrote to world leaders throughout her life, whether she believed they would respond. One day, she heard back from Winston Churchill in a handwritten letter that was later gifted to Aaron.

"She would write to world leaders because she believed in the power of the lone voice," said Aaron. "The world is so big and so complicated, it's hard to feel like the lone voice has any sound at all. I had to constantly tell myself: it makes a difference."

Studio Responsibility Index reveals mix of high, low numbers

GLAAD released its eighth annual Studio Responsibility Index (SRI)—a report that maps the quantity, quality and diversity of LGBTQ characters in films released by the eight film studios that had the highest theatrical grosses from films released in the 2019 calendar year and four of their subsidiaries, as reported by box office database Box Office Mojo.

These studios were Lionsgate, Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures, STX Films, United Artists Releasing, Universal Pictures, The Walt Disney Studios and Warner Bros.

GLAAD found that of the 118 films released from major studios in 2019, 22 (18.6 percent) included characters that were LGBTQ. This represents a slight increase from the previous year's report (18.2 percent, 20 out of 110 films) and the highest percentage of inclusive films found in the eight-year history of the report.

However, there was also a continuation of a downward trend in terms of racial diversity of LGBTQ characters. There was a significant decrease in racial diversity of LGBTQ characters for the third consecutive year. In 2019, just 34 percent of LGBTQ characters were people of color (17 of 50), down from 42 percent in the previous report and a decrease of 23 percentage points from the 57 percent of LGBTQ characters of color in 2017.

And, for the third year in a row, transgender characters were entirely absent from major studio releases.

For the first time in the report's history, GLAAD also tallied LGBTQ characters with disabilities. This year, there was only one character with a disability in major releases (Poe, from Lionsgate's *Five Feet Apart*). Subsidiary releases from art-house studios counted two LGBTQ characters with disabilities, both from Sony Pictures Classics.

The full report is at [GLAAD.org/sri](https://www.glaad.org/sri).

MOVIES

Film probes Chechen's anti-LGBTQ atrocities

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Toronto-based LGBT-rights advocacy *Rainbow Railroad* hosted an online discussion of the HBO documentary *Welcome to Chechnya* on July 16.

That film, which premiered last month, details both hostilities facing LGBTQ persons in that Russian state, and grassroots efforts to relocate those victims of persecution to other parts of the world, an endeavor in which *Rainbow Railroad* has been actively engaged. ABC News London Correspondent James Longman moderated the July 16 panel.

Russia has a long history of abuses against its LGBTQ citizens, but the Chechen Republic's history of brutality against that community is especially egregious. *Welcome to Chechnya* opens with video footage of an assault against a gay



couple, and continues with an unflinching depiction of that persecution.

Kimahli Powell, *Rainbow Railroad's* executive director, praised the film's "sensitivity and urgency," adding that it effectively captured the tensions and dangers that have come to the fore in Chechnya. "It was a very frightening experience navigating the events that were documented."

David France, the film's director, said in the discussions that he made the film to bring the stories out to a larger audience. Not only do government officials, and other Chechens, deny that the atrocities happen, they often deny that LGBTQ Chechens even exist. Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, a loyal ally to Russian President Vladimir Putin, allegedly is behind the persecutions.

"It's a terrifying historical moment in Russia," said France. "...These incredible acts of violence are taking place without impunity."

Welcome to Chechnya depicts the persecution at its height in 2017, but France and Powell emphasized that it continues, with perpetrators becoming more elusive and discrete. The COVID-19 pandemic has only heightened problems for LGBTQ Chechens since now they can't leave the country even if they can marshal the resources to get out.

David Isteev, an activist who coordinated many of the rescues hopes they can find refuge in embassies and eventually get to a welcoming country such as Canada.

"It's important that no one is silent," said Isteev.

Welcome to Chechnya can be viewed online for free at <https://itsh.bo/2ZJfsqh>. The link also contains information about where to provide financial assistance.

NUNN ON ONE: PHOTOGRAPHY

Peter Bussian focuses on New York's trans community

BY JERRY NUNN

Peter Bussian is a visual artist who continually promotes international themes in his work. He's been published in The New York Times, LA Times, Paris Match and O: The Oprah Magazine, among others. Several galleries in Los Angeles have displayed his work involving Afghanistan.

He's made documentary films in Nigeria, Sudan and Pakistan. In 2008, he worked on Opium War, a film in which he played a U.S. soldier; the movie was Afghanistan's submission for the Academy Awards.

Bussian's latest project is a photography book called Trans New York that gives an intimate look on a wide range of people in various city settings. Choosing not to have the pages glossy for the print version was calculated by Bussian to convey the overall style of his work.

Windy City Times: How long have you been in photography?

Peter Bussian: I have been in photography for 40 years and for the last 20 in international development photography, so I spent many years in Afghanistan, various parts of Africa and the Middle East.

I came back to New York and haven't traveled much for the last couple of years. A year ago, I decided to take pictures at the Pride Parade, which I had never done. I got one really good picture of someone who was possibly nonbinary and sent it to my publisher. She loved it and we decided to do a book on transgender New Yorkers.

WCT: Do you have an exhibition for the photos planned?

PB: I would like to have an exhibition and I have talked to The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center in the West Vil-

lage about it. When COVID hit we weren't able to do it, but I hope to have something in the future. We have talked about next year and I would love to do all 50 portraits with a proper opening for an exhibit. We are doing some Zoom events, but it's not quite the same.

WCT: How did you find the subjects for Trans New York?

PB: I had friends that knew the transgender community in New York and I started contacting people on Instagram.

WCT: From the book, it's easy to tell that some of them knew each other. Did you find it to be an isolated group?

PB: Yes, somewhat. There was some resistance to book at the beginning because people didn't know me and rightly so. They are a community that has been persecuted and they are very protective. I respected that a lot.

I think it helped me being a quirky outsider. I had an objectivity and no agenda. I just wanted to tell people's stories. As I trudged all over New York during a hot summer, I got to know them and became very impassioned about them. Now I have several good friends out of the experience. I stay in touch with most of them.

Abby Chava Stein, who did the foreword, for my book is a trans woman and an Orthodox rabbi. The book went deeper than just portraits of 50 people. Through the interviews, I believe it broke some new ground that may not be in other books.

WCT: How did the interview process work?

PB: With my publisher, we came up with what we would ask them on the interviews. I emailed them the questions and photo release beforehand. They would fill it out and I would know the basics when I met them. It would have been too much to interview and shoot pictures at the same



Left: Peter Bussian. Right: Bussian's photo of Abby Chava Stein
Left photo by Scott Pasfield

time.

WCT: Were there any requests for it to be a glamour shot?

PB: Yes. Many wanted pictures for their websites. Some were in media or actors. This shoot was not about that. I had to make that clear that I was not shooting headshots for people or fashion pictures.

WCT: Lester Esmond Dale described believing himself as being born deformed. Can you talk more about his story?

PB: Lester had a very interesting history and family. He's married and has two adopted kids. They are adults now, with one of them being a Vietnam veteran.

WCT: In the Je'Jae Cleopatra Daniels photo,

who was the angry-looking man in the picture?

PB: That happened by chance. We met at Union Square to do the pictures and there were Trump supporters there at the same time having a demonstration. Je'Jae started interacting with them and we had fun messy with them!

WCT: Any other surprises on the photo shoots?

PB: One thing I noticed about the whole trans community is how, in general, happy they are. I believe it's because they did something to actualize who they are and who they want to be. I think it is the same joy when anyone follows their dreams.

Turn to page 21

Filament Theatre director to step down

Filament Theatre announced that, after 13 years, founding Managing Director Christian Libonati will be stepping down from his position at the end of the summer.

Libonati is stepping down to make more time for his own artistic pursuits. He said in a statement, "I am excited to make space for a leader with new strengths, new skills, and new vision. My work with Filament has been the greatest honor of my life, and I am so thankful to the artists, board members, audience members, foundations, institutions, and politicians that have made this work possible. Thank you."

Filament's board of directors has launched a national search for his successor, who will work alongside founding Artistic Director Julie Ritchey. To learn more about Filament Theatre's job search visit FilamentTheatre.org/work-with-us.



Filament Theatre Managing Director
Christian Libonati.

Photo courtesy of Filament



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SPORTS

Amazin LeThi: On journeys of emotional and physical strength



Amazin LeThi.
Photo courtesy of LeThi

BY ROSS FORMAN

Amazin LeThi was a young adult in London when she hit rock bottom: She was homeless, living in and out of shelters for a couple years. She was suicidal and battling mental health issues.

LeThi told Windy City Times she slept for basically two days straight, then finally woke up on the third day crying, in the fetal position at the shelter. "I just thought, 'What has become of my life?'" LeThi said in a late-June interview.

Despite her woes at the time, she said she knew "I had so much more to give, even though I didn't know exactly what that was."

She reached into her sporting background for strength, courage, advice, and help.

Sports was her anchor, to help pull herself out. "I came out stronger in the end, more resilient. And I knew, if I could get over the hard point in her life, everything else is easy she said. "Sports give you a specific mindset. Athletes often really must push past the pain. Sports definitely helped me survive."

LeThi was born in Saigon and left in an orphanage by her mother. She said that, as a youngster, she was regularly bullied because she is Asian and kids thought she was different. In addition, "I was very confused with my own sexuality, so I [endured] a lot of gay slurs," she said.

She added, "I felt very alone and isolated [as a child]—I never saw an Asian person on TV or in the media, [and] never saw an LGBT person. I really thought I was the only Asian LGBT person in the world."

At age 6, she turned to weight training which led to bodybuilding—and she was quite successful as a competitive natural bodybuilder, such that:

—In 2014, she was the first Asian ambassador for Athlete Ally.

—In 2018, she was named one of four Asian LGBTQ athletes accelerating sports equality by the American National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance along with becoming the first openly out Asian athlete to appear in the Stonewall UK "Rainbow Laces Campaign."

—In 2019, she was among the Out 100 List and became the first Asian Sport Champion (Ambassador) for Stonewall UK's new Sports Champion Ambassador Program.

—In early March, she became the first Asian LGBTQ athlete to be honored at the Brooklyn Nets' 4th Annual Pride Night and had the "Game Ball Delivery" honor.

That Nets' game replaced a speaking appearance she was to have made in Chicago. LeThi also was to have appeared in Chicago on June 30, as the Australian and Irish consulates of Chicago had a Pride Month event planned, but that was changed to a virtual panel due to the coronavirus pandemic. [Note: Windy City Times covered that event.] The event celebrated the marriage-equality campaigns of both countries and included a discussion on the ongoing work to further equality for the LGBTQIA+ community.

LeThi was chosen to discuss her journey and her experience.

"With everything that's happening now in the world, there are very different conversations around athlete activism, what activism looks like, how governments and businesses need to pivot," she said, describing the June 30 event as "really good."

She added, "Governments have a responsibility to have these kinds of conversations around LGBTQ equality in the countries that they're working in. And there's a lot we can learn from Ireland and Australia."

"The conversation [June 30] was so important because we have to look at the milestones that we have had in the community, and one of them has been marriage equality. But we also need to look at what else needs to be done."

"People were able to hear about other countries and the successes they are having—and that gives us hope [and motivation]."

LeThi has been a worldwide activist for the LGBTQ community, anchored around her athletic background. Sure, she no longer competes in bodybuilding, but now serves as a strength coach. Plus, she has been training for competitive shooting.

"I never expected my career in sports and activism to be the career that I have.

I just wanted to share my story, especially as an Asian in sports," said LeThi, whose Pride Month was filled with worldwide on LGBT rights and more, always anchored around sport.

"We're at a really interesting place because of the Black Lives Matter movement," she added. "We have never seen athlete activism united in the way that we would have hoped. And Asian LGBTQ equality in sports is one of the last frontiers, along with trans athletes' rights."

LeThi noted that the next two years are key for the Asian community, particularly from a sporting perspective. The 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo were, of course, pushed to 2021. And, in 2022, many more major sporting events are slated to be held in Asian countries, including the Commonwealth Games, the Beijing Olympics, a Formula One race, the World Cup and the Gay Games.

"These next few years, we have a moment to shine as an Asian community, with the whole world watching," she said. "If we fall flat on our place at Tokyo 2021 around these [LGBT] discussions, what will that look like going into 2022?!"

"It is so important, especially personally as I think back to my childhood. For Asian LGBTQ kids who are struggling with their sexuality and gender identity to see a major sporting event, in Asian, and see a strong representation [of LGBT] en masse. That will send a ripple across the world."

LeThi is shooting for a spot at a future Olympics, representing her native Vietnam. She's finished her competitive bodybuilding career. "I have accomplished what I wanted to [in bodybuilding], but there is so much more to do in a new sport."

"Sports have always been my first passion. I cannot see a life [for me] without sports, and sports is a language that everyone understands. Coming out of the pandemic, we really need to use sports to bring everyone together."

For more about LeThi, visit AmazinLeThi.com. She is on Twitter and Instagram @amazinlethi, and is on Facebook as well.



New Ravinia President/CEO Jeffrey P. Haydon.

Photo by Gabe Palacio

Ravinia Festival names new CEO

Ravinia Chairman Don Civgin announced the hiring of Jeffrey P. Haydon as president and CEO of the nation's oldest music festival.

Haydon is currently CEO of the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts in New York and will replace Welz Kauffman, who announced last October that he would vacate the position in September 2020 after 20 successful years in that role.

Since September 2012, Haydon has run Caramoor, which, like Ravinia, presents a diverse array of concerts and music programs, mentors young professional musicians, and provides music education opportunities to children. Prior to Caramoor, Haydon was executive director of the Ojai Music Festival and also held positions with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fort Wayne Philharmonic and Aspen Music Festival.

The not-for-profit Ravinia Festival typically presents more than 120 events each summer, including the annual summer residency of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, on 37 wooded acres on Chicago's North Shore. This season was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



@windycitytimes

JAIDA from page 13

With everything going on in the world right now, I think it's important to always do your best performance that you have ever done. I know a lot of people were concerned about the finale on Drag Race, but in the end they loved it.

With the distance, it may seem there's an obstacle to hold their attention, but I am sure we can do it.

WCT: Some performers in the past have brought hidden talents, like fire breathing, to *Werq the World* shows. Do you have talents that we don't know about?

JEH: I probably am a fire breather—maybe out of my ass! I think it will be a surprise. Everyone is going to bring something to the table. They always do.

I am excited that people will see another layer of me. Since we have been in a lockdown, we have not traveled so people can see us in a live show. Audiences can finally see that from me.

WCT: Do you have a favorite song that you lip-sync to currently?

JEH: My all-time favorite and one I do at every show, if I can, is "Die Young," by Kesha. The energy is up with that song and is all about a party. It's about having fun, which is what I like to give at shows.

WCT: Who are you interested in seeing from the *Werq the World* cast?

JEH: I am excited to see Crystal Methyd and Gigi Goode. I have not seen them since February. We have only had this weird way of only seeing each other from watching the show. After the show ended, I haven't been able to see them. We only talked through social media, so now I can finally see them smiling in person!

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

JEH: Yes; we all talk through a group chat. We tell each other how we have been doing.

WCT: What did you spend your winnings on?

JEH: I did splurge on a Gucci bag. It was something I wanted for the longest amount of time. When the salesperson rang it up, I wasn't sure if I should use my credit card, even though I had won \$100,000, but I had worked hard and felt like I deserved it. I had to go ahead and treat myself to something nice.

WCT: Were you happy how things turned out for your season of *Drag Race*?

JEH: I was really happy overall. I was very hopeful for the finale. I didn't know what would happen or how it would work, especially with the platform being different. Crystal and Gigi are so creative and we all saw how they did. I am just a performer. I am used to working in the bars and not having to produce a whole show. In the end, we all bought something completely different to the table. I think it's one of the best finales ever.

WCT: I heard your boyfriend makes your jewelry. How has the quarantine been with him?

JEH: Quarantine has been good. I think the best thing about our relationship is that we respect each other. I hope we continue to do so! With my journey on *Drag Race*, he helped me out so much. I don't know what I would have done without him. He did the camera work for the finale and did my hair. He will not touch my costumes, but he can do as much jewelry work as he wants to!

Jaida Essence Hall.

Photo courtesy of Brandon Voss



WCT: Do you get tired of people yelling your catchphrase "Look over there?"

JEH: [Laughs] No. I love it. I didn't even think it would be a thing. I was in the moment when it happened. Now, when I walk into a store someone always screams, "Look over there!"

We filmed the show last year and then this year we would normally be traveling and the audience would slowly get to know us. People would watch episodes and trickle in as fans along the way. With the pandemic, we have been sitting in the house the entire time. We got the love from everybody at once. People will recognize me at the grocery store, even with a mask!

WCT: With your current worldwide platform, do you want to be an activist?

JEH: Yes. As a Black queer entertainer just by performing and being who you are is already activism in itself, but you still have to do more. I try to use my voice as much as I can. I speak out about my experiences and people's experiences like me, not just about being a Black gay person, but about women's issues. Until we all win together, none of us are winning, so we all have to work and use our voice as much as we can.

I think the biggest part is talking about intersectionality between people who are marginalized or repressed like a Black woman or an Asian queer man. Even though we have so many differences, there are so many things that link us together. We need to all realize that and stop having this mentality that it is only one of us. What affects me also affects other people too. If we can think in that way, we can have progress and move forward faster.

WCT: Chicago is currently revamping [its] drag scene.

JEH: Oh, I heard about the town hall, honey! [Editor's note: Drag personality/entertainment producer T Rex issued an apology about her treatment of other performers, and agreed to a town-hall meeting.] I love that the queer entertainers in Chicago have had enough and are taking it into their own hands and making the change hap-

pen. If they are not given an opportunity, they still make a change because they needed to.

WCT: A little bird told me that you are a *Hamilton* fan.

JEH: Yes, I am and just watched it. I know there is a *Wicked* live recording somewhere, so they need to release that!

WCT: Is *Wicked* your favorite?

JEH: It's up there. I love *The Wiz*. I wish I could

see *The Wiz* as a musical live and in person. I like *The Color Purple*'s musical version and *Hamilton*. A lot of people don't know that about me. I love Broadway and I love musicals, especially!

Visit VossEvents.com for ticket information about Hall's upcoming *Drive 'N Drag* on Aug. 7-9 at Soldier Field, with two time slots per night of 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

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BOOK REVIEW

Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man

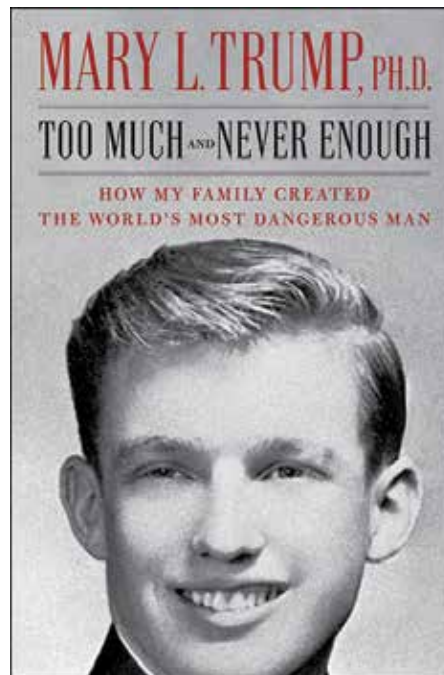
Author: Mary L. Trump, Ph.D.
\$28; Simon and Schuster;
227 pages

REVIEW BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

You hadn't seen that container in ages.

You really can't remember when you put it on the shelf. Sometime this year, six years ago, when you moved last? What's in it must be worth something, though, or you wouldn't've saved it. Now, as in the new book *Too Much and Never Enough*, by Mary L. Trump, Ph.D., digging may yield answers.

No one has to explain to you who Donald Trump is but, for anyone who's been completely out of the loop, Mary Trump is Donald's niece. (She uses his first name, always, and to avoid confusion, so will we.) Trump has a Ph.D. in psychology, worked at Manhattan Psychiatric Center while in school, was once a therapist, and taught graduate psychology. The point is, she's got chops and it



shows, especially when this book—a look at her family and, specifically, her Uncle Donald—reads like something from the True Medicine genre. Indeed, medically-based passages are nearly emotionless in their clinicality.

To fully understand this story and where it leads, Trump begins with brief accounts of her great-grandfather, who came to the United States

from Germany in order to avoid military service. After the elder man died, Trump's grandfather "Fred" (as she refers to him) became business partners with his mother, and expanded the family fortune.

Trump asserts that Fred was "a high-functioning sociopath" who put his own self-interests above everything else. He was cruel for cruelty's sake and ultimately used that against his eldest son and namesake, "Freddy," whom Fred hoped would assume the family business but who didn't have the heart for it.

When Freddy proved to be a disappointment, Fred turned to Donald, his second son, and gave him free-reign, an open bank account, and the paternal approval Trump suggests that Donald craved.

Once you get this far into *Too Much and Never Enough*, it shouldn't surprise you; none of it will, going forward, because you know how this book ends. Long before that, though, Trump shares details of growing up, noting nuances within the Trump sibling group and the family at large, learning to read silences, and hearing regular racist or homophobic comments that made her, years later, keep mum on her marriage to (and subsequent divorce from) a woman. The cruelty, as she describes it, can sometimes read like a TV documentary on wolves at a kill. Disappointment was thick on both sides.

Readers may occasionally note something like sour grapes, too, but even that offers more of an understanding of Trump's observations. While this memoir somewhat culminates with the fight

over Trump's grandfather's will, a skewed inheritance, subsequent lawsuit, and the truth she says she found with the urging of the *New York Times*, the story—as she indicates—won't begin to be finished until January, or a January four years hence.

Until then, this is a must-read for left and right alike but beware that it might leave you feeling mournful—not for any one person, but overall, in general: *Too Much and Never Enough* just contains a lot of sadness.

Want more? Then look for *The Art of Her Deal: The Untold Story of Melania Trump*, by Mary Jordan; or *The Strange Case of Donald J. Trump: A Psychological Reckoning*, by Dan P. McAdams.



Mary L. Trump.
 Photo by Peter Serling



Wanda B. (right) and mother, who passed away in July 2019.
 Photo courtesy of Wanda B.

BOOKS

Local activist Wanda B. tells her life story in 'Leader by Fault'

BY ANGELIQUE SMITH

Founder of Stud 4 Life, Lawanda Green—or Wanda B.—is no stranger to giving back. Her organization has marched to stop the violence and does cancer walks in honor of her late mother, Dorothy Jean Green. And now, she is sharing her life story in *Leader by Fault*, a new book about forgiveness, the importance of community and living her life her way.

Windy City Times: What's new with your organization, Stud 4 Life?

Wanda B.: We're trying to adopt another shelter since the other one [women's shelter, Clara's House] got shut down. We're trying to find one that deals with LGBTQ runaways so we'll be able to mentor, too. In the meantime, we're going to viaducts and taking clothes to help people on the streets and we're marching for all the unnecessary killing. We're still doing all of that.

WCT: Tell us about the book you've written.

WB: It took me 10 years, but I stopped for five, because when my mother got diagnosed with cancer and I had to take care of her. *Leader By*

Fault is a book that describes my life, coming out, living life as a stud in the projects and all of the stuff I had to deal with just being who I am. It describes the obstacles that come with that, the pain, and the family struggles.

WCT: We talked about this briefly in our last interview a few years back, but how did you come up with the title?

WB: When I was a teen, they made me a leader in the projects, and all the things that happened to me that was bad, like sexual abuse, was not my fault, so that's how I came up with it.

WCT: In reading the book, self-care comes up a lot, especially in terms of talking about your past trauma. What made you decide to finally go to therapy and how has that helped you?

WB: I had to go to therapy because I was really hurting myself. I was looking at my wife and my son and I didn't want my son to see me angry like that. Therapy really helped me—she hypnotized me and, when I woke up, I had rage and tore up her office. I really needed somebody to listen to me, and to understand the trauma that comes

Turn to page 23

Welbon invited to join Motion Picture Academy

Local Black lesbian filmmaker Yvonne Welbon was among the 819 artists and executives invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

The 2020 class is 45 percent women, 36 percent underrepresented ethnic/racial communities and 49 percent international individuals, from 68 countries. There are 75 Oscar nominees, including 15 winners, and five recipients of Scientific and Technical Awards.

Those who accept the invitations will be the only additions to the Academy's membership in 2020.

Last year, Welbon's Chicago-based nonprofit Sisters in Cinema, with support from Chicago Women's Foundation LGBTQ Giving Council, awarded three first-time feature filmmakers with a \$2,500 grant for the production of a documentary film. Sisters in Cinema launched in 1997 as an online resource for and about African-American women filmmakers.

Just a few of the other invitees include actors Awkwafina, Tyne Daly, Cynthia Erivo, Ana de Armas, Brian Tyree Henry, Eva Longoria, John David Washington and Olivia Wilde; casting directors Javier Braier and Nandini Shrikent; cinematographers Katsumi Yanagijima and Chayse Irvin; and directors Lulu Wang and Robert Eggers.



Yvonne Welbon.
Photo courtesy of Welbon

MCA reopening July 24

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago announced it is planning to reopen to the public Friday, July 24, after several months of closure due to the coronavirus pandemic.

With support from Northern Trust, the museum is welcoming

back visitors with free admission through the end of August, as well as new museum hours, days, and a lower capacity optimized for the safety and well-being of visitors, following city, state and CDC health guidelines.

The MCA will now be open to the public on Fridays and weekends 11 a.m.-6 p.m., with the first hour of the day dedicated to seniors and people at an increased risk. Visitors are encouraged to make online reservations in advance through a new touchless admission process.

The MCA's reopening features more work on view by Chicago artists and from Chicago collections than ever. Chicago filmmaker Deborah Stratman's exhibition on her film *The Illinois Parables*, includes a re-creation of the WFMT radio studio of the renowned Studs Terkel with a selection of his celebrated interviews. And "Duro Olowu: Seeing Chicago" has been extended to Sunday, Sept. 27, featuring an assembly of works drawn from Chicago's greatest public and private collections by the British-Nigerian fashion designer Duro Olowu.



"We're going to start this off with Chris being the only uncircumcised one amongst the four of us, which was a mystery to us as young boys because we only knew the penis to be one way."—**Jake Gyllenhaal** discusses the penis of his friend Chris Fischer, who is married to Amy Schumer. I'm not sure what is stranger—that Jake and his friends had points of penis comparison as "young boys," or that Jake chose to share this anecdote as part of his wedding toast!

People seem to give enormous weight to words and terms which they feel have long outlived their usefulness. There is a petition going around demanding that Chicago's gay area no longer be referred to as **Boystown**. The term, popularized in the '80s due to the large gay population, was legitimized by the Northalsted Business Alliance and by Chicago Mayor Daley, who, in 1997, called it "the first official gay neighborhood in the U.S." This man had obviously not heard of a little place called West Hollywood. Anyhoo, "boys" is clearly not an all-encompassing term. The petitioner claims that the term might be "unwelcoming for some in the LGBTQ community." New monikers under consideration include Legacy Way, Rainbow Way and Queerville.

Let's spin the dial of Billy's Wayback Machine to 2015. That's when it was alleged that **Father Peter Miqueli** stole more than \$1 million from his church to give to his boyfriend, **Keith Crist**—a name I couldn't make up if I tried. To be more accurate, Crist was a "boyfriend" with an hourly rate. Crist got his rent paid, got paid extra for "bondage sessions," was provided what officials call "ChemSex supplies" and eventually was given a house. Isn't this the plot from season five of *Breaking Bad*?

When this all came out, the priest tried to get treatment at what is referred to as a "rehab facility for priests." But they turned him down! Do you know how fucked up you are to be turned down by a "rehab facility for priests?" Anyway, he



Cheyenne Jackson (above) will soon be on the popular show "Stars in the House," which Seth Rudetsky hosts.

Photo by Karl Simone

recently died—or did he? A police spokesperson said, "Miqueli was found deceased." His family doesn't know where he was found, how he was found or where he is now.

We now turn to the biggest scandal of the week—no, not Mary Trump's book. YAWN! We're talking about **Tom Bergeron** being ousted from *Dancing with the Stars*. As if that weren't bad enough, he's being replaced by Tyra Banks? Oh, the humanity! Doesn't ABC know how beloved Tom Bergeron is? Sure, they dumped Erin Andrews, too. But, frankly there's been a revolving door of gals who have been in what I lovingly call the Brooke Burke-Charvet slot.

You know what has been giving me enormous pleasure? **Seth Rudetsky**. He does two "Stars in the House" shows each day with his husband, **James Wesley**, and has raised oodles of money for the Actors Fund. He's also doing weekly on-

line concerts with celebrated artists. How they are doing it live with him playing the piano in one place and the artist singing in another with no audio lag is something the Filth2Go engineers have yet to master. But they've been terrific. The one with the amazing **Audra McDonald** was ... well, amazing. He just did a concert with **Norm Lewis** that was also spectacular. Upcoming concerts include **Megan Hilty** on July 26 and **Cheyenne Jackson** on Aug. 2. Check them out on TheSethConcertSeries.com.

Dida you know it was Seth who prodded me to do shows online? When he started doing "Stars in the House," I sent him an email of praise. His response? "So, why aren't you doing shows, too? We've got to all pitch in and keep people entertained." Now you know who to blame for "Billy Masters LIVE!"

Last week, we had **Rachel Mason**, the director of the documentary **Circus of Books**—about the famed bookstore in West Hollywood that her parents owned. It was great to hear some behind-the-scenes stories, and even better when we were joined by the store's current owner, **Miss Chi Chi LaRue**. Naturally, we also tackled hard news with New England Cable News commentator, Sue O'Connell. "Billy Masters LIVE"—your one-stop shopping for news and entertainment. Every Tuesday and Thursday at 3 p.m. ET on BillyMasters.com/TV or at Billy Masters TV on YouTube.

Do you have a few million dollars to spare? Because **The Golden Girls house is for sale**. No, it's not in Miami; Miami, you've got style. It's in Brentwood; Brentwood, you've got ... well, they got gated communities, but that doesn't really rhyme with anything. But, I just had an idea. Before those damn H&G people gobble it up and turn it into a shrine, why doesn't **Ryan Murphy** buy it? He'll never miss the money—just say it went to pay for overages on Hollywood. Then we set up some sort of a lottery situation where real fans get to live there in pre-determined shifts. You could probably film a reality show of gays living in the house. After all, there's already video equipment set up in *Blanche's* room! Sign me up.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Giorgio from Roma: "Com'e possibile che **Pietro Boselli** assomigli esattamente alla statua di Davide a Firenze? Impossibile! Nessuno sembra cosi."

Scusatemi, ma la gente di GQ Italia crede che Pietro sia l'incarnazione della statua di Davide—e chi sono io per non essere d'accordo? In effetti, spero che dimostrando la mia fluidità in italiano (oltre agli altri miei attributi), Boselli potrebbe innamorarsi perdutamente di me. Certo, potrei sbagliarmi. Pazienza. Nel frattempo, puoi vedere la somiglianza tra Pietro e Davide su BillyMasters.com.

When I'm once again showing off my foreign tongue, it's definitely time to end yet another column. If you had trouble following that, have no fear. A picture is worth a thousand words in any language, and you can see the best pictures on BillyMasters.com—the site that likes to show and tell. For all of your other lingual needs, drop a note to me at Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before "DWTS" replaces Bruno Tonioli with Caitlyn Jenner! 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

Paulina Meat Market

BY ANDREW DAVIS

There's no mistaking when you're in the vicinity of **Paulina Meat Market** (3501 N. Lincoln Ave.; PaulinaMarket.com).

The scent of various smoked meats is enough to make most people's mouths water (including this writer's)—and, thanks to its expanded area, the spot is bringing in lots of people (although capacity is limited because of the COVID-19 pandemic). However, if that's not enough to convince you about what the market does, maybe seeing people take a number from a (plastic) pig's mouth will do the trick.

Paulina Meat Market (also called Paulina Market) has been around for more than seven decades, having originally opened in 1949. In 2006, longtime manager William and Laurie Begale, their three children (Jackie, Joe and Johnny—the latter a onetime Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honoree) and their devoted staff are in charge.

Locals have flocked to Paulina Market because it was a combination smokehouse/sausage house/



William and Johnny Begale of Paulina Meat Market.
Photo by Andrew Davis

butcher shop. (And a tour showed how, literally, the sausage is made.) However, it now also has a specialty grocery as well as a commercial kitchen where you can get sandwiches (more on those later).

"We were always kind of a grocery store," William told Windy City Times, as a steady stream of customers entered the spot (although a crowd never amassed). "We had higher-end items you couldn't find anywhere else. We had a retail area of about 2,500 square feet; in about

2007, I poked a hole through a wall and got about another 1,000 square feet and, now, we have about 5,000 square feet—so about half the building is retail."

And this market has certainly made changes in the age of the coronavirus. Williams said, "We have hand sanitizers everywhere. We have a minimum of how many people can be in here, and people have to stay six feet apart from each other. We put shields in front of all our registers. No one can come in or shop without wearing a

mask. And we have hospital-grade UV lighting."

"We closed the store for two months and had curbside pickup only," Johnny said, with his father adding, "We were fortunate to survive easily because we had so many people ordering."

As for the aforementioned sandwiches, Johnny said, "They've been keeping us busy." I've no doubt about that, as I've been dreaming about the Turkey Supreme (with roasted, honey and smoked turkey, served with Swiss cheese and your choice of toppings on a French roll) since my visit. There are also options such as the Hot & Spicy, the New York Sub and the 1949 Sub (with the type of German meats that have been at this market since the beginning), among others.

And, yes, you'll find practically any type of sausage (from liverwurst to game meats) as well as chicken, pork, bison and much more. However, there are also items such as artisanal cheeses, canned and pickled vegetables, pretzels and even chocolates.

One trend that many places have employed is plant-based meats, so with a venue like Paulina Market (that is steeped in tradition in a lot of ways), I had to ask if that's a possibility here. "We had something similar to that five or six years ago, but it wasn't [the best] quality," Johnny said. "We want to have something that's awesome. It would be nice to have something like that as an option, even if it's in the freezer."

Lastly, regarding the future of Paulina Market, does William see this venue becoming the Starbucks of meats? "We're just going to stay right here," he said. "We're bulging at the seams. Believe me, I know how lucky I am."

La Cage aux FUN!:

Opening weekend at A-ville's The Bird Cage

Photos by Joseph Stevens Photography



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BUSSIAN from page 15

WCT: Possibly they enjoyed being picked for your book?

PB: I hope that is true and that makes me proud about the project. It really changed my view about trans people for sure.

WCT: You asked several of the subjects in the book what makes them unique. So, what about you makes you unique as a photographer?

PB: For me, one photograph tells an entire story. I'm a storyteller. My goal is to tell that story with one photograph instead of 12 different photos. I don't know if I always succeed, but I try.

WCT: Were you tempted to not include interviews in the book and instead speak with just the photographers?

PB: No. I think the interviews give basic information and I wanted that in the book. I did tend to get more lengthy than I originally thought. The forward and essays at the beginning also organically evolved. I am mainly a photographer and didn't know we would have this many words. It's a good thing we did that because they had a lot to say.

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WCT: Have you thought about other books, such as a Trans Illinois one?

PB: That's not a bad idea. I have thought about a Trans California book. We also thought about Trump country, such as Wyoming and West Virginia. I would like to do a book tour there.

A trans photography book in Pakistan would be powerful. The first time I displayed the pictures was at the International Islamabad Art Festival last year. They were very well received.

While trans people are persecuted there, like everywhere, legally they have stronger rights there than anywhere in the world for inheritance and marriage. That is not true there for gay people.

South Asia has a very old tradition of trans people performing at weddings, so they are accepted even though still denigrated. I would like to pursue a project there.

I'm open. The book is doing well in photojournalism and a few other categories on Amazon.com. I prefer if people purchase it at a small chain bookstore, though, or at ApolloPublishers.com. If it sells, I am looking forward to doing more!

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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.]

Friday, July 24

American Writers Museum reopens With a mission to inspire the young writers of tomorrow. Portions of ticket sales during July support two groups: Young, Black & Lit and Bernie's Book Bank. See virtual program schedule at the link. 10:00am - 5:00pm American Writers Museum, 180 N Michigan Ave., #505 <http://american-writersmuseum.org/calendar/>

Judy and Liza - Once in a Lifetime: The London Palladium Concert COVID-19 safety practices in place to restore the experience of live theater. Through Aug. 9, 2020 7:00pm Greenhouse Theater Center 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Chicago Tickets: <http://www.greenhousetheater.org>



SPELL CHECK Throughout July

Magician Dennis Watkins will entertain (virtually) with The Magic Parlour at Home, on Fridays and Saturdays.

Photo by Ryan Bourque

Sunday, July 26

Ann Hampton Callaway Live Stream Series "The Callaway Hideaway" Diva Power, Ann's soaring celebration of the legendary ladies who helped shape the soundtrack of our lives, Barbra Streisand, Judy Garland, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Peggy Lee, Anita O'Day, Edith Piaf, Etta James, Carole King and Joni Mitchell. \$20 for this 60 minute performance. 6:00pm Online Tickets: <http://PayPal.Me/annhampton-callaway/20>

Monday, July 27

Chicago Gay Men's Caucus Chat and Chew Every Monday, the Caucus staff and some special guests will be streaming LIVE from our Facebook page to check in with our community in this time of social distancing. 12:00pm Facebook Live Tickets: <http://Facebook.com/CBGM>

Friday, July 31

Being Earnest online Based on Oscar Wilde's satirical comedy of manners, The Importance of Being Earnest. Skylight Music Theatre online/virtual, full-length musical, the score a tribute to 1960's rock groups Herman's Hermits, The Dave Clark Five, The Rolling Stones, The Seekers, The Hollies, The Lovin' Spoonful (414) 291-7800 Tickets: <http://www.skylightmusictheatre.org>

The Magic Parlour at Home Magician Den-

nis Watkins virtual magic show, designed for group and family viewings, will offer multiple performances every Friday and Saturday evening in July. \$75 per household. First show 7:30 p.m. 9:30pm Online Tickets: <http://TheMagicParlour-Chicago.com>

Saturday, Aug. 1

The Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame selection committee virtual meeting Individuals inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame will now review the slate of candidates. e-mail outreach@LGBTHallOfFame.org Online <http://www.facebook.com/groups/56108152083/>

Friday, Aug. 7

Andersonville Farmers Market online order for pickup 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 Avenue; <http://AndersonvilleMarket.org>

Monday, Aug. 10

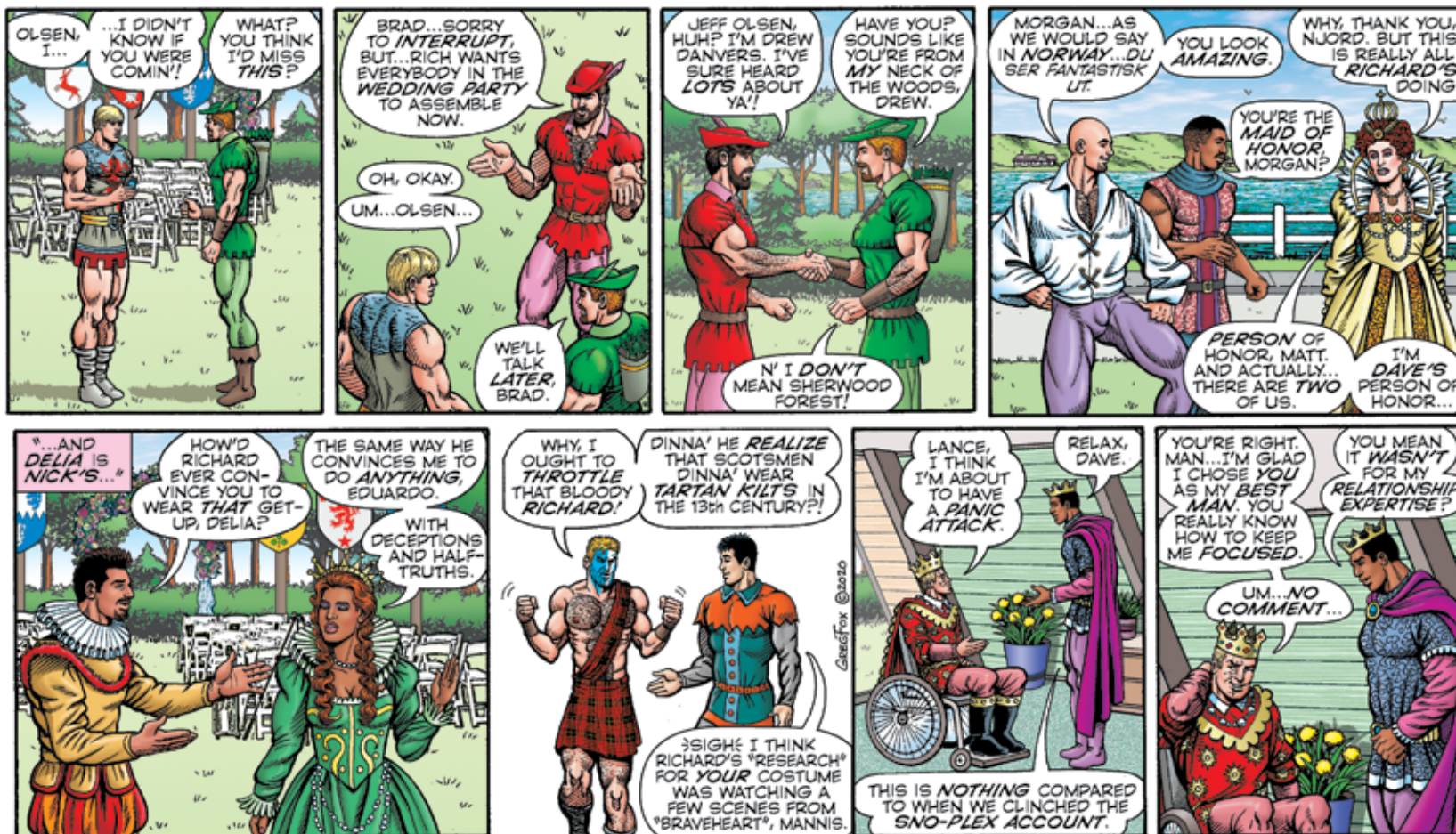
Dance for Life 2020: United as One digital Works archived from Dance for Life performances during the past 29 years, Partner Dance Companies-Giordano Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Joffrey Ballet, Hanna Britson and Dancers, Chicago Dance Crash, Ensemble Espanol Spanish Dance Theater, 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. Aug. 10-15. Donations welcome. See Aug. 15 listing for culminating event. Time:TBA Online <http://ChicagoDancersUnited.org>

Wed., Sept. 16

The Midwest LGBTQ Health Symposium 2020 Virtual Event "Being Healthy is a Radical Act" a conceptual framework to explore the health and wellness of LGBTQ communities. Healthcare professionals, social service providers, advocates, and researchers will highlight innovative best practices in LGBTQ patient-centered clinical care 9:00am - 6:00pm Malcolm X College. HowardBrown.org

KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



WANDA B. from page 18

with being a dominant person out here and to face some of the things that happened to me. I'm not a victim, I'm a survivor. In order to help other people, I had to fix me.

WCT: What do you think has made you want to help people and take on this role as a protector: of your family, of the neighborhood and of people in the LGBTQ community?

WB: I've always been a protector because my brother was the oldest and gone in the streets all the time. There was four girls and I felt like somebody had to be with them to make them safe. I would rather have gotten hurt than my sisters or my mother. When you go through things at a young age, like getting shot at, you become pretty strong, and I just started protecting everybody.

WCT: You talk about getting stabbed and you've been shot at, and your brother might have come at you with a meat cleaver. Is there anything you intentionally left out of the book?

WB: Yeah, I intentionally left some things out. Not a lot, though. Certain things I left out because I'm still working on them in therapy, so I didn't want to give advice on things I haven't even fixed myself.

WCT: What was the hardest part of writing out your life story?

WB: The hardest part was the sexual [assault] stuff because I actually had to relive it. When I was reliving it, I could visualize, I could see some of the nights. When I started off, I didn't even know how to work a computer. I was computer illiterate and I did it all on notebook paper. My son bought me a computer and I tapped one letter after another to write this book. Man, you don't

know, this book was painful. It made me think about all the tears and sexual acts, but I had to share my story.

WCT: You talk a lot about the importance of biological family, but you also talk about your rainbow family and those who are disowned and need mentoring.

WB: I love my rainbow family because when everybody in my other family wasn't there for me, I had them. They become your family when you feel like you don't have the support and love you need. Especially when coming out so young, depression is real and people are killing themselves in the community. If I can help, I want to do it. I think it's a calling of mine.

WCT: You talk a lot about street life in the book. What have you learned that you pass on to the people that you mentor?

WB: This life on the street is not a good life

and you could be killed out here. I try to teach them to go to school and to go get some help. Some people are afraid of therapy, but I'm not. I think by sharing my story, it shows that if I can overcome things and become a better person ... that helps them feel like they can do it, too.

WCT: Is that similar to what you hope your book accomplishes?

WB: I hope that readers will be able to say, 'If she can do it, I can do it. She came from here, from the streets with the shooting and the drugs, to now: she's married, she's working, her son is good, her life is good, she's got an organization, she helps people and she loves people.' As long as it helps the next generation, I don't care whether you're gay or straight, that's my goal.

People can purchase Wanda B.'s book on Amazon.



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