

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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Photo by Carrie Maxwell

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## WINDY CITY TIMES

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March 4, 2020	May 13, 2020	July 22, 2020
March 18, 2020	May 27, 2020	Aug. 5, 2020

online exclusives at  
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## SHOWING 'PERSPECTIVE'

Bi entrepreneur Rhett Lindsey (left) is behind "Diverse Perspective"—an innovative news/social platform that even has Beyonce's parents on board.  
Photo courtesy of Anderson Group Public Relations

## VOTE-WORTHY



Visit WCT's website for more interviews with political candidates, such as Jacob Meister (above).  
Photo courtesy of Meister

## THE INDY CITY

Indianapolis is just a hop, skip and a jump away—and provides plenty of diversions.

## THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Sam Smith, Cirque du Soleil and Dee Rees.

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## PASSAGES

# Gordon L. Smith

Gordon Lewis Smith, of Chesterton, Indiana, died Jan. 14. He was 68.

On that day, he'd taken the train to Chicago as always, but shortly after arriving to work, he collapsed. It was his heart. At day's end, as the sun was setting and surrounded by a tender fold of dear friends, an aura of Broadway music softened the hospital air and Barbara Cook's lyric soprano bid him a soft farewell of "Goodnight My Someone."

He was born Dec. 30, 1951, to the late Irving Lewis Smith and Regina Rose (Brown) Smith in Bridgeport, Connecticut. At age 2, his family moved to Monroe, Connecticut, where they lived in a home built by his father, and where his only sister, Dawn Smith Veccherelli, lives still. After graduation from Masuk High School in 1969 and Post Junior College in Waterbury, Connecticut, in 1971 he embarked on a professional career in financial services. His first years were with City Trust Bank in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and, most recently, in operations with Deutsche Bank and the heritage investment firm of Alex Brown in Chicago.

As a costumer for New York and Connecticut theater groups during the 1970s and early '80s he is remembered, according to his friend and fellow theater alum, Denise Medved, now of Hendersonville, North Carolina, for elaborate detail, perfectionism and historically correct execution. She recalls him dressing her for parts in Carou-

sel, Barefoot in the Park, The Man Who Came to Dinner and Gift of the Maji as well as for Victorian caroling at Rockefeller Center. During those years, he also created wardrobes of black tie-worthy gowns for elite New York charity events as well as accessories for Denise's wedding gown made of fabric woven with actual silver thread.

Gordon lived in Chicago during the late 1980s and '90s, sustaining the grief and loss of two life partners. After selling his Sheridan Road penthouse in Chicago in 2003, he changed his venue and moved to Northwest Indiana where he embraced an historic Miller property surrounded by forest, tall grasses and marsh wetlands, the home and gardens of which are now part of the Indiana Dunes National Park.

Gordon's migration to Chesterton was next and a natural as he'd become a close friend with Pilar Berman of Porter—his "work wife" who both worked with him and was among his fellow daily commuters on the South Shore train to Chicago, many who've remained friends in the years since.

He was widely known in Chesterton and Michigan City as a dapper gentleman and an always meticulously turned-out man about town. His own wardrobe and accessories were celebrated for their quality and style and the elaborate costumes he crafted for social, charitable and philanthropic events throughout northwest Indiana and southwest Michigan were exceptionally artistic creations from concept to composition.



**Gordon Smith.**

Photo courtesy of Cremation Society of Illinois

He was also a go-to designer and tailor for many of his friends as the visionary behind their distinctive looks for galas, weddings and especially historical costume parties.

In recent months he had been planning enthusiastically for retirement, looking ahead for the adventure and the next phase of his life: a relocation to Palm Springs, California, inspired by his dear friends Rick Heath and partner, Bobby Richard, who had moved there ahead of him in the past year.

In addition to his sister, he is also survived by niece Cortney Veccherelli of Southbury, Connecticut; nephew Brandon Veccherelli, of Montreal; a grand-niece and -nephew; former brother-in-law Michael Veccherelli, of Huntington, Connecticut; his former mother-in-law and late partner Brian Healy's mother, Adrienne Michelon, of Chicago and Miller Beach, Indiana; and many cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents, grandparents and two life partners, Brian Healy and Randolph, along with his dear, Milo, a dog devoted to his master but known for selectivity

in his acceptance of Gordon's close friends.

For a man who had refined the art of ghosting, or leaving without a goodbye, his exit has left an enormous void for a collective of best friends. He will be so missed by many, especially Rick Heath, of Palm Springs and New Buffalo, Michigan; Christine Leonard, of Miller Beach; Mark McLane and Carlos Lemus, formerly of Porter and now London; Pilar Berman, Craig and Colleen Ramquist and Maria Eicke, of Porter; Richard and Ann Marie Riley and Holly Jackson, of Chesterton; his frequent sidekick and muse, Mary Lukes, of Michigan City; and his sister by selection, Jamie Hogan also of Porter—all of whom feel fortunate to have had in their lives someone like him.

A memorial event "Remembering Gordon Smith: A Celebration of His Fabulous Life" will be held Saturday, Feb. 22, hosted by his dear friends the Rileys, at their Riley's Railhouse in Chesterton. The evening will begin with a reception at 5 p.m.; a short program at 6 p.m. will include a time for sharing and remembering stories of Gordon. Guests may celebrate him by wearing something in his best loved color, Tiffany Blue; for those who happen to have a Gordon design in their own wardrobe, wear that.

There will be music he would approve along with a slide presentation highlighting Gordon's life, both produced by "tiki" Louie Maldonado of Michigan City. His special friend Mary Lukes is curating, with the help of Alexander Dehilster and Maria Eicke, a retrospective of his clothing and costumes, hats and accessories for display. And some very distinctive and memorable pieces will be worn by his friend Rick Heath. Gordon's accumulation of the colorful socks that were his trademark will be available as token souvenirs.

A signature cocktail, The Gordon Gimlet, is being crafted by Mary Lukes to toast the man who was rarely without the essential ingredient: Rose's Lime Juice.

It was Gordon's wish that his ashes be united with those of his late partners, Brian and Randolph, to be dispersed in all the places he held dear.

Arrangements were respectfully handled by the Cremation Society of Illinois under the expert guidance of Brooke Benjamin, celebrant and funeral director.

—Lovingly penned by Jamie Hogan

*Cherished in that category of the family we choose,*

*relied on and trusted to be with him as he transitioned to the great beyond,*

*and left also to deal with all those treasures he dragged home in Dante*

*while remembering his footnote that "it isn't actually hoarding if it is good stuff."*

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## Exhibit examines works of refugee, immigrant writers

The American Writers Museum, 180 N. Michigan Ave., celebrates refugee and immigrant writers with its newest exhibit, "My America: Immigrant and Refugee Writers Today," which explores the influence of modern immigrant

and refugee writing on our culture, history and daily lives.

The exhibit—which runs through May 2021—is designed to elicit thoughtful dialogue on issues relating to the modern refugee crisis and the perception of immigrants in our country today.

Admission is \$12 for adults, \$8 for seniors and students, and free for children ages 12 and under. Visit [AmericanWritersMuseum.org](http://AmericanWritersMuseum.org) or call 312-374-8790 for more information.

# Census official talks LGBTQs' relevance

BY MATT SIMONETTE

According to Timothy P. Olson, associate director for field operations for the U.S. Census Bureau, it is imperative that members of the LGBT community fill out their census data in the upcoming months.

"The results of the census will determine how everyone is represented in congress and the state legislatures for the next decade," explained Olson, who is openly gay. "That is the critical thing for people to realize. Their voice in the U.S. Congress is dictated by the number of seats that they get and that's based on the census count."

Another important consideration, he added, is that "\$675 billion are allocated to communities throughout the U.S. for school funding, transportation—public transportation and regular roads and bridges—healthcare programs, senior services and housing programs. By being counted, they are ensuring that their community will get the fair share of that funding."

In mid-March, every address in the country will receive a series of official invitations to fill out their census form. The form can be filled out securely online and takes about 10 minutes, Olson said.

He emphasized that every person living in a household, even if they are residing there on a temporary basis, or are not a blood relation, should be counted.

"Everybody who lives at that address, related or unrelated, needs to be on that form," Olson said.

For the first time in U.S. history, when the form

asks about specific relationships, respondents will be able to choose categories describing same-sex relationships. While some information had been tabulated in previous censuses, this is the first time specific options were provided to respondents.

"This is a big deal for the gay and lesbian community," noted Olson. "... I hope people will self-respond accurately so we'll have an accurate count of same-sex couples living together. We can then see a real profile of America, and a profile of each state in an accurate count."

He noted that the responses are encrypted, confidential and protected by law.

"The Census Bureau cannot share information with immigration authorities, or the FBI, IRS or local code enforcement," Olson explained. "If you're in an apartment and the landlord thinks you should only have two people there, but there are five, we want you to put five people on that questionnaire. The Census Bureau cannot share that there are five people at that address with anybody at all."

Olson noted that the Census Bureau is still recruiting for temporary census employees in the in the Chicago area. Applicants must be at least 18 and a U.S. citizen, and must pass a simple background check.

"We urge people to reply to right now," he said.

For more information, see [2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs).

*Note:* This is one in a series that will run in Windy City Times about the U.S. Census.



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## Suburban district settles anti-trans lawsuit

After more than four years, Palatine-Schaumburg High School District 211 settled a lawsuit brought by transgender former student Nova Maday, who alleged discrimination.

The Daily Herald reported that the district decided to pay Maday and her legal representatives \$150,000 to settle her 2017 state lawsuit claiming she was discriminated against regarding her use of the girls locker room at Palatine High School. The complaints were initially filed in 2015.

In a statement sent to Windy City Times, ACLU of Illinois Director of the LGBTQ Advocacy Project John Knight said, "Nova bravely stood up for her dignity, after being subjected to unfair treatment simply because she is a transgender young woman and wanted to take a gym class. We hope that the end of the lawsuit and the new policy recently adopted by the Board will bring a new day at District 211 for other students who are transgender."

Maday herself added, "Being forced to dress in a separate locker room was isolating and



**Nova Maday.**  
Photo courtesy of Maday

drew attention to me that I didn't want – that no high school student wants. And even when I was offered use of the locker room, I was told that I would be segregated behind a changing curtain. That felt terrible.

"I just wanted to be treated like any other girl.

"My hope is that the new D211 policy truly means that no student has to face this kind of treatment in the future."

# LGBT-procurement goals make up main part of MWRD meeting

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's (MWRD's) Committee on Affirmative Action held an informational study session on LGBT procurement goals and other pending issues Feb. 6 at MWRD's headquarters.

MWRD Vice President Barbara J. McGowan presided over the packed proceedings, which included a presentation by attorney/consultant Colette Holt. All nine commissioners—MWRD President Kari K. Steele, McGowan, Frank Avila, Cameron Davis, Kimberly Neely Du Buclet, Marcelino Garcia, Josina Morita, Debra Shore and Mariyana T. Spyropoulos—were in attendance. (Shore and Garcia are members of the LGBTQ community.)

The meeting was the result of six months of work by Garcia and Shore to have LGBT-owned companies added under the minority-owned umbrella for district contract considerations.

In terms of LGBT programs, Holt said there is a disagreement over what the legal standards of classification are. She said this has been complicated due to the fact that the Obama administration viewed sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination as sex discrimination whereas the Trump administration disagrees. Holt added that there is a pending U.S. Supreme Court Title VII case that deals with this very question.

Holt outlined the kinds of certification issues LGBT-owned companies will have to grapple with, including what type of proof they will have to provide, especially for transgender people, and the equal-protection issues since people of color have to provide proof of their race to qualify.

As for data-collection issues, Holt said that to

do any type of disparity analysis, information has to be gathered regarding people's sexual orientation and/or gender identities on vendor applications, bidders lists and other documents—an issue he said concerns agencies across the country.

Morita asked how MWRD and other agencies verify a person's race or sex. Holt said it could be their birth certificate or driver's license, among other documentation.

Shore asked Holt if, in her opinion, there are any initiatives at other agencies or municipalities that are exemplars in the effort to increase participation, outreach and data collection for all minority communities and women—to which Holt said no.

Garcia said LGBT-procurement goals are very important to him because "discrimination is discrimination." He added that if one minority group is targeted for discrimination, others will be, as well.

"In places where people are free to be who they are, they should be leaders in making sure people feel welcome and protections are extended to them," said Garcia, who added that one organization that is at the forefront of this issue is the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

During public comments one audience member, construction company owner Tamika Holt, took issue with the LGBT-procurement focus of the meeting, saying Black people are last on 16 economic indicators and still face discrimination.

Taj Development Company Inc. CEO Roxanna Daniel countered what Holt said, stating that, as a Black lesbian, she is especially discriminated against by Black firms because of her sexual orientation. She said the best way to figure out how



MWRD commissioners Debra Shore and Marcelino Garcia. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

to proceed with these LGBT-procurement goals is to go to places where that community gathers and get feedback. Daniel also offered her services to MWRD.

LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois Director Jerome' Holston spoke about the work the chamber has done to certify LGBT-owned businesses over the years and that there have been no issues with their verification process. He added that the LGBTCC looked forward to partnering with MWRD in this effort.

Sustainable Systems LLC Environmental Engineer and Managing Member Sharon Waller offered some solutions that she said would benefit all disadvantaged communities, such as using electronic-procurement forms that would also be ecologically sound, giving out smaller contracts and utilizing a mentoring program.

Garcia spoke about the MWRD Affirmative Action Ordinance Draft Appendix O that he has been working on with Shore to expand opportunities to engage all groups where discrimination is prohibited by district statutes, including LGBT people.

The ordinance's purpose is "to encourage participation in MWRD prime contracts and associated subcontract—including, but not limited to, contracts and subcontracts for construction, pro-

fessional services, goods and general services—for businesses owned by members of protected categories not currently eligible for utilization goals under MWRD Affirmative Action Appendices A, C, D, V or K and to gather information to guide future policy decisions aimed at minimizing barriers for these business owners."

Shore said this ordinance is not seeking to establish any numerical or participation goals or change the MWRD affirmative action ordinance. She called on everyone to look at the purpose of the ordinance—which she said is to be as inclusive as possible.

Garcia asked MWRD Executive Director Brian Perkovich to have appropriate staff review and propose modifications to the appendix and have it put on the agenda for the next meeting on Feb. 20.

Among the other topics of discussion were minority, women-owned (M/WBE) and small business program legal standards that MWRD uses; pending cases across the country; trending issues; contract goal setting; how to include participation goals in furnish and deliver contracts; indirect M/WBE participation in district contracts; and intergovernmental agreements.



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# Affinity says goodbye to executive director Imani Rupert-Gordon

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Staff and supporters of Affinity Community Services sent off departing Executive Director Imani Rupert-Gordon with a celebration at its South Loop headquarters on Feb. 13.

Rupert-Gordon had led the agency, which primarily serves LGBT persons of color, with a focus on Black women, for about four years. She was recently named as head of the San Francisco-based National Center for Lesbian Rights.

She described the moment as “bittersweet” in a brief speech.

“One of the things I’ve learned at Affinity is the importance of being [both] honest and authentic,” she said. “Leaving here feels like leaving home.”

A number of friends and colleagues offered testimonials to Rupert-Gordon’s legacy at the organization. Affinity’s Ann Rowell jokingly called her “Black royalty,” praising her for being “high-class but not classist. ... We’re [now] going to let other people enjoy her.”

Activist Kelly Saulsberry recalled that she was “overjoyed” upon hearing that Rupert-Gordon



Imani Rupert-Gordon.  
Photo by Matt Simonette

had been named as Affinity’s head, adding, “You inspire us to expand ourselves and elevate ourselves.”

Incoming Interim Executive Director—and Affinity co-founder—Chris Smith noted, “I appreci-

ate your leadership and your acumen on behalf of the community.”

Affinity Board President Anna DeShawn said of Rupert-Gordon’s new employers: “They have no idea of the fierceness that’s coming their way.”

## Commissioner Mona Noriega to retire

Chicago Commissioner of Human Relations Mona Noriega is stepping down from her post.

Noriega sent Windy City Times a statement, saying, “Serving as commissioner of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations has been an amazing opportunity to expand on the City of Chicago’s commitment to civil rights and to ensure fair treatment and enforcement of the law for any one who walked into our office with a complaint of discrimination. It has been a privilege and honor to work with amazing staff and activists who have worked tirelessly to address discrimination and to serve hate crime victims.

“And it has been a particular honor to serve in this history making administration of Mayor [Lori] Lightfoot. I am grateful that Mayor Emanuel had the confidence in me to serve as commissioner and that Mayor Lightfoot asked me to continue my service. This has been one of the most challenging and absolutely rewarding jobs I have had. I have shed a few tears and had plenty of laughs, [and] I now look forward to the next chapter!”

In her own statement, Lightfoot said, “Since her work as an activist in the 1970s, Commissioner Mona Noriega has built a remarkable career dedicated to advancing equality and justice here in Chicago and across the United States. As head of the City of Chicago’s Commission on Human Relations for nearly a decade, Mona leaves behind a proud legacy of strengthening protections against racial and LGBTQ+ discrimination and sexual harassment. Because of her leadership, Chicago also expanded civil rights protections into new areas such as credit history, criminal history and military status. Mona led the charge to eliminate requiring government-issued identification when accessing public spaces that are private in nature, requirements that adversely impacted transgender and gender non-binary individuals.

“I have personally known Mona for many years as a stalwart figure in the fight for equality rights, and I am deeply grateful for her passion and grace in standing up for every Chicagoan, no matter the cost. Though I am sorry to no longer have her as a member of my cabinet, I wish Mona, her wife Evette, and their family all the happiness in the world as she begins her well-earned retirement and embarks on this next chapter in life.”

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From left: Tracy Baim, Linda Bubon, Pat McCombs, Mona Noriega and Kathy Munzer.  
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

## Panel talks lesbians, feminism in Chicago during the '70s and '80s

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Lesbians and Feminism in Chicago in the 1970s and '80s was the focus of a panel discussion Feb. 12 at Gerber/Hart Library and Archives (Gerber/Hart).

The event took place in conjunction with Gerber/Hart's current exhibit, "Lavender Women and Killer Dykes: Lesbians, Feminism and Community," running through March 25.

Chicago Reader Publisher, Windy City Times co-founder, journalist and author Tracy Baim was the event moderator. Panelists included Women & Children First co-founder and former co-owner Linda Bubon; Executive Sweet co-founder and social-justice activist Pat McCombs; Mountain Moving Coffeehouse Collective (Mountain Moving) co-producer and collective member Kathy Munzer; and Amigas Latinas co-founder and soon-to-be retired Chicago Commission on Human Relations Chair and Commissioner Mona Noriega.

Addressing a packed house, Gerber/Hart Communications and Programming Coordinator and "Lavender Women" exhibit co-creator Jen Dentel spoke about how the exhibit came to fruition including the categories they focused on—lesbian community centers, political action groups, bookstores, publishing, bars and restaurants and women's music in Chicago as well as the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival.

Chicago Women's History Center (CWHC) Board President Mary Ann Johnson said it was "a great adventure" for CWHC to work with Gerber/Hart on the exhibit and this discussion as a co-sponsor.

Baim asked each panelist to share more of their backstories and the roles they played.

McCombs spoke about the successful pickets she organized after being denied entry into the most popular lesbian bar at the time, the now-defunct Augie and CK's Bar, because they were discriminating against women of color. She said

that discrimination and her desire to create parties across Chicago in safe spaces led to the formation of Executive Sweet.

Munzer said she joined Mountain Moving almost immediately after coming out, and later became a co-producer during 1981-2005. She added that she has been a member of the Institute for Lesbian Studies discussion group for the past 28 years.

Noriega spoke about coming out in the late 1970s and, at the time, not knowing what feminism was. She added that she did not see anyone like herself—a Latina lesbian mom—so she decided to normalize it. She added that identifying herself an activist and feminist was a gradual process and one of the ways this manifested itself was when she co-created the now-defunct Latina Lesbians en Nuestro Ambiente (LLENA) and Amigas Latinas.

Bubon said the origins of Women & Children First can be traced to when she and Ann Christophersen decided not to pursue their Ph.D.'s and instead opened the bookstore because both of them knew about literature. They both were new feminist activists, so they determined that the store's mission would be featuring both feminist writers and children's books.

Baim spoke about coming out in college while living in Des Moines, Iowa, and upon returning to Chicago in 1984. There she found "this incredible community that felt like it had been there for 100 years."

McCombs, Munzer and Noriega regaled the crowd with stories about what their organizations looked like, including their promotional strategies, during that time, while Bubon spoke about the difficulties of finding enough women authors and specifically lesbian-themed books to line the shelves when the bookstore first opened.

Read the entire account of the panel online at [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

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## Pizer named interim state rep to fill 12th District seat

Yoni Pizer has been named to fill the 12th District State House seat, which had a vacancy created when state Sen. Sara Feigenholtz retired from the Illinois House.

Feigenholtz has now been named state senator, while Pizer is also running for the 12th District seat that has its primary Tuesday, March 17. Interested candidates met and discussed their credentials with the Northside Democratic Committee in an open forum Feb. 9 at the Center on Halsted.

Pizer received the majority of support at the meeting with committee persons from the 2nd, 27th and 44th wards voting to select him as state representative for the remainder of Feigenholtz's term.

Ald. Tom Tunney (44th Ward)—who has previously announced his endorsement of Pizer for the March 17 election—is the chair of the committee. The committee members' votes are weighted according to the number of voters in each ward's 2018 General Election. Tunney has 45.09 percent of the vote, with others being Sean Tenner (28.56 percent), Lucy Moog (17.31 percent), Tim Egan (7.73 percent) and Walter Burnett (1.26 percent).

"Yoni Pizer raised his family and owned a business in Lakeview for more than twenty-five years and he knows the progressive values that are important to the people in our community," said

Tunney in a statement. "Today, the Committee heard Yoni make a compelling presentation about his longtime advocacy to protect and advance women's and LGBTQ rights, and many other progressive policies. At a time when women's rights are under attack by the Trump Administration and hate crimes against the LGBTQ community and religious minorities are on the rise, Yoni has a strong, credible voice that will speak out and advocate for our diverse community's values."

As required by law, the Committee convened to fill the vacancy within 30 days of Jan. 21 to ensure people within the district are represented in the Illinois General Assembly.

Also, a press release was issued Feb. 17 stating that Feigenholtz endorsed Pizer in the Democratic primary election for the House seat she held for 24 years, calling him "the best candidate to represent the diverse needs of the 12th District."

She added, "Yoni is an openly gay Jewish person who moved to Lakeview with his husband and raised two sons right here in our neighborhood because he felt safe and at home. He is emblematic of the diversity of this district. At a time when hate crimes and antisemitism are on the rise, we need leaders like Yoni fighting for our community in Springfield."



**Yoni Pizer.**

Photo courtesy of Woods

## Lightfoot launches open applications for advisory councils

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) launched an open call for applications to fill vacancies in several community advisory councils, including the newly formed LGBTQ+ advisory council, announced last month.

The groups are the The Equity, LGBTQ+, Women's, Veteran's and New American's advisory councils.

All advisory council members must live in the City of Chicago throughout the duration of the term and agree to undergo a background check. Applications will be evaluated based on: (1) connection to targeted populations, both personal and professional; (2) evidence of engagement in local community, civic leadership, or volunteerism; (3) a personal commitment to equity and inclusion; and, (4) a demonstrated ability to engage the broader community of local networks, community members, and stakeholders.

If selected, each advisory council member serves up to a three-year term and attends, at minimum, meetings each quarter.

Applications will be accepted up until Saturday, Feb. 22. Interested applicants should contact [communityengagement@cityofchicago.org](mailto:communityengagement@cityofchicago.org) with any questions. To apply to serve on one of the five advisory councils, please visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8X23NPD>.



State Rep. Kelly Cassidy (left) and Candace Gingrich with Elizabeth Warren cutout.  
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

## Candace Gingrich endorses Warren at LGBTQ event

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Activist Candace Gingrich announced her endorsement of Elizabeth Warren for President at a Chicago LGBTQ and allies Come Out for Warren happy hour Feb. 13 at Sidetrack.

Prior to the event, Gingrich told Windy City Times that they "are supporting Elizabeth Warren for president because, in every plan that she has put out, I have seen myself and other members of the LGBTQ community. I have also seen people that other candidates do not have time for. I believe in an America where there is a president for all Americans and works for them and that person is Elizabeth Warren.

"This will be my first time voting in a presidential election as an Illinoisan, and I am pretty excited to be voting for Elizabeth Warren. Being here at Sidetrack is historical because it has been a gathering place for not just movers and shakers

but everyday people who do all the work to get the good stuff done like everyone here tonight who are going to make sure Elizabeth Warren wins."

Sidetrack performer and event emcee Dixie Lynn Cartwright greeted the over 100 attendees and said she was "all in for Warren from the jump."

Among the other speakers were Gingrich's wife, state Rep. Kelly Cassidy (14th District), who also introduced Gingrich; Ald. Maria Hadden (49th Ward); Second Congressional District Delegate André Washington; Illinois for Warren Field Organizer David Guirgis; and Warren for Illinois volunteers Justin Broom, Joey Grant and Ryan Hays.

The overriding reasons the speakers gave for their Warren endorsement included, but were not limited to, her comprehensive LGBTQ plan that centers the most marginalized in that community, her lens on racial inequality and intersectionality, housing and education plans, student loan forgiveness and economic justice plan.

The Illinois for Warren Campaign and Chicago for Warren/Chicago Pride for Warren co-hosted the event.

## ELECTIONS 2020 Early voting info; election judges needed

Early voting for the March 17 primary elections will take place March 2-16.

From Feb. 19 through March 1, early voting will be offered ONLY at the new Loop Super Site at 191 N. Clark St.

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

Government-issued photo ID is not required but is helpful if there is a question about the registration, address, signature or if there are two voters with the same or similar names at the same address. Also, note that 17-year-olds in Illinois can vote; however, they must be 17 on or before the date of the Primary Election and turn 18 on or before the date of the General or Consolidated Election.

To view a list of sites, visit [ChicagoElections.com/en/early-voting.html](https://ChicagoElections.com/en/early-voting.html). For those who reside outside Chicago but within Cook County, visit [CookCountyClerk.com/agency/early-voting](https://CookCountyClerk.com/agency/early-voting).

Also, people can apply to be election judges. The pay is \$230 for new judges (and \$255 for experienced ones) who complete training and then serve on Election Day; visit <https://chicagoelections.com/en/serving-as-a-judge-of-election.html>.

## 'Drag Them to the Polls!' Feb. 20

"Drag Them to the Polls!"—a voter education effort to get out the LGBTQ+ vote in the Chicago area by celebrating the city's history of drag art and activism—will take place Thursday, Feb. 20,

7-9 p.m., at Sidetrack Chicago, 3349 N. Halsted St.

The Illinois primary will take place Tuesday, March 17.

In addition to drag performances, there will be event will feature a meet-and-greet with openly LGBTQ+ candidates.

See [DragThemToThePolls.com](https://DragThemToThePolls.com).



## Honorees named for Impact Awards

The honorees have been named for the Chicago Foundation for Women's 2020 Impact Awards, which celebrate the people that are working to make a better future for women and girls in our region a reality.

—Founders Award: Wendy Pollack, founder and director of the Women's Law and Policy Initiative at the Shriver Center on Poverty Law

—Pioneer Award: Christina Frasier, co-founder of the Students for Reproductive Justice

—Impact Awards (three recipients): Neha Gill, executive director of Apna Ghar; Colette Payne, policy associate of Cabrini Green Legal Aid; and Imani Rupert-Gordon, (outgoing) executive director of Affinity Community Services

—The Rev. Willie Taplin Barrow Emerging Leaders Award: Assata's Daughters

The ceremony will take place Wed., March 18, 6-8 p.m., at the Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St. See [CFW.org/2020-impact-awards](https://CFW.org/2020-impact-awards).

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**ELECTIONS 2020:**  
**ILLINOIS STATE REP (9TH DISTRICT)**

# Candidate Ty Cratic on LGBT issues, campaign challenges

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Political consultant TyJuan “Ty” Cratic, who is openly gay, is one of several candidates vying to fill the vacancy left from the stepping-down of longtime state Rep. Arthur Turner. Among his competitors, in fact, is Turner’s son, Aaron. But Cratic is confident that his extensive political experience can put him ahead of the game in the heated race to represent the 9th District.

**Windy City Times: Your website mentions both that you have a “new vision” for state government and various issues require a “creative approach.” What exactly does that mean to you, and why do you think you are the right person to bring that to Springfield for the 9th District?**

Ty Cratic: The 9th District is a pretty bifurcated district. You have parts of it that are the wealthiest in the city and in the state, then you have the western portion of it, represented by the second poorest community in the city. It’s a very diverse community, but the message I carry is the same message at each door, whether I’m in North Lawndale or Lincoln Park: If we don’t look—if the state, the city and the county don’t work congruently—to make sure that we’re bringing new jobs, industry and small business growth to North Lawndale, an area that hasn’t seen significant development in over 50 years, we will continue to be reliant on property taxes, sales tax and income tax to fund our government. That means we’re leaving opportunity on the table.

**WCT: Where do you see the role of the state rep in all that?**

TC: Well, the job of the state representative is to do three things: go down to Springfield to vote on laws that affect everybody in the state; vote on funding that funds everything in the state; and then fight for their community in terms of bringing dollars in from the state—bringing in projects that bring jobs to their district. Sometimes you have to work outside the legislative process to make sure that you have the political will to make sure all this happens. The state rep’s job is a part-time job; you go down there and represent your community. You go back and you fight for these things that bring to bring them back. You’re supposed to be getting your community ready to receive the things that you go down there and fight for.

**WCT: How would you see your representation be different or similar from that of outgoing state Rep. Turner?**

TC: I’m a little bit more boisterous. I love the work that Art Turner has done. He has really gone down as a champion of criminal-justice reform. [But] I knocked on doors across the district, and in the northern portion of the district, I am

knocking and people are saying, “This is great, I’ve never met my representative. I never see him. He never knocks on doors or holds town halls or anything like that. For me, I’m going to be more of a representative of the district, and not a trustee of the district. We have to take into account people’s positions and people’s issues. I am going to hold town hall meetings and I am going to work with other elected officials, no matter what political “tribe” they’re from. We’re all paying taxes and we’re all in this together.

**WCT: What do you think are the most press-**

**ing issues for LGBT residents of the 9th District?**

TC: I think it is healthcare, being visible and homelessness. It’s all connected. When you see families that aren’t willing to accept either a trans son or a trans daughter, [the child] finds themselves being homeless at the moment. We have to be able to say that this is an issue. We want people to be safe and on their medicine, whether they are or are not HIV-positive. We don’t want them to continue a life of sex work, but we want them to know that, if they are in a life of sex work, there are areas where help can be provided. That is to help you get out of that line of work, but to make sure that you are safe as well.

When we look at homelessness, if we don’t do anything about it—whether you’re LGBTQ or non-LGBTQ—we see the rates of infection [for HIV and other STIs] go up. We need to make sure that people have proper healthcare, so that they are able to take care of themselves, whether they are LGBTQ or not.

**The full talk is at WindyCityMediaGroup.com.**



Ty Cratic.  
Photo courtesy of Cratic

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PATRICK  
**Crawley**  
JUDGE

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- Found “Recommended” by the **Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago**
- Received the **highest judicial rating possible** from several bar groups including the **Women’s Bar Association of Illinois**
- James Crawley is, “hardworking ... has extensive practice experience... and is **well regarded for his dedication to the law and his integrity.**”  
[Source: Chicago Bar Association]
- Crawley is “**Qualified**” to be Circuit Court Judge because he “has substantial experience doing complex litigation. [He] is praised as a solid litigator who is hard-working with a good temperament. He is considered to have good legal ability and is exceptionally knowledgeable.” [Source: Chicago Council of Lawyers]

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# Election 2020

## US PRESIDENT

HRC = Human Rights Campaign

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

RC = Reclaim Chicago

	HRC	PP	RC
Tom Steyer (D)			
Joseph R. Biden (D)			
Bernie Sanders (D)			Y
Pete Buttigieg (D)			
Amy J. Klobuchar (D)			
Michael R. Bloomberg (D)			
Elizabeth Warren (D)			
John K. Delaney (D)			
Tulsi Gabbard (D)			
Donald J. Trump (R)			
Roque "Rocky" DeLaFuente (R)			

## COOK COUNTY RACES

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

PPAC = Personal PAC

RC = Reclaim Chicago

SEIU = SEIU Illinois State Council

	EI	PPAC	RC	SEIU
<b>COOK COUNTY CLERK</b>				
Jacob Meister (D)				
Iris Y. Martinez (D)		Y		
Richard R. Boykin (D)		Y		
Michael M. Cabonargi (D)		Y		
Barbara Bellar (R)				
<b>STATE'S ATTORNEY</b>				
Bill Conway (D)				
Kim Foxx (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Patrick W. "Pat" O'Brien (R)				
Christopher E. K. Pfannkuche (R)				
Donna Moore (D)				
Bob Fioretti (D)				

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Frank Avila (D)

Heather Boyle (D)

M. Cameron "Cam" Davis (D)

Kimberly Neely Dubuclet (D)

Eira L. Corral Sepulveda (D)

Michael G. Grace (D)

Kim L. Dulaney (D)

Mike Cashman (D)

Tammie Felicia Vinson (G)

Troy Antonio Hernandez (G)

Rachel Wales (G)

Deyon Dean (D)

Shundar Lin (D)

## US SENATE

HRC = Human Rights Campaign 115th Congress (Jan. 3, 2017-Jan. 3, 2019), ratings are a percentage of total 100% based on HRC tracking of how candidates voted in the 115th Congress

IFT = Illinois Federation of Teachers

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

SEIU = SEIU Illinois State Council

	HRC	IFT	PP	SEIU
Richard J. Durbin (D)	100	Y	Y	Y
Mark C. Curran Jr. (D)				
Tom Tarter (R)				
Casey Chlebek (R)				
Peggy Hubbard (R)				
Robert Marshall (R)				

## US CONGRESS RACES

HRC = Human Rights Campaign 115th Congress (Jan. 3, 2017-Jan. 3, 2019), ratings are a percentage of total 100% based on HRC tracking of how candidates voted in the 115th Congress

IFT = Illinois Federation of Teachers

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

RC = Reclaim Chicago

SEIU = SEIU Illinois State Council

	HRC	IFT	PP	RC	SEIU
<b>1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>					
Bobby L. Rush (D)	100		Y		Y
Ameena Nuur Matthews (D)					
Robert Emmons, Jr. (D)					
Sarah Gad (D)					
Philanise White (R)					
<b>2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>					
Robin Kelly (D)	100	Y	Y		Y
Marcus Lewis (D)					
Theresa J. Raborn (R)					
<b>3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>					
Rush Darwish (D)					
Daniel William Lipinski (D)	58	Y	Y	Y	Y
Marie Newman (D)					
Charles M. Hughes (D)					
Mike Fricolone (R)					
Arthur J. Jones (R)					
Catherine A O'Shea (R)					
<b>4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>					
Jesus "Chuy" Garcia (D)		Y	Y		Y
Christopher Lasky (R)					
<b>5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>					
Mike Quigley (D)	100	Y	Y		Y
Brian Burns (D)					
Tommy Hanson (R)					
Kimball Ladien (R)					
<b>6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>					
Sean Casten (D)		Y	Y		Y
Jeanne Ives (R)					
Gordon (Jay) Kinzler (R)					
<b>7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>					
Danny K. Davis (D)	88	Y	Y		Y
Kina Collins (D)					
Anthony Clark (D)					
Kristine Schanbacher (D)					
Craig Cameron (R)					

## 8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Raja Krishnamoorthi (D)

William Olson (D)

Inam Hussain (D)

## 9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Janice D. Schakowsky (D)

Sargis Sangari (R)

## 10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Brad Schneider (D)

Valerie Ramirez Mukherjee (R)

## 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Rachel Ventura (D)

Bill Foster (D)

Rick Laib (R)

Krishna K. Bansal (R)

## 12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Raymond C. Lenzi (D)

Joel D. Funk (D)

Michael Bost (R)

## 13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Betsy Dirksen Londrigan (D)

Stefanie Smith (D)

Rodney Davis (R)

## 14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Lauren Underwood (D)

Jim Oberweis (R)

Catalina Lauf (R)

James T. "Jim" Marter (R)

Ted Gradel (R)

Sue Rezin (R)

Jerry Evans (R)

Anthony Catella (R)

## 15TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Craig Morton (D)

Kevin Gaither (D)

Erika C. Weaver (D)

John W. Hursey, Jr. (D)

Mary Miller (R)

Darren E. Duncan (R)

Kerry A. Wolff (R)

Chuck Ellington (R)

## 16TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Dani Brzozowski (D)

Adam Kinzinger (R)

## 17TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Cheri Bustos (D)

Esther Joy King (R)

William W. Fawell (R)

## 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Darin LaHood (R)

Individual races for which no data were applicable have been eliminated from the print version of this chart. Data from [voteforjudges.org](http://voteforjudges.org), which compiles evaluations from various bar associations, were not made available in time for the print version of this chart. In addition, space was made in the chart for endorsements for IVI-IPO, but those were also not available in time.

Please see our website for full charts and check back in the next issue, out March 4, 2020.





## ELECTIONS 2020

# Guide to the LGBTQs

This year's primary elections will feature a record number of openly LGBT candidates throughout Illinois. See the complete list at [www.WindyCityTimes.com](http://www.WindyCityTimes.com). They include:

## 1. Karla Bailey-Smith

Race: Illinois state representative (88th District)

Website: [Unite88.org](http://Unite88.org)

The skinny: Bailey-Smith was born in Greencastle, Indiana. She earned an undergraduate degree at Illinois Wesleyan University in 1990 and a graduate degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1993. Bailey-Smith's career experience includes working as a painter and scenic artist.

## 2. Deidre Baumann

Race: Cook County Circuit Court (C. Sheehan vacancy)

Website: [DeidreForJudge.com](http://DeidreForJudge.com)

The skinny: Baumann has more than 25 years representing people against the government and large corporations, and was lead counsel in the Burr Oak Cemetery litigation. She is currently president of the Suburban Bar Coalition, and serves on the boards of directors for the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago and for the Decalogue Foundation.

## 3. Kelly Cassidy

Race: Illinois state representative (14th District)

Website: [citizensforcassidy.com](http://citizensforcassidy.com)

The skinny: Cassidy, who recently wed activist Candice Gingrich, has served her district since 2011. Seeking to get re-elected, Cassidy is the only openly lesbian member of the General Assembly.

## 4. Ty Cratic

Race: Illinois state representative (9th District)

Website: [TyCratic.com](http://TyCratic.com)

The skinny: Cratic (a onetime Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honoree) has been heavily involved in politics for quite some time, although this is his first time running. He is a native Chicagoan and has earned his B.A. degree in political science from Southern Illinois University. Among other accomplishments, Cratic served as senior staff on two Congressional campaigns in Ohio and Georgia, and has worked in the office of Alderman Jason C. Ervin, of Chicago's 28th Ward.

## 5. James Patrick Crawley

Race: Circuit Court of Cook County (Roti vacancy)

Website: [crawleyforjudge.com](http://crawleyforjudge.com)

The skinny: Openly gay Crawley has been endorsed by Personal PAC as well as a number of other organizations. He previously served on the boards of Jane Addams Hull House and AIDS Care.

## 6. Michelle Darbro

Race: Illinois state representative (20th District)

Website: [DarbroForRep.com](http://DarbroForRep.com)

The skinny: A Norwood Park resident, Darbro is a career firefighter and paramedic who is a 2015 inductee to the University of Chicago Athletic Hall of Fame.

## 7. James T. Derico Jr.

Race: Cook County Circuit Court (Coghlan vacancy)

Website: [Derico4Judge.com](http://Derico4Judge.com)

The skinny: Derico is a 1982 graduate of the University of Notre Dame and a 1985 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School. In December 2018, the Illinois Supreme Court appointed him to serve as a Circuit Court judge for the Circuit Court of Cook County.

## 8. Michael Forti

Race: Cook County Judicial Circuit Courtve (8th Subcircuit/Gubin vacancy)

Website: None

The skinny: Forti is a judge for the 8th Subcircuit of the Cook County Judicial Circuit Court in Illinois. However, his current term expires Dec. 7, necessitating a run. He faces no opponents in this race.

## 9. Jimmy Garfield

Race: Illinois state representative (12th District)

Website: [JimmyGarfield.com](http://JimmyGarfield.com)

The skinny: Garfield, an attorney, is running on a platform focused on reform in Springfield, and has been vocal about his opposition to longtime House Speaker Michael Madigan.

## 10. Greg Harris

Race: Illinois state representative (13th District)

Website: [GregHarris.org](http://GregHarris.org)

The skinny: Harris who was chief co-sponsor of SB10, the legislation that brought about marriage equality in Illinois has a district that includes several North Side neighborhoods. Harris (who was first elected to the state House in 2006, and is the first openly gay person in Illinois to become a member of legislative leadership) ran unopposed in the March 20 primary.

## 11. Marty Malone

Race: Illinois state representative (12th District)

Website: [martymalone.com](http://martymalone.com)

The skinny: Lake View resident Marty Malone is making his first bid for office as one of four openly gay men vying to be the 12th District's House representative. His platform focuses in large part on property tax reform.

## 12. Mary Cay Marubio

Race: Cook County Circuit Court (O'Brien vacancy)

Website: [JudgeMarubio.com](http://JudgeMarubio.com)

The skinny: Mary Catherine "Mary Cay" Marubio is currently an associate judge for the Circuit Court of Cook County. Elected by her peers in 2016, she is currently assigned to the Pretrial Division and previously served in the Domestic Relations Division. Also, Marubio is president of the Alliance of Illinois Judges—whose mission is to promote and encourage respect and unbiased treatment for LGBTQ individuals as they relate to the judiciary, the legal profession and the administration of justice.

## 13. Denika McMillen

Race: Illinois state representative (41st District)

Website: [McMillen4U.com](http://McMillen4U.com)

The skinny: McMillen is a licensed clinical social worker and resident of Naperville. Since moving to Naperville in 2016 with her wife and their three children, McMillen has been an active member of the Diversity Advisory Committee for District 203, Indivisible Naperville and other groups, and was an original board member of the Naper Pride organization.

## 14. Jacob Meister

Race: Cook County clerk of the Circuit Court

Social media site: "Jacob Meister," on Facebook  
The skinny: Branding himself a progressive reformer, Meister has been practicing law in Chicago for almost three decades. He is also the founder of The Civil Rights Agenda, an LGBTQ-advocacy organization.

## 15. Ken Mejia-Beal

Race: Illinois state representative (42nd District)

Website: [KMBfor42.com](http://KMBfor42.com)

The skinny: First-time political candidate in the DuPage County district, Mejia-Beal's platform centers on three major issues he intends to change in his district: halting any revenue increases on alcohol, establishing simpler distribution of affordable insulin and HIV medication, and ending puppy mills in Illinois.

## 16. Yoni Pizer

Race: Illinois state representative (12th District)

Website: [yonifor12.com](http://yonifor12.com)

The skinny: Pizer, a longtime Lake View resident, is a realtor/developer who, with husband Brad Lippitz, has been intensely involved in politics for years, hosting fundraisers for politicians such as Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and president candidate Pete Buttigieg. Pizer was recently named to serve as the acting representative of the district following the departure of Sara Feigenholtz for the state Senate.

## 17. Ryan Podges

Race: Illinois state representative (12th District)

Website: [RyanPodges.com](http://RyanPodges.com)

The skinny: Yes, there are four gay men running to succeed Sara Feigenholtz for this Illinois House seat. Podges, a Chicago attorney, feels there should be more LGBTQ representation in politics, and that the biggest problem for LGBTQs is access to proper healthcare.

## 18. Jill Rose Quinn

Race: Cook County Court judge (K. Sheehan vacancy)

Website: [VoteJillRoseQuinn.com](http://VoteJillRoseQuinn.com)

The skinny: Quinn, a transgender attorney, has private practice experience includes working at general legal practices in Chicago, Bloomington, Lombard, Glen Ellyn and Franklin Park. She has also gotten the backing of several key political figures, including Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot.

## 19. Lamont Robinson

Race: Illinois state representative (5th District)

Website: [VoteLamontRobinson.com](http://VoteLamontRobinson.com)

The skinny: Robinson—who runs two Chicago Allstate Insurance offices, in Bronzeville and Humboldt Park—made history as the first openly gay African-American person in the General Assembly. During this primary, he is running unopposed.

## 20. Brian Sager

Race: Illinois state representative (63rd District)

Website: [People4BrianSager.com](http://People4BrianSager.com)

The skinny: Sager is a retired college professor and administrator who has been the mayor of Woodstock since 2005. Among his top legislative priorities are economic and job growth as well political ethics and early childhood education.

## 21. Levander "Van" Smith Jr.

Race: Cook County Circuit Court (Larson vacancy)

Website: [SmithJrForJudge.com](http://SmithJrForJudge.com)

The skinny: Smith, an Oak Park resident, is waging his first campaign for Cook County Circuit Court judge—but he already sits on the bench. In February 2019, the Illinois Supreme Court appointed Smith as a judge (in the domestic-violence division), with a term set to expire Dec. 7, 2020.

## 22. Maggie Trevor

Race: Illinois state representative (54th District)

Website: <http://trevorforstaterep.net/>

The skinny: Trevor, who identifies as lesbian, is the only candidate in the Democratic primary—and incumbent Tom Morrison is the sole candidate in the Republican primary. Trevor was born and raised in Rolling Meadows, where her parents were among the city's original residents.



All photos courtesy of individuals campaigns or WCT staff photos

## viewpoints



**Dr. Steven R. YACOVELLI**

## Make 2020 the year that being queer is your key to a courageous career

Remember, in *The Wizard of Oz*, how the Cowardly Lion—when he got to see the wizard—was like, “What? I already had courage? WTH?” I mean, it was kinda poopy that the wizard made the poor cat go through that drama, only to say, “That gift you want? You already got it!”

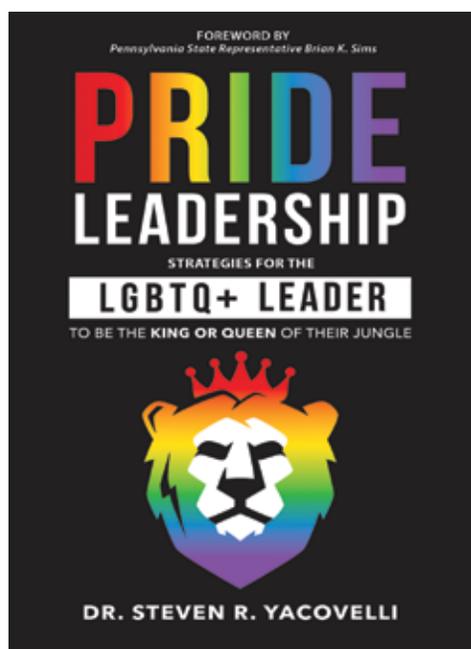
Well, leadership courage is a lot like that. When leaders ask me, “How can I get more courageous in my leadership?” I share that—like that lion—you already got this; just tap into it (or click your heels a few times like Dorothy)!

At its core, it’s easiest to think of courage as that adrenaline-filled action hero that we see in the movies. Amazon warriors like Wonder Woman, death-facing young wizards like Harry Potter, countless soldiers and sailors entering the battle to win the war: We see these images and get an idea of what “courage” is supposed to be. But even if you’re not a Navy SEAL or a wand-wielding wizard or an immortal Amazonian princess, you’re still in luck: Courageous leadership doesn’t require you to be any of those. By nature of who you are as an LGBTQ+ person, I’d argue that you already have a whole ton of courage up your sleeve.

First and foremost, if you’ve taken the steps to be your true, authentic self then you’ve already exercised that special courage that typically goes against the norm. We can channel that power to help be a more effective leader in the workplace and beyond.

When we think about being courageous in the workplace, even if we’re living our authentic selves, there’s still a lot of factors that can prevent us from being our most courageous and effective leadership selves. Time and again, these are the top three “courage inhibitors” that tend to come up for leaders, especially LGBTQ+ Leaders.

**1. The challenge of fear:** If you were to ask



around, you’d likely find that a lack of courage and abundance of complacency in the workplace comes down to one simple thing: fear. When we think about this in the business context it can be broken down into two subtypes: fear of (perceived or actual) failure and fear of feeling like an outsider.

With the first, we tend to strive for perfectionism. Typically, most folks want to be seen as a rock star performer and anything less is deemed a failure. The latter comes from a more personal place, where challenging the status quo may make you feel like an outsider in your workplace. As LGBTQ+ people, we’ve most likely had that feeling before, or maybe still do. So, in a work context, this desire to avoid the feeling of being the “other” leads us to be compliant, even if we know the idea really needs to be challenged for the good of the organization. Having leadership courage here is to be OK with failing, being OK with being perceived as that outsider for the sake of doing better work, benefiting your team members or moving your organization forward.

**2. The challenge of assumptions (or “filling in the blanks”):** As humans, we often fill in the gaps when we’re presented with in situations where we don’t know all the data. It’s easy to connect the dots between one problem and the next, even when the two aren’t related, without taking the time to

examine our own approach. When we think of this in the context of courage, we’re either avoiding truly understanding the situation or we’re scared to dive deeper into its truth. Having leadership courage means lifting up those rocks and seeing what’s underneath; lack of courage here is making assumptions about the situation without knowing all the information.

3. The challenge of being locked into current behaviors: Let’s talk about change for a minute. I’ll tell you something you probably already know: most people don’t like change. On a fundamental level, change is a really fab idea; it’s fresh and new, it expands horizons, it allows us to be innovative and to have new experiences.

In the workplace context, we initiate change so that our organization can grow and prosper. But the truth is the vast majority of people hate change. Why? On one hand, humans unconsciously don’t like change because it hits a part of our brain that likes safety and security; engaging in something new could lead to a dangerous situation. When most people engage in change, it leads to an unsettling feeling of vulnerability.

On the other hand, most folks’ conscious selves don’t like change because it’s hard. We get used to situations and know how to act and adjust to them, even if the situation isn’t ideal. Some humans don’t like change so much that they’d sooner stay in a bad situation than move to newness. So, whether unconscious or conscious, for most people change is hard! It takes courage to try something new, something different and individual resilience to keep at it when it doesn’t work perfectly the first time.

As LGBTQ+ people, courage is part of our foundation: the courage to be ourselves, to love who we love, to be our authentic selves in front of the world. It’s a superpower that every LGBTQ+ person I know has within them: it’s just a matter of avoiding the three “courage inhibitors” and channeling that courage just like the not-so-Cowardly Lion did. ROAR!

**Dr. Steve Yacovelli (“The Gay Leadership Dude”)** is owner and principal of **TopDog Learning Group, LLC**. His latest book, **Pride Leadership: Strategies for the LGBTQ+ Leader to be the King or Queen of their Jungle** “came out” June 2019. For more information, visit [www.amazon.com/Pride-Leadership-Strategies-Leader-Jungle/dp/1946384674/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=yacovelli&qid=1579724743&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Pride-Leadership-Strategies-Leader-Jungle/dp/1946384674/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=yacovelli&qid=1579724743&sr=8-1).

**The book is available for purchase at [https://www.amazon.com/Pride-Leadership-Strategies-Leader-Jungle/dp/1946384674/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=yacovelli&qid=1579724743&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Pride-Leadership-Strategies-Leader-Jungle/dp/1946384674/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=yacovelli&qid=1579724743&sr=8-1).**

**Photo of Yacovelli by Clara Smith**

with his husband, Paul, and their pugs, Spooner and Magnus, in Chicago’s Edgewater neighborhood.

### 25. Sam Yingling

Race: Illinois state representative (62nd District)  
Website: [SamYingling.com](http://SamYingling.com)

The skinny: Grayslake resident Yingling ran unopposed in the primary for his fourth term. He is the first openly gay House member from outside metropolitan Chicago. Yingling proposed to longtime partner Lowell Jaffe at the party former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn threw to celebrate the passage of Illinois’ marriage-equality bill in 2013. (They married in 2015.)

Race: Circuit Court of Cook County (9th Judicial Subcircuit)

Website: [MichaelWeaverForJudge.com](http://MichaelWeaverForJudge.com)

The skinny: Weaver is a partner in the trial department at the law firm McDermott Will & Emery LLP, where he is also the partner-in-charge for the LGBTQ+ Diversity and Inclusion Committee. He lives



All photos courtesy of individuals campaigns or WCT staff photos

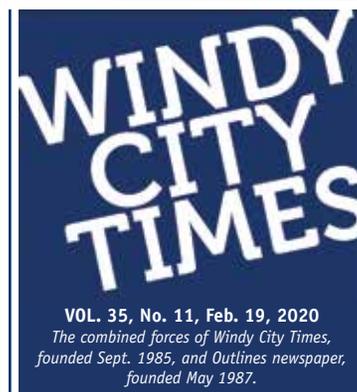
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### 23. Emiliano Vera

Race: Illinois state representative (93rd District)  
Website: [VoteVeraIL.org](http://VoteVeraIL.org)

The skinny: Vera is running against Scott Stoll in the Democratic primary in the western Illinois district, which has Republican Norine Hammond as the incumbent. This district is one of 710 state legislative districts throughout the nation that intersects with one or more pivot counties (those that went from Obama in 2008 and 2012 to Trump in 2016).

### 24. Michael Weaver



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## Vaginal Davis talks storied career at Art Institute event

BY CARRIE MAXWELL



Vaginal Davis.  
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

A packed house greeted renowned artist Vaginal Davis as she took the stage for her one-woman show, *No One Leaves Delilah*, Feb. 5 at the Art Institute of Chicago's Fullerton Hall.

Davis, a founding member of the homocore movement who named herself after activist Angela Davis, has showcased her self-proclaimed "multiracial, maxi-gendered" mixed-media pieces at venues across the world since the late 1970s. In 1991, Davis brought her singular style of art to the first international queer zine convention SPEW at Chicago's Randolph Street Gallery.

Following remarks by Society of Contemporary Art President David Egeland and Art Institute of Chicago Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Curatorial Fellow Solveig Nelson, Davis played a 15-minute audio recording of eclectic music/spoken word in German that she created and a slide show of her own visage into 1970s Black power images before she emerged onstage with a corded phone handset to her ear and a shopping bag decorated with some of her favorite photos.

In lieu of using modern technology, Davis' spoken-word chronicling of her life was written on paper, with photos of African-American figures Octavia Butler, Zora Neale Hurston and Ethel Waters printed on the back.

Speaking about her childhood in Los Angeles, Davis said she grew up in an all-female household with a mother who was "the leader of a group of multi-racial women with weapons fighting to establish a feminist state."

In terms of institutions, Davis said they change people, not the other way around.

Davis said it is a miracle that she never learned how to drive which is unusual, especially due to where she grew up. She added that she has no desire to ever own a car because it emits fossil fuels.

"For over a decade, I have lived in the beautiful but bleak Berlin, Germany, where almost everyone rides bicycles and takes public transportation," said Davis.

Davis talked about her artistic endeavors in Berlin, including her many collaborators. She also named a number of people who have influenced her work, such as Adrienne Rich and June Jordan.

During the Q&A, Davis was asked how to dismantle systems of oppression and she said the key is to be vocal and belligerent so people listen. She said young people should demand that older folks step aside so things change for the better. Davis also called on attendees to actually write and send letters via the post office.

A dinner gathering took place at Bad Hunter in the West Loop immediately following Davis' performance.

The Society for Contemporary Art presented the event with Eric Ceputis and David W. Williams serving as co-sponsors.

An exhibition of her work—"Vaginal Davis: The White to Be Angry," co-curated by Nelson and Art Institute of Chicago Modern and Contemporary Art Curator Hendrik Folkerts—is on display at the Art Institute through April 26.

See [VaginalDavis.com](http://VaginalDavis.com) and [ARTIC.edu/exhibitions/9441/vaginal-davis-the-white-to-be-angry](http://ARTIC.edu/exhibitions/9441/vaginal-davis-the-white-to-be-angry) to purchase tickets.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Lipstick Lobotomy**

Playwright: Krista Knight

At: Trap Door Theater, 1655 W. Cortland Ave.

Tickets: \$20-\$25; Trapdoor.ticketleap.com

Runs through: March 21

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Home, goes the adage, is where they have to take you in, but if you're an adult female viewed by your kin as a liability to its tribal aspirations, you might find yourself sequestered under the surveillance of gentle-but-firm warders in some remote retreat providing palliative care to the infirm of mind, body or impulse control—sanitariums having supplanted convents as cloistered residences befitting ladies of sheltered upbringing.

Among the cruelties cited in the demystification of the once-revered Kennedy clan is its patriarch's decision in 1941 to subject his eldest daughter to a then-experimental psychosurgery known today as prefrontal lobotomy, all other methods of curtailing her incorrigible behavior having failed to reduce its threat to the family advancement.

This isn't the story that Krista Knight is here to recount, however. While Rosemary Kennedy may be the celebrity "guest" at the fictional Institute For Living, our protagonist is one Virginia Harrison Hamann—"Ginny" to her friends—on whose real-life journals her great-niece's play is based. In contrast to the headstrong heiress who



Eleanor Katz, Ann Sonnevile, Abby Blankenship and Natará Easter in *Lipstick Lobotomy*.

Photo courtesy of Trap Door Theatre

becomes her confidante in this likewise fictional tale, Ginny's search for escape from the depression rendering her imperfect in the eyes of her demanding father leads her to embrace the often-unproven therapies offered by eager doctors looking to make their reputations.

While the power invested in male authorities may lie at the source of the atrocities inflicted upon the women of their day, the prejudices of a

rarified society in mid-century North America, as depicted by Knight, must also share the blame. After Ginny reveals her Jewish ancestry, Rosemary's reflexive rejection sparks the retort "Well, you're Catholic! That's just as bad!" In an atmosphere of xenophobia arising from the possibility of war with Germany, uncertified childbirths and fraternization with divorcees are regarded as impediments to an Irish immigrant family with political ambitions like the Kennedys.

Trap Door Theatre makes no attempt to reproduce the full spectrum of a well-endowed "health" resort, but instead relies on Jacqueline Froy's jungle-gym climbing apparatus to suggest the Institute's indoor and outdoor furnishings, from recreational facilities to cells equipped with restraints and cephalogrammic electrodes (playgoers prone to hospital nightmares might want to look away during the cerebral amputation scene). Providing the thematic undercurrent for Knight's narrative is Mike Mazzocca's score linking Irving Berlin's patriotic anthem "God Bless America" (the cadence-chant prescribed for daily exercises) with the infantile ditty "Animal Crackers."

Kate Hendrikson's direction is additionally enlivened by such presentational devices as grotesque fixed-smile masks, Brechtian title cards and age/ethnic-fluid casting, but what remains in our memories afterward (besides a deep suspicion of medical science) is the empathy generated by Ann Sonnevile and Abby Blankenship in the roles of the forlorn damsels whose thwarted potential might have brought them peace and contentment in a more enlightened world.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Emma**

Playwright: Paul Gordon

(book, music &amp; lyrics)

At: Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Navy Pier

Tickets: 312-595-5600; ChicagoShakes.com;

\$35-\$90

Runs through: March 15

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

This new musical adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma* has received mostly glowing reviews, but my reaction is somewhat contrary. It's not that I disliked it: it's handsome and melodious, with an outstanding cast and orchestra; I had a pleasant time. So why didn't *Emma* sweep me away?

Jane Austen's novels—set in elegant Regency England of the early 1800s—are masterpieces of delayed gratification. Her upper-class hero and heroine never so much as embrace—let alone dally—until they declare undying love late in the story. However, to dramatize *Emma* as a movie, play or musical, you can't delay gratification too long or you'll pleasantly lose your audience, and this version does just that.

To be sure, Paul Gordon's book, music and lyrics are true to the main threads of Austen's novel. Gordon effortlessly conveys—no mean feat—Austen's combination of romance, intellect and comedy of manners, and his contemporary music gracefully summons an earlier, more stately era. Still I waited and waited and waited for someone to fire an emotional gun in this show. Finally, when the hero, Mr. Knightley, expressed his passion for *Emma* in a soaring song, the audience leapt to embrace it, making it the show's most rousingly-applauded number. But it didn't happen until the middle of Act II, which is much too long to wait. Intermission came and went without anything really being at stake for *Emma* or Mr. Knightley. Gordon must find a way to inject something deeply emotional for the hero and heroine much earlier.

*Emma* isn't a dance show, either, and Act I could use some goosing up with fancier musical staging, or a rousing all-cast number similar to "Relations," the effective early number that really sets *Emma* in motion. Also, Gordon has turned Harriet Smith's love interest, Robert Martin (Ian Geers), into an inarticulate country bumpkin rather than the well-spoken yeoman farmer of the novel. It makes him a minor comic character for whom Smith (Ephie Aardema) seems to settle, thereby diminishing both of them.

Beyond these points, *Emma* is beautifully played and sung. Lead players Lora Lee Gayer (*Emma*), Brad Standley (Mr. Knightley), Erica Stephen (Jane Fairfax) and Devin DeSantis (Frank Churchill) have wonderful mezzo, alto and tenor voices and deserve a good quartet, which they do not have. The strong strings and woodwinds of the five-player orchestra provide a rich sound for Gordon's lilting and lovely score, although it would be better to cut the two brief opening songs and launch the show with "Relations."

Roberta Duchak is musical director, Korey Danielson the conductor, Jane Lanier the choreographer and Barbara Gaines the director. All have done strong work, but the vehicle itself needs fine tuning after this initial full production.

## THEATER REVIEW

**How a Boy Falls**

Playwright: Steven Dietz

At: Northlight Theatre, 9501 Skokie Blvd, Skokie

Tickets: 847-673-6300; Northlight.org;

\$30-\$89

Runs through: Feb. 29

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Mitch and Sam ogle an attractive young woman in a coffee joint. Although they've just met, slightly sleazy Mitch (Travis A. Knight) urges Sam (Sean Parris) to hit on her. Instead, an older man (Tim Decker) enters and sits with Michelle, called Chelle (Cassidy Slaughter Mason).

Caring little about Chelle's credentials, uber-wealthy Paul quickly hires her as au pair for his young son, and almost immediately tells romantic tales of how he met and his wife, Miranda (Michelle Duffy). This all happens in the first five minutes of this 75-minute world premiere, which goes lickety-split. Join the club if you're not sure where you are or how you got there.

One thing is certain: the child disappears while playing hide-and-peek with Chelle. Apparently he fell from the balcony of Paul and Miranda's seacoast mansion ... but there's no body and security camera footage has been erased. What gives? Paul coerces Chelle to remain in the mansion while Miranda travels. He never acts on what appear to be sexual intentions towards Chelle. Miranda, meanwhile, reveals all is



Sean Parris and Cassidy Slaughter Mason in *How a Boy Falls*.

Photo by Michael Brosilow

not rosy in her marriage and business partnership with Paul. Chelle, too, has a secret past. And Mitch, it turns out, works for Paul. Or is it Miranda? And Sam, when he finally befriends Chelle, spins a story, too.

Distinguished veteran author Steven Dietz—perhaps America's most widely produced playwright who isn't a household name—keeps five plates spinning in the air in this psychological thriller, aided by capable director Halena Kays. None of the five characters is whom he/she appears to be and all are hiding something, which ends up being either too much or too little.

The "too much" part is the speed and number of twists, reversals and revelations, although Dietz is a clever puzzle master and the rapid-fire plot holds audience attention. *How A Boy Falls* is good theater in terms of devices and mechanics. But it's too little because hardly any time is

devoted to character development. The people you should care about—Chelle primarily but possibly Sam and Miranda—never give enough of themselves emotionally for a viewer to connect. In the end, Chelle is as callous as Paul (the play's fall guy), although she gets away clean and he doesn't. I don't think the audience would mind if the play were 12 minutes longer, with that time devoted to character-building and deeper exposition. Also, the amusing dichotomy between Sam and Paul—one loves a paper trail, the other loathes it—could be exploited more.

Lizzie Bracken's scenic design nicely echoes the play: the mansion is suggested by high, white, cold, opaque gauze walls, standing atop three broadly curving steps suggesting the seashore below and the twists of the plot.

## OPERA REVIEW

**The Queen of Spades**

Score: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky;

Libretto: Modest Tchaikovsky;

after Alexander Pushkin

At: Lyric Opera of Chicago, 20 N. Wacker Dr.

Tickets: 312-827-5600 or LyricOpera.org;

\$39-\$299

Runs through: March 1; sung in Russian with projected English translations

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

It's been two decades since *The Queen of Spades* (a.k.a. *Pique Dame*) last graced the stage of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Back then it marked the start of Sir Andrew Davis' tenure as Lyric's music director, so there's symmetry to him conducting Tchaikovsky's penultimate opera from 1890 with such care and nuance before he steps down next season.

This time, the Lyric presents director Richard Jones' well-traveled Welsh National Opera production from 2000. Rather than sticking to the opera's prescribed 18th-century imperial Russian setting during Catherine the Great's reign, Jones and his design team present a *mélange* of grubby 20th-century styles.

Traditionalists will be frustrated to decipher the exact era, but this allows production designer John Macfarlane to surrealistically play with decay and death visuals amid memories of lost



Brandon Jovanovich in *The Queen of Spades*. Photo by Cory Weaver

youth. There's also a *Grey Gardens* documentary vibe, especially for the dilapidated mansion interiors which features a flattened-out painting of the youthful Countess propped against a wall.

The Lyric's *Queen of Spades* cast is top-notch. Not only do they navigate Tchaikovsky's gorgeously melancholy score with aplomb, they dig deep into the obsessive psychology of its unhinged characters.

Tenor Brandon Jovanovich passionately tears into Gherman, a gambling-fixated soldier who will stop at nothing to find out the three-card secret to winning the game of faro (known only to the elderly Countess of Jane Henschel).

So Gherman stalks and seduces the Countess'

servant-like granddaughter Lisa, who is played with great agitation and despair by soprano Sondra Radvanovsky. Lisa falls for the unstable Gherman, even though she has a sure-bet investment in her engagement to Prince Yeletsky (Lucas Meachem, who is vocally solid and appropriately stolid as an upstanding character).

There's great interplay and vulgarity among the military men Count Tomsy (Samuel Youn), Chakalinsky (Kyle Van Schoonhoven) and Sourin (David Weigel), who each goad/bully Gherman to pursue the Countess. Other vocal standouts in small roles include Elizabeth DeShong as Pauline and Jill Grove as the imperious Governess.

Puppetry director Chris Pirie also deserves props for the party *divertissement* sequence that ditches the traditional ballet for an amazingly life-like puppet show full of foreshadowing. In the hands of revival director Benjamin Davis, *The Queen of Spades* is gripping music theater (even with its mishmash of visually styles).

*The Queen of Spades* is also a remarkable piece of art created by two gay brothers at a time when society shamed them for their sexuality. So feel free to find as much symbolism over inescapable obsession and painful longing in the opera to make it all even more beautifully tragic.

**'Judy & Liza' tribute March 5-April 5**

The tribute show "Judy & Liza—Once In A Lifetime: The London Palladium Concert" will be presented at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., March 5-April 5.

Shows will be Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m.; also, there will be matinees on March 19 and 26 at 2 p.m. in place of evening performances those two days.

Actresses Nancy Hays and Alexa Castelvecci star in this approximately 95-minute concert (with a 10-minute intermission), recalling the iconic 1964 concert of Judy Garland and 18-year-old daughter Liza at London's Palladium Theatre. Solos like "The Man That Got Away," "Gypsy in My Soul" and "Over the Rainbow," favorite duets "Chicago" and "Get Happy/Happy Days," and special medleys are all backed by the c jazz-combo arrangements of Jeff Award recipient Robert Ollis, the music director.

Tickets are \$20-\$25 each; see [JudyLizaTribute.com](http://JudyLizaTribute.com) and [GreenhouseTheater.org](http://GreenhouseTheater.org), or at 773-404-7336.

**Right: Alexa Castelvecci, Robert Ollis and Nancy Hays.**

Photo by Tyler Core



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NUNN ON ONE: COMEDY

# Zach Zimmerman: Bringing 'Fabulous' to Chicago

BY JERRY NUNN



Zach Zimmerman.  
Photo by David Phelps

Out comedian Zach Zimmerman's first comedy album *Clean Comedy* debuted at number one on the iTunes Comedy charts. He's a Princeton University graduate that performed in Chicago with The Second City Theatricals.

He took his act to New York, where he now performs regularly at Union Hall, Stand Up NY and Caroline's on Broadway.

His *Gay But Not Too Fabulous* Tour arrives in Chicago in March.

**Windy City Times: Didn't you grow up in the South?**

Zach Zimmerman: Yes. Originally, I am from southern Virginia. I moved to New Jersey for school, then Chicago in 2010. I was there for seven years until New York, [where I've been] for three years now.

I came of age in Chicago. I worked at Center on Halsted and enjoyed my Boystown moments. I loved, lost, then left!

**WCT: How did this evolve into standup?**

ZZ: I started in improv and sketch in college. I moved to Chicago because it was cheaper than New York. I took a summer intensive at The iO Theater. I thought it was amazing.

I wanted to create art onstage and make people laugh forever after that. I stuck with it and did some cruise ships with The Second City. After that, it was time for a new challenge, so I switched to standup when I moved to New York.

**WCT: [Have] there ever been struggles performing for straight audiences?**

ZZ: Great question—yes. In more metropolitan cities, it can be a healthy mix. Sometimes I will ask if there are any gay people in the room. If it's silent then I pretend to leave the stage.

There was one night at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival last year, [and] there were a ton of straight bros in the audience. They were cracking jokes like, "My mate is into you." I guess they thought that was funny. When I was leaving the doorman said he had invited a bunch of people to the show, thinking he was helping me. Those were the wrong kind of people!

**WCT: Do you talk politics or hot topics in your act?**

ZZ: It is very autobiographical. I talk about the South and gay relationships. I don't have a Pete Buttigieg joke, but the way I think about the world is potentially a political act.

**WCT: What does the title of your tour—"Gay But Not Too Fabulous"—mean?**

ZZ: I opened for Alyssa Edwards, the drag queen from RuPaul's Drag Race, last March. When I got the email I didn't know who she was because I don't watch Drag Race.

**WCT: Uh, oh—they are going to take away your gay card!**

ZZ: When I came out, I wanted to kiss boys. I didn't know I would have so much homework. There are 12 seasons of Drag Race!

I took the gig and opened for her. I asked the

booking agent why they asked me to open for her. He explained, "They wanted someone gay, but not too fabulous." That is me. I talk about it in the show.

My show was called *Clean Comedy*, but I felt *Not Too Fabulous* describes me. I came out late. I had friends in college who knew who they were at 16 years old and watched all of Drag Race. They went to all the right parties and bartended at Minibar, when that was around. I feel I was stunted by my upbringing and figuring out my fabulousity.

**WCT: So it was about Alyssa not wanting anyone to outshine her?**

ZZ: Yes. I talk about that in the show also. Gay audiences can be tough to please. Gay comics playing to gay crowds were the judgiest and harshest of the bunch. Only in the past few years has that started to quiet down.

There hasn't been a super-famous gay standup. We are only getting a couple of figures now.

**WCT: What comics have influenced you?**

ZZ: The sad thing is they were all old, straight, white men. I loved Jay Leno, Jim Gaffigan and Patton Oswalt.

Now there are queer folk that have come of age in New York [who] do standup, like Joel Kim Booster, Matt Rogers and Bowen Yang. They are part of a new wave of comics coming out.

**WCT: Your comedic timing is very good, judging from the clips I have watched.**

ZZ: I think improv training taught me to listen to the audience. They are telling you what to focus on. That way I can be interactive, rather than doing a monologue for me.

The biggest lesson Edinburgh taught me from doing a show 30 times in a row was acknowledging when people give you love or a smile. Don't get lost in what you are doing and be open to how an audience reacts. I hear you. This is live and not on TV!

**WCT: When did you stop eating meat and become a vegetarian?**

ZZ: It was my first year of college and I watched a documentary about meat. I wanted to decrease the suffering of sentient beings. I also gave up christianity, so needed some way of thinking I am better than other people! [Laughs]

**WCT: What are you working on next?**

ZZ: I'm debating on going to Edinburgh again. I am working on some new material for an album.

**WCT: What would you call your album?**

ZZ: Some of the themes I am exploring are about jobs, so maybe *Blowjobs*? The title doesn't really come until late in the game.

I also have a Christian magician character that I like to play. I first developed him in Chicago. He does a magic show, then tries to convert everyone to Christianity. I might double-down on that and bring him back to life!

Catch Zimmerman at The Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia Ave., on Monday, March 16, at 7 p.m. Tickets can be found at [HideoutChicago.com](http://HideoutChicago.com).



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## THEATER REVIEW

**The Boys in the Band**

Playwright: Mart Crowley  
 At: Windy City Playhouse,  
 3014 W. Irving Park Rd.  
 Tickets: WindyCityPlayhouse.com  
 Price: \$75-95  
 Runs through: April 19

BY KAREN TOPHAM

In Windy City Playhouse's immersive interpretation of Mart Crowley's iconic *The Boys in the Band*, directed by Carl Menninger, the audience is invited directly into a party thrown by Michael (Jackson Evans) to celebrate the birthday of one of his frenemies, Harold (Sam Bell-Gurwitz).

William Boles' set, featuring red walls, a sunken living room, and ceiling and wall coverings, so clearly says "60s" that, sitting on benches around the room, we seem utterly out of place. As the party rolls on and the room fills with gay men, we watch Michael become increasingly drunk and caustic while relationships dissolve before our eyes, our fly-on-the-wall proximity magnifying the experience of lives being altered dramatically.

Evans, outstanding in the central role, sets up his eventual breakdown by showing small hints of internalized anger in flashes at the start as he converses with his boyfriend, Donald (Jordan Dell Harris). Bell-Gurwitz's Harold is trapped within himself in a different way: he has built walls around himself so that very little can really af-



Kyle Patrick as  
 Cowboy in Windy  
 City Playhouse's *The  
 Boys in the Band*.  
 Photo by Michael  
 Brosilow

fect him, leaving him almost an outside observer at this party in his honor.

Unlike Michael and Donald, Harold is both completely open and comfortable with his sexuality. It is reflected in the way he dresses, talks, and moves, though nowhere near the extreme

of Emory (William Marquez, happily chewing up the scenery from the moment he enters). Emory's affect is so effeminate that, when Michael's old college roommate Alan (Christian Edward Cook) arrives unexpectedly, it takes no time at all before Emory's very presence makes the conserva-

tive extremely uncomfortable.

While the first half of *Boys* is laugh-out-loud funny, its second part, revolving around a "party game" that the bitter Michael makes everyone play, is dark. The game is designed to reveal everyone's secrets and clearly intended to result in married-with-children Alan exiting the closet the host is sure he inhabits while leading everyone present through some powerful and painful moments. Bernard actually breaks down after his turn, underscoring just how frightening this game would be for these 1960s men, and almost no one comes through it unscathed.

It seems almost quaint, in a way, to watch a period piece about gay men that exists in a pre-AIDS world still full of bathhouses and partner-hopping. Knowing what the future holds certainly affects how we feel as we watch this play full of the normal issues of interpersonal relationships—the ones that don't involve premature, wasteful death. But as Menninger immerses us into the party—eat the snacks! drink what the characters do!—Crowley's play comes alive in ways it probably never has before. Seeing Alan's effete form almost at all times—he goes offstage a lot in the proscenium version—is a constant reminder of his intrusive presence here, and seeing Larry and Hank tenderly making love in the upstairs bedroom is so much more perfect than when that room is out of sight. It's a brilliant, powerful staging that amplifies every experience in this highly emotional play, and another engaging production from this unique and original theater.

**'The Color Purple' in theaters Feb. 23**

In honor of the film's 35th anniversary, *The Color Purple* returns to movie theaters nationwide during Black History Month—its first nationwide release in more than three decades.

Fathom Events, Turner Classic Movies and Warner Bros. are behind the movie being in theaters across the country Sunday, Feb. 23, at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Whoopi Goldberg, Danny Glover, Margaret Avery and Oprah Winfrey are among the actors in the 1985 film that is based on the Alice Walker novel.

Locally, *The Color Purple* will run at the Regal City North Stadium 14, 2600 N. Western Ave.; Regal Webster Place 11, 1471 W. Webster Ave.; and Century Evanston, 1715 Maple Ave., Evanston.

Tickets for *The Color Purple* can be purchased at [FathomEvents.com](http://FathomEvents.com) or participating theater box offices.

**Patin at Hyde Park through Feb. 28**

Hyde Park Art Center, 5020 S. Cornell Ave., is welcoming Nikki Patin as its new flex space resident through Feb. 28, 2020; she will be developing ongoing performative work combining text, music and movement.

Patin is a writer, performer and educator



Nikki Patin.  
 WCT photo

whose practice addresses issues of body image, sexual assault and the needs of the LGBTQ community. Also, she is the creator of *Surviving the Mic*—an organization dedicated to creating safe spaces for the creation and telling of stories of survivors of all kinds of trauma, with a special focus on Black- and female-identified survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

Patin was featured on the fourth season of HBO's *Def Poetry Jam*; has been one of *Windy City Times* 30 under 30 honorees; and took the gold medal in the poetry-slam competition at the 2006 Gay Games.

See [HydeParkArt.org](http://HydeParkArt.org).



# THE CAKE

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(former writer and current producer of NBC's hit show "This is Us")

Directed by Steve Scott



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## CONCERT COVERAGE

# Grammy Awards; Super Bowl's halftime; Yola and Amythyst; Deadmau5

BY VERN HESTER

January and part of February felt like springtime in Chicago, with intermittent snow showers, clouds of fog and the rare sunny day. For music fans, the weather could hardly put a damper on things and it actually paid off to stay home and watch television.

The 62nd Annual Grammy Awards were handed out on Jan. 26 and featured some surprising nods, with lifetime achievement awards going to punk high priest Iggy Pop, soul icon Isaac Hayes and gospel star (and one of the original architects of rock 'n' roll) Sister Rosetta Tharpe. There was also a queer conga line headed by Tyler, the Creator (who won Rap Album of the Year), Lil Nas X (who received an award and was presented in a production number that recalled the vulgar showmanship of the late Allan Carr) and Brandi Carlile (who shared Country Song of the Year, making her part of Tanya Tucker's surprise comeback).

If the Grammys lacked drama, the combination of Shakira and Jennifer Lopez fronting the halftime show at the Super Bowl on Feb. 2 was such a stunner that it upstaged the game. It was not enough that this was the first time two Latinas headed the show, or that they delivered the hits with pizzazz and thunder. It wasn't enough, however, that they used their allotted time to clobber unsuspecting and culturally ignorant football fans with hard-to-ignore flashes of raw culture. (Shakira wowed with renditions of the mapale and the chapeta—both traditional Columbian dances—while shocking suburban housewives with a zaghrouta, a Middle Eastern gesture signaling joy. On top of that, most of her singing was in Spanish and Arabic.) There was also multiracial unity (the army of scantily clad dancers onstage was largely made up of Brown and Black men and women) and upfront political jabs (such as Lopez coming out draped in a Puerto Rican flag made of feathers while singing a snippet of "Born in the USA" with her daughter). With all the gyrations, fireworks and extreme lighting, it was the ultimate punk statement, using high-gloss entertainment and showmanship to deliver an unsubtle message to the country two days after a shady acquittal in a presidential impeachment trial. One can only hope that somebody explained it all to Donald Trump.

Yola onstage at Thalia Hall.  
Photos by Vern Hester



Amythyst Kiah.

Grammy nominee and cheeky Brit **Yola** hit Thalia Hall on Jan. 14 with guest nominee **Amythyst Kiah** for a sold-out evening of Black-tinged folk and Americana music. The wildly enthusiastic crowd met Kiah's solo acoustic set with great fanfare and she performed searing readings of "Firewater" and her nominated song, "Black Myself." Once the headliner got onstage the show immediately crossed into another dimension as Yola not only performed much of her celebrated album, *Walk Through Fire* (on Easy Eye Sound Recordings) while including several surprise covers. Tucked between her "Shady Grove," "It Ain't Easier" and "Faraway Look" were nods to Elton John ("Goodbye Yellow Brick Road"), Aretha Franklin ("You're All I Need to Get By") and The Hollies. (Her reading of "The Air that I Breathe" was so heartfelt and lovely that it brought this reviewer to tears.)

On Feb. 1, innovative EDM producer and composer **Deadmau5** (pronounced "dead mouse") took over Festival Hall at Navy Pier for what felt like a nuclear house party. The massive stage setting—composed of video screens with a focus on a revolving giant cube—throbbed and glowed while the star of the show largely stayed hidden. Occasionally Deadmau5 (birth name: Joel Thomas Zimmerman) would glide into view wearing his trademark face covering mouse helmet. It was a little off putting, more reminiscent of Dorothy meeting the Wizard of Oz for the first time than a conventional concert. Still, with the hall packed with jolly fans dancing the night away, with many wearing what can only be called "Deadmau5 drag," it was impossible to complain.

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Heads up: On Feb. 15, Chicago Boricua Resistance will host an evening of live punk and soul to raise funds for Puerto Rican earthquake relief at U.E. Hall at 37 S. Ashland Ave.; performers slated to perform include Porno Queens, JusSol, Sex Queen and Kaivyn Lael. The Black, Brown, and Indigenous Crew will present an evening of punk music to accompany the Art Institute's exhibition Vaginal Davis: The White to be Angry at The Chicago Stock Exchange Trading Room on Feb. 21; performers participating include Mermaid N.V., the Breathing Light, Blacker Face, and Gold Grrl. Tickets are already on sale for Mika's show at The Riviera Theater on April 27.



Deadmau5.

## '...Love Is Queer to Stay' throughout Feb.

The Laughing Stock Theatre production *The Masquerade*; Or, *Love Is Queer to Stay* presents a queer spin on classical tropes, and will run at the Crow Theater, 3935 N. Broadway, on Feb. 22 and 29 at 8 p.m.

The cast includes Aaron Quick as Flaminio, Claire Proepper as Signora Rosaura, Jeffrey "JR" Rubin as Pedrolino, Jennifer Mohr as Smeraldina, Martin Downs as Lelio, Shea Lee as Pantalona, and Steven Yandell as Capitano. There will also be direction and choreography by Proepper, fight choreography by Yandell, sound design by Quick, and music composed by Downs, Quick and Proepper.

All shows are pay-what-you-can; visit <https://dime.io/events/Masquerade>.

## CGHA participating in Blackhawks Pride Night

The CGHA (Chicago Gay Hockey Association) is participating in the first official Chicago Blackhawks Pride Night at the United Center, 1901 W. Madison St.

CGHA athletes and select individuals will be playing in a friendly game at the United Center on Wed., March 4, 7:45-9:15 p.m.; then on Thursday, March 5, the CGHA be watching the Chicago Blackhawks take on the Edmonton Oilers at 7:30 p.m.

The association is working with the Blackhawks to create a once-in-a-lifetime experience where people as well as their family and friends will be able to watch them play at the United Center. Additional opportunities to meet a player, have a locker-room tour, grab

some Hawks Pride swag and more are still being determined.

To play in the CGHA game at the United Center on March 4, people need to buy their Hawks tickets at [ChicagoGayHockey.org/blackhawkspride](http://ChicagoGayHockey.org/blackhawkspride). To guarantee their spots to play, then a ticket purchase of four seats is suggested. (Alternatively, people can send their friends and family to the link and have them note the original persons' names down on their sale.)

See [ChicagoGayHockey.org](http://ChicagoGayHockey.org).

## SocialWorks' Black History Month Film Festival through March 1

SocialWorks' 3rd Annual Black History Month Film Festival will run at Showplace Icon Theater, 1011 S. Delano Ct., through March 1.

Throughout February, SocialWorks is screening Black movies like *Hollywood Shuffle*, with Robert Townsend; *Set It Off*, with Jada Pinkett and Queen Latifah; *Fences*; the Chicago-set movie *Love Jones*; the Oscar-winning *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*; and more. SocialWorks, founded by Grammy-award-winning musician and humanitarian Chance the Rapper, aims to empower the youth through the arts, education and civic engagement.

The final day concludes on Sunday, March 1 highlighting some of the best young indie Chicago and Midwest filmmakers; included this year are films like *Sugar Hill*, *Brothers from the Suburbs*, *The CTA project*, and *Present Tense*.

See [ShowplaceIcon.com](http://ShowplaceIcon.com) to purchase tickets; for more information, visit [SocialWorkChi.org/news/3rd-annual-black-history-month-film-festival](http://SocialWorkChi.org/news/3rd-annual-black-history-month-film-festival).

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Mykal Kilgore.  
Photo courtesy  
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MUSIC

# Mykal Kilgore: Out singer on NAACP award nod, \$2 wine and Billy Porter

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Mykal Kilgore definitely marches to the beat of his drum.

The singer certainly possesses talent (as witnessed by his current NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding New Artist, which pits him against Ari Lennox, Mahalia, Lucky Daye and a little-known man named Lil Nas X), but also airs his opinion about a variety of topics.

His debut album is entitled *A Man Born Black*. Windy City Times recently spoke with Kilgore on the phone.

**Windy City Times:** So how does it feel to be an NAACP Image Award nominee?

Mykal Kilgore: It still hasn't sunk in yet. I think once I start my award-show diet, it'll sink in. It'll be a whole lot of hoping, dreaming, water and

salads—and more praying and hoping. [Interviewer laughs.]

As for my attire, I don't have anything picked out yet.

**WCT:** So how did you find out?

MK: [Funnily] enough, I was in therapy when the nominations were announced. My phone kept going off and my therapist let me answer it; it was my manager, who said "Congratulations!" My therapist said I could talk more but I said, "I'm in session." For the rest of the session, I was smiling like a Cheshire cat.

I'm really honored to be in what I call the 2020 freshman class of [these] awards.

**WCT:** Why is the album titled *A Man Born Black*?

MK: The title is about what you conceive about me from a distance. Across the room, across the street what you see is a man born Black. If you want to know more, you have to come closer and be more interested in who I am. It's just me, and I want you to come closer to know more about me.

**WCT:** By the way, where did you have "\$2 Trader Joe wine?" [Note: These are lyrics in one of the songs on the album.]

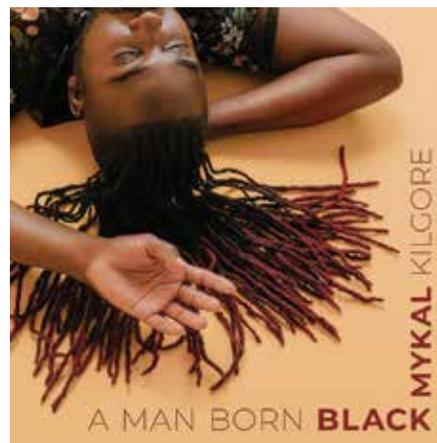
MK: It's what we called two-buck chuck back in my day; now, it's may be \$2.99. It was the go-to wine for sangria or almost anything else. I'm ready for Trader Joe's to cut that check and give me a phone call. [Interviewer laughs.] They need to roll that price back and give us that two-buck chuck we're missing.

**WCT:** That's okay—I don't want to go back to that.

MK: You can, you can! I believe in you. [Interviewer laughs.]

**WCT:** I believe in me, too; that's why I'm not going back to it. But let's move on to the song "For Zimmerman." What's the message of that song?

MK: I'm from Orlando, and that's close to Sanford, where Trayvon Martin was murdered. When that happened, it was extremely impactful to me;



it was heartbreaking and it felt like it happened in my backyard.

I kept trying to write a song about Trayvon Martin, but I couldn't write anything—and I thought there was another way around it. Truly, my feeling was anger about what happened to him. So I wrote the song about George Zimmerman and the George Zimmermans of the world—people who don't see humans, but the stereotypes instead. Trayvon was just a boy in the rain who wore a hoodie.

**WCT:** And there's a take on the national anthem in the song as well, right?

MK: Yes, there is. That's the bridge, and that's the one that's about all of us. Do we act when we hear the screams of people who need us—or do we just shake our heads and say, "I'm so glad it's not me?" But what do we do next time?

**WCT:** Switching gears a bit, you have a connection to Billy Porter.

MK: Yes. He is my mentor; in my phone, I have him as "Billy Porter, personal hero, musical icon and everything wizard."

**WCT:** I remember him from the 2000 movie *The Broken Hearts Club*. He's not an overnight success.

MK: Right. I remember hearing him in the Broadway musical *Grease*. I remembering staying up too late and saying, "Who is this man with the orange hair [singing "Beauty School Dropout"]?" Later, he released the album *At the Corner of Broadway and Soul*, and it was, like, all the things I [happened to be] was wrapped up in his singing. From that moment on, I wanted to be him.

One day I went to an audition for a show called *Five Guys Named Moe*, and he was directing it. I sang, and he started laughing and cursed me out, saying "You should ALWAYS sing like that, you [bleep-bleep-bleep]. Mykal, you need to move to New York." He was the push that started my career; a month later, I was on Broadway, in *Hair*. I owe him a great deal. We still talk quite often.

**WCT:** People think the entertainment industry is very liberal and welcoming, especially for LGBTQ individuals. Have you found that to be the case?

MK: I found that it's open when it serves itself. There are places where it makes sense to put a gay face or a Black face to meet quota, at times.

I want to go where love is—I don't want to be tolerated, but appreciated. In this industry, there's the attitude of "We're going to tolerate it because it's bankable." That's why the Image Award nomination means so much; it's about my community celebrating my community. I'm doing music for the world, but it's through being Black, gay and American as well as my experiences that color all of that.

But this business is a business first. The bottom dollar is what it often boils down to, so I put stock in myself now. Protect your joy, at all costs. As much as I love what I do, this business doesn't have a heart, mind or soul. I hope that, one day, this industry will truly reflect the world we live in.

I sometimes struggle with the success I have. I hope to have a really long career, but I think about those before me who wanted to live out loud, and the industry wouldn't allow them to.

**WCT:** I do want to end this on a more upbeat note. If you could collaborate with any three people, living or dead, who would they be?

MK: That's really, really good. I think the first person who comes to mind is fellow nominee Lucky Daye. I think he's so spectacular and unique. [Note: At this point, the phone connection suddenly ended.]

**WCT:** [After being reconnected] So, you were telling me how you wanted to collaborate with Justin Bieber on "Yummy, Part 2."

MK: You absolutely did not hear that! [Interviewer laughs.] But, going back to what I was saying, I do think Lucky Daye has a great brain.

Another singer I'd like to work with is [gospel singer] Tamala Mann. She has a Stradivarius of a voice; she's just perfect.

My wild card is Kacey Musgraves. She's a writer par excellence and her presentation is spectacular. I love her singing and storytelling—and I'm a firm believer in the reclamation of Black people singing country. There were people like Charley Pride, and I'd love to do a tribute to him.

Kilgore's website is [MykalKilgore.com](http://MykalKilgore.com). The 51st NAACP Image Awards will air Sunday, Feb. 22, on BET Networks.

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Da'Vine Joy Randolph.  
Photo courtesy of Hulu

NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

## Actress brings Da'Vine performances to various roles

BY JERRY NUNN

Performer Da'Vine Joy Randolph grew up in Philadelphia and studied musical theater in school. This led to a Tony-nominated performance in the musical *Ghost*, in which she played Oda Mae Brown.

She landed television roles in ABC's *Selfie* and the TBS show *People of Earth*. She has voiced

Netflix's *The Mr. Peabody & Sherman Show* since 2015. Her latest endeavor is a new web series from Hulu, *High Fidelity*, that premiered on Feb. 14; it is based on the film of the same name.

Her standout performance in the Netflix movie *Dolemite Is My Name*, as Lady Reed, has had critics praising her name and it has brought her new roles in upcoming films such as *Kajillionaire* and *The Last Shift*.

Before giving a talk back at the Chicago Humanities Festival, Randolph stopped to sit down and discuss her life.

**Windy City Times: First off, talk about your name.**

Da'Vine Joy Randolph: I have a two-name first name. I don't have a middle name. It took my parents seven years to have kids. I am the oldest. Seven is a significant number, so I was a divine joy to be birthed. No pressure...

**WCT: You graduated from Yale. Did you always want to be an actress?**

DJR: No. I went to Temple University. I am a classically trained opera singer. I got kicked out of school. Because of credits, my mom said, "You are an actor now!" It was under the same umbrella of credits so I could graduate, then eventually go to Yale.

**WCT: You performed in the musical *Hair*?**

DJR: I did! That was a really important project for me. I didn't want to sing after being kicked out of school. The topic of being free and being true to yourself helped me more than I knew. It was healing for me. It allowed me to rebuild myself as a performer. I learned to stand up for myself and love myself, both personally and within my career.

Thank you for bringing that up. I don't think I would have been able to go to Yale if I hadn't had that production under my belt.

**WCT: Were you around Whoopi Goldberg when you played her role in *Ghost the Musical*?**

DJR: No. I think she was going to be involved, then it didn't happen. We didn't get to personally connect on it.

**WCT: You have been in Chicago before, to film Fox's *Empire*?**

DJR: Yes. I filmed all throughout season four. I also did [the movie] *Office Christmas Party* here.

**WCT: Did working on *Empire* lead you to working on the upcoming *Billie Holiday* project with Lee Daniels?**

DJR: No; that's completely unrelated. Funny enough, I thought that's what happened for

Dolemite, because the executive director Craig Brewer on *Empire* was the director for *Dolemite*. There was no correlation whatsoever.

I even auditioned for *Precious* when I was much younger, at Temple. Daniels is from Philadelphia like me, but even with *Empire* we never personally linked.

**WCT: Filmmaker Rudy Ray Moore was either gay or bisexual. Why do you think this wasn't addressed in the movie *Dolemite Is My Name*?**

DJR: Interesting, isn't it? Titus Burgess' character is a real person, too. I was aware of it as well, when I did research. Ultimately I wanted to know Lady Reed's role: Was she a beard, or something more? I think it was a mix of both. It was a true partnership and they really loved each other. He could do his thing and mess around with another guy. They had some sort of agreement.

**WCT: Talk about your character in Hulu's *High Fidelity*.**

DJR: I play Cherise, who is a Brooklyn native. It's based off of the cult movie that was headed by John Cusack and Jack Black. It has been turned into a series with Zoe Kravitz playing the Cusack role; I'm playing the Jack Black part.

We have taken something with two white males and put two Black women in it instead. It's cool to see how much of it does work. Many things didn't have to be altered, which is a bigger topic. Love is love and music is music. We are all just human beings at the end of the day.

Sometimes heterosexual, white males get certain opportunities that seem only exclusive to them. This was a huge drawing factor to me that Hulu and Disney were open to flipping that idea.

Cherise is a local, so we are dealing with gentrification. It's a trio of friends set in New York. We have released an album on vinyl and I sing on it. I recorded a Stevie Wonder song that I sing on the show and soundtrack.

**WCT: Are there LGBT characters in *High Fidelity*?**

DJR: Oh, yeah—everyone is living! In fact, one of her five heartbreaks is a woman. That's the whole premise: As Zoe Kravitz's character, Rob, is getting older, she's trying to figure things out. She wants to settle down and goes over five relationships to see what happened. She hopes she can learn from it and have the love that she wants.

The character of Simon, even in the movie, is a gay man. He's the same in the series.

**WCT: I had a feeling you would be a friend to the LGBT community before I even met you.**

DJR: One of my gay friends in New York designed costumes for the queens of *RuPaul's Drag Race*. I stayed with him on his La-Z-Boy and the butt pads were my pillows. The drag queens would come in, just like the Netflix show *AJ* and the Queen, to pick up their gowns. I would write out their receipt. We would all watch *RuPaul's Drag Race* together. This was just before I did *Ghost*.

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

DJR: I just finished filming *The United States vs. Billie Holiday*, with Lee Daniels. I start filming next month on Showtime's *On Becoming a God in Central Florida*, with Kirsten Dunst, on the second season.

I am hoping for a movie this summer and then, hopefully, a second season for *High Fidelity*!



## BILLY Masters

"I thought, 'Why does he have to do that?' I mean, it seemed like he was living a fine life. Everyone who knew him knew he was gay."—**Dame Joan Collins** discusses UK personality Phillip Schofield coming out at 57 years old during a recap of the Oscars on Good Morning Britain. She added, "We take it for granted today that people are gay, or lesbian, or trans or whatever." When she got to that last part, she gestured to fellow panelist **Perez Hilton**.

In news that will surprise nobody, this year's Oscars telecast brought in the lowest TV ratings in history. That's the bad news. The good news is that it was the most watched television special since last year's Oscars. Yes, the Academy Awards still beat out the Grammy Awards and Golden Globes. What does that mean? That nobody is watching any of these award shows. There are too many options, and the audience is too fragmented. I suppose they could boost the ratings somehow. Maybe they could introduce an audience vote—or a swimsuit competition.

If they go the swimsuit route, the Academy might wanna enlist the aid of **Pamela Anderson**. The former Baywatch babe is back in the headlines because of **Jon Peters**. You'll recall Peters came to notoriety in Hollywood courtesy of **Barbra Streisand**—because Babs and Pam have so much in common! I had no clue Jon and Pam even knew each other, let alone got married! Apparently they didn't know each other that well—the marriage lasted all of 12 days (thus beating the record of shortest marriage held by Ethel Merman and Ernest Borgnine, for my older fans). According to Peters, Pamela is in hock up to her areolas, and he believes she married him to help pay off \$200K of debt. Correct me if I'm wrong—can't Pamela make that in an hour with some Arab sheik? I can't believe that the only way Pam can earn money is by marrying someone. Where's Hef when you need him?

During a discussion of women celebrating Galentine's Day instead of Valentine's Day, **Wendy Williams** found herself in hot water. She said, "Well, first of all, if you're a man and you're clapping, you're not even a part of this. You don't even understand the rules of the day. It's women going out and getting saucy and then going back home. You're not a part." Fine. Then she added, "I don't care if you're gay. You don't get a mensie every 28 days. You can do a lot that we do, but I get offended by the idea that we go through something you will never go through." And here comes that extra step. "And stop wearing our skirts and our heels. Just sayin'. Girls, what do we have for ourselves?" Suddenly people began accusing Wendy of being homo- or transphobic. (A few supporters felt she was defending the "appropriation of womanhood.") The next day, Wendy made a video in which she apologized and expressed love for her LGBTQ+ fans.

I've said it a million times—if you commit a crime, get caught and have the chance to walk away, take the deal. Mind you, I am not talking



Andrew Garfield may get to explore more than the city in the next Spider-Man movie.

Screen shot of Garfield

about anyone in particular. I'm speaking hypothetically—because I'm bilingual. But, it does kinda remind me of **Jussie Smollett**. Guilty or not, he had a chance to walk away from last year's "incident" by simply repaying the City of Chicago for the money they spent on the investigation. He didn't have to admit any guilt—just write a check. Or, better yet, put it on his credit card and take a trip with the miles. But, no—he refused. The case was reopened. Now he's been indicted by a special prosecutor on six charges of disorderly conduct. He's due in court on Feb. 24. On the positive side, this is the first thing he's had in his calendar all year!

Some sources are claiming that the next Spider-Man film will include a boyfriend ... for the superhero! I have my doubts this will happen, but here's how the rumor got started. Way back in 2013, **Andrew Garfield** said the following: "What if [Spider-man's girlfriend] is a dude? Why can't we discover that Peter is exploring his sexuality? It's hardly even groundbreaking! So why can't he be gay? Why can't he be into boys?" Andrew brought this idea up to the producers and they balked. However, the current rumor claims that Sony is so eager for Garfield to return to the franchise, they'd now consider a bi-Spidey. We'll see...

A clip recently dropped of **Robert Pattinson** as Batman. Well, they say it's Robert Pattinson as Batman, but who really knows? Were there no lights on this set? Even a flashlight? 'Cause, for all I know, it could be J. Lo in that Batman suit! I suppose it's possible that Pattinson has figured out how to say "I'm Batman" in that husky, Brenda Vaccaro type of voice. But, physically, he seems to ooze all the raw masculinity of a young Kristy McNichol.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Simon in London: "Will **Daniel Craig** really show all in his final outing as James Bond? That's the rumor I've heard. And what do you hear about the film? I HATE the song."

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MOUNT GAY THE BOWENIST KONTROL REMY MARTIN

I recently told someone that the theme song needs to be Bassey-fied. As to the film, I know very little except that Mr. Craig will not show all. However, Craig has previously shown his naughty bits fleetingly in several films—most notably, *Some Voices*. I've always contended that it's unfair to judge a flaccid penis running around on the set. Perhaps it was chilly. And maybe, just maybe, it's a grower. Decide for yourself on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

When 007's penis is for your eyes only, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Of course, you can see Daniel Craig and so many others on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com)—the site where members see members. Just to keep you all in the loop, I will be heading to South Beach for the National LG-BTQ Task Force's Winter Party Festival. The festivities take place March 4-10, and I'm told that discounted tickets are practically sold out. So what are you waiting for? Get over to [WinterParty.com](http://WinterParty.com). If you've got a question for me, send it to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before Spider-Man and Batman hook up. 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

### Doc B's; Andersonville Restaurant Week

BY ANDREW DAVIS

I first had a taste of the offerings at the River North location of **Doc B's Restaurant + Bar** (55 E. Grand Ave.; DocBsRestaurant.com) last year during a tour of restaurants at The Shops at North Bridge—and I remember being taken with several of the items.

I revisited this spot recently, and came away even more impressed with the variety and taste of the items—as well as service I won't soon forget.

First, here's some background information on the restaurant itself: Craig Bernstein founded the chain (as there is a spot in the Gold Coast area of Chicago as well as in Texas and Florida) in 2013 in Chicago (at the River North place). He named it after his father, a physician who passed away because of a brain tumor. No two locations are alike, with even the ones in this city being very different from one another in terms of everything from decor to menu items (marked "Very Special Entrees") to waitstaff attire.

The cuisine looks quite appealing from the start, although there is a caveat: The prices are pretty reflective of other restaurants in the area. (For example, salads are \$14-\$23 each, so be forewarned.) However, there's no denying that



**Knife and Fork Cobb at Doc B's.**

PR photo

practically everything my friend and I tried was quite satisfying, at the very least.

Starting with drinks, I tried the "Beet"lejuice, which I could've had all day. It's a heady mix of gin, organic beet juice, mint and lemon—probably the most healthful cocktail I've ever had.

The meal started with California-style kale-and-artichoke dip—certainly a step above the standard dip one might try, although the tortilla chips were even better. My guest then had the tangled noodle salad and the "hot" chicken—a tasty concoction definitely for those who like heat, as the bird is habanero-honey glazed, although it comes with soothing cole slaw. I opted for the Knife and Fork Cobb—a nice mix of crispy chicken with field greens, bacon, egg, avocado and Danish Blue cheese—as well as a crispy chicken sandwich that came with sweet-potato fries. (Yes, I was on a "crispy chicken"

kick that day—but it was beautifully cooked in both cases.)

Doc B's, incidentally, has an amazing selection of sandwiches and burgers. There's also a "Wok Out Bowl" I intend on trying soon; it's served with market vegetables and chopped cashews, with various proteins, sauces and bases (brown rice, quinoa and lo mein) available. Tantalizing desserts are also here, including a Cinnamon Toast Crunch cheesecake and a tres leches cake.

But there's the chocolate cake. Yes, it's decadent beyond measure, but (at least this month) there's an added reason to purchase it: Five dollars from each purchase will be donated to the American Brain Tumor Association, with a goal of \$20,000—in memory of the original Doc B—allowing diners to put a philanthropic spin on what should prove to be an enjoyable culinary experience.

As for the previously mentioned service, it was courtesy of the attentive and talented Laura (who my guest and I called "Aunt Laura," as she told she recently became an aunt). I say "talented" because she's a classically trained vocalist—and treated us to "lunch theater" as she gave us a wicked snippet of the Peggy Lee song "Fever."

**Note: Profiles/events are based on invitations arranged from restaurants and/or firms.**

### Andersonville Restaurant Week

Andersonville Restaurant Week will take place Feb. 21-March 1. Andersonville Restaurant Week aims to highlight Andersonville's diverse dining scene, with a variety of brunch, lunch, and dinner prix fixe menus, drink specials and desserts.

Two dozen spots are slated to take part, including Vincent, 1475 W. Balmoral Ave.; Hutch American Kitchen + Bar, 1477 W. Winnemac; Big Jones, 5347 N. Clark St.; Replay Andersonville, 5358 N. Clark St.; and Hamburger Mary's, 5400 N. Clark St.

See Andersonville.org.



## JACKHAMMER

No one does it harder than Joe Whitaker's FuKr party.

Joseph Stevens Photography



## SIDETRACK

Feeling the love of Sidetrack's Valentine's Day party.

Joseph Stevens Photography

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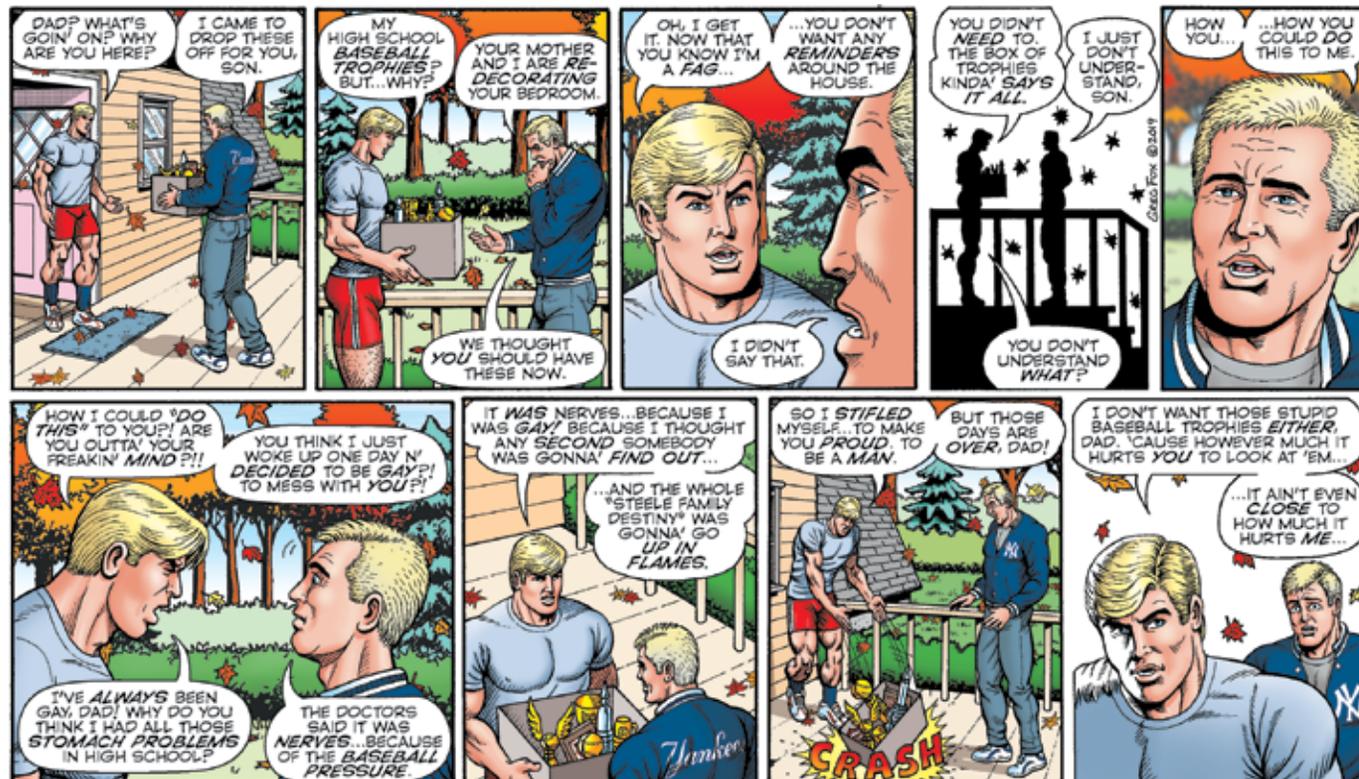
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# WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Wed., Feb. 19**

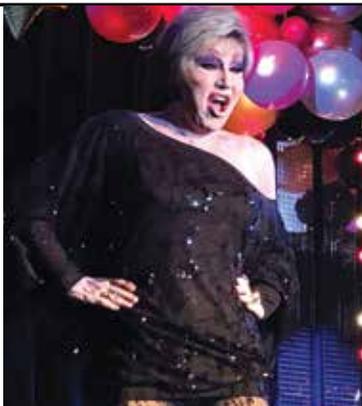
**Youth and Senior Intergenerational Talent Show** Hoover-Leppen Theater. Youth Program, Senior Program participants, staff invited to perform/present/attend. Center and Town Hall staff, interns and volunteers invited to attend. Refreshments, dinner, show. Questions to Todd Williams [toddwilliams@centeronhalsted.org](mailto:toddwilliams@centeronhalsted.org) 4:30pm - 7:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago 773 472-6469 ext 426 <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

**Author reading: My Autobiography of Carson McCullers, by Jenn Shapland** Audacious new form of nonfiction that remakes the boundaries between criticism, biography, and autobiography in search of two identities. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://womenandchildrenfirst.com>

**Thursday, Feb. 20**

**Drag Them to the Polls kickoff event** Meet-and-greet with openly LGBTQ+ candidates and drag performances in an education effort to get OUT the LGBTQ+ vote in the Chicago area, celebrating our history of drag art and activism. Drag queens and gender variant folks have been the heart and soul of our LGBTQ+ movement. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St.; [DragThemToThePolls.com](http://DragThemToThePolls.com)

**She the People** All-female, all-funny show. Tickets start at \$26 each 8:00pm



**CHILLI OF ME**

**Wed., March 4**

Chilli Pepper (above) and the Baton Show cast will mark the venue's 51st anniversary—and first at its new location.

Photo by Jean Albright

The Second City's UP Comedy Club, 230 W. North Ave. 312-337-3992 Tickets: <http://SecondCity.com>

**Friday, Feb. 21**

**Brave Space Alliance open house mixer** Community partner Human Rights Campaign. Refreshments. . RSVP online. 6:00pm - 8:00pm 1515 E. 52nd

FL Floor #3 <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/brave-space-alliance-open-house-mixer-with-co-host-hrc-chicago-tickets-90700081385>

**Author reading: Holler If You Hear Me (Comic Edition)** Join author Greg Michie along with Bill Ayers and several contributing artists as they discuss the process of creating the comic edition of Holler If You Hear Me, one of the most enduring teacher memoirs of our time. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

**Saturday, Feb. 22**

**Carnival II, Mardi Gras Masquerade Party** Bring that Ruckus Spirit with a festive mask and/or cosume and enjoy New Orleans Jazz, complimentary body painting and fun masks. Our sexy Mardi Gras GoGo boys will be here to dance and make sure you have plenty of beads. \$30/\$20. Benefits the Legacy Project 6:00pm - 9:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago Tickets: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-legacy-project-presents-carnival-ii-mardi-gras-masquerade-party-tickets-93850197467>

**Voice of Good Hope, dramatic portrait of Barbara Jordan** The life of the late lawyer, educator and politician, the first African American elected to the Texas Senate and the first Southern African American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Through Feb. 23 7:30pm Venue, 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4254900>

**Sunday, Feb. 23**

**Howard Brown Health X Queer Care Day: Thriving While Black** Free tickets and open to the public on a first-come-first-

served basis with prioritization of queer, feminine-spectrum and trans that self-identify as black 11:00am - 4:00pm Reunion Chicago, 2557 W. North Ave <https://www.facebook.com/events/573395349905685/>

**Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association meeting** OPALGA meets the fourth Sunday of each month 3:00pm - 5:00pm First United Church of Oak Park 848 Lake St. Oak Park, IL 60301 <https://opalga.org>

**Becoming A Man: Book Signing with P. Carl** Celebrate the publication of the striking memoir of P. Carl's journey to become the man he always knew himself to be. 4:00pm - 5:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/PCarl-Book-sign.html>

**Thursday, Feb. 27**

**LAGBAC President and Board Installation Reception** Judge Mary Catherine Marubio, President of the Alliance of Illinois Judges Association, featured speaker. LAGBAC created a new executive Board Position of "Historian" which will be filled by Giuliana Martinez. . RSVP online 5:30pm - 7:30pm Schiller, DuCanto & Fleck LLP, 3rd Floor Lounge, 200 N. LaSalle St <http://http://evite.me/2xCxfGsm4M>

**Interactive Workshop, Re-envisioning Masculinity** Ada Cheng, producer and host of the popular storytelling show Am I Man Enough? will host this workshop, weaving together storytelling and dialogue to examine toxic masculinity. Guests Delia Kropp and Carlos Benitez. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

**Friday, Feb. 28**

**Tickled Pink's 15th-annual celebration** Bites, music, silent auction and wrist-band entry to the official Tickled Pink after party at Tao. Non-profit organization focusing on the prevention and early detection of breast and ovarian cancer. \$115-\$135 8:00pm - 1:00am Rockwell on the River, 3057 N Rockwell St.; <http://BrightPink.org> Tickets: <http://TickledPinkChicago.com>

**Tuesday, March 3**

**OUTspoken monthly storytelling event** Celebrating uniquely personal stories from across the LGBTQ community. OUTspoken is held on the first Tuesday of each month at Sidetrack. Doors to Main-Bar open at 6 p.m. 7:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://sidetrackchicago.com>

**Wed., March 4**

**Baton Show Lounge's 51st anniversary** Longest running show in Chicago, rated by many as the Top in the Nation Revue, new show through March 8. Three shows a night. Reservations. 10:30pm Baton Show Lounge 4713 N. Broadway Chicago <http://www.thebatonshowlounge.com>

**Friday, March 6**

**Int'l Women's Day Dance** \$60 through 5pm on March 5; \$75 at the door. By the LGBT Giving Council, Chicago Foundation for Women. 21+ 6:00pm - 10:00pm Beauty Bar Chicago 1444 W. Chicago Ave.; Tickets: <http://www.cfw.org/6th-annual-international-womens-day-dance/>

## Yarbrough officiates special Valentine's Day wedding



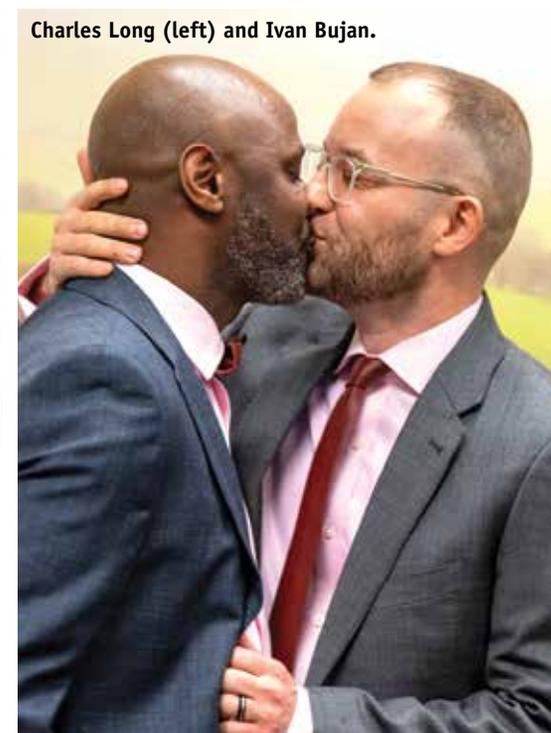
Charles Long (left) and Ivan Bujan.

On Valentine's Day, Cook County Clerk Karen Yarbrough officiated the wedding of Bronzeville couple Ivan Bujan, 34, and Charles Long, 40, in the Cook County Clerk's Vital Records Bureau office downtown.

Their marriage date falls on the seventh anniversary of the day the Illinois Senate passed marriage equality (Feb. 14, 2013). The couple received a free dinner, flowers, show tickets and a commemorative marriage certificate.

Yarbrough chose the couple by drawing their name from a fishbowl Feb. 11.

Photos by Bryan Docter/Cook County clerk's office



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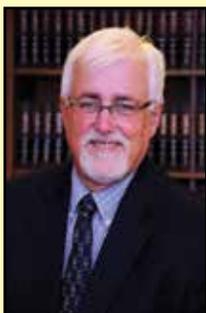
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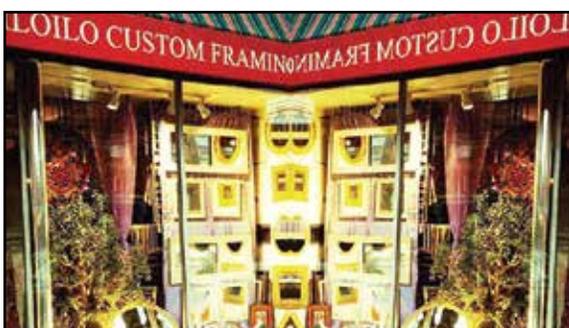


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