

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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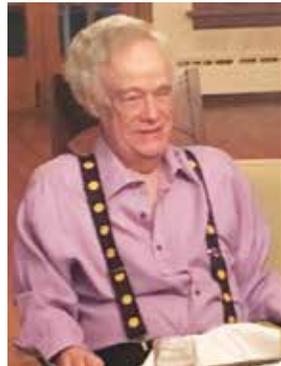
A NEW DAY

Howard Brown breaks ground on new BYC site.

Photo of Latanya Maley by Matt Simonette



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BILL KLEIN

Chi-Town Squares member dies.

Photo by Bob Siegel

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'RATCHED'

Actors discuss role in new Netflix show.

Photo of Sharon Stone courtesy of Netflix



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Dramarama.
Courtesy of Reeling



THE REEL THING

Reeling goes virtual this year

COVERAGE BEGINS ON PAGE 13



Breaking Fast.
Courtesy of Reeling



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WINDY CITY TIMES

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LOOK FOR OUR FINAL PRINT EDITION:
SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

online exclusives at
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**SAM SESSION**

Local social-media influencer Sam Cushing talks about his coming-out video and coping during this pandemic.
Photo of Cushing (left) by Steven Koch

TAKING ACTION

Business lawyer/progressive activist Coco Soodek talks about how people can get politically involved in the battleground state of Michigan.
Photo courtesy of Soodek

EVENT HORIZON

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

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Halle Berry, the show Pose and The Flaming Lips.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

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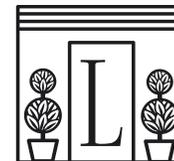
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COMPASS

PASSAGES

Sandy Potoglou

Sandy Potoglou (Stathoula Dimitria Potoglou), aka "Holly," left this world Aug. 27. She was 54.

An obituary sent to Windy City Times stated the cause of death as "the Republican National Convention."

Sandy (who was born Feb. 7, 1966) was active in the LGBTQ community since she attended York Community High School in Elmhurst, Illinois. She was best known for her free-spirited positivity and welcoming charm, which many people cherished. She was a beloved fixture in Chicago's Boystown and LGBTQ social events for more than 30 years. She will be dearly missed by everyone who knew and loved her.



Sandy Potoglou.

Photo courtesy of Sue McAley

She earned a bachelor's degree in geography from the University of Illinois. She enjoyed her career working in the travel industry and was employed long-term at American and United Airlines. She was working at American Airlines on 9/11 and often reflected how working at the airlines was never the same after that day.

Sandy traveled the world and visited such places as Japan, Ireland and Amsterdam. Her absolute favorite destination was her beloved Greek Islands, where she met with relatives and took pride celebrating her Greek heritage.

She was known for her great love of showtunes. Although she was not blessed with a singing voice, she could belt out any showtune, tell you the musical it was from and who performed it. She carried that love into volunteer work as an usher for the Chicago Civic Opera.

Her favorite movies included *My Cousin Vinny*, *Meet Me in St. Louis* and *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, and loved to watch the TV shows *Jeopardy* and *Star Trek* as well as any Chicago sports team

in the playoffs. She cried tears of joy when the Cubs won the World Series in 2016. She was absolutely thrilled she could hear the Wrigleyville crowd cheering just two blocks from her apartment on Roscoe.

Sandy had a beautiful smile, a quick wit and a terrific sense of humor. She loved hearing funny stories and loved to tell her "complimentary peanuts," "old lady bingo" and "dumb blonde" jokes. Sandy would instigate practical jokes or light conflict, just for laughs. She was truly supportive of all her friends and never displayed anything but genuine happiness when her friends succeeded or had good fortune.

She was not one to engage in mean-spirited gossip and would be quick to start a conversation with anyone who reciprocated a smile. Sandy loathed Donald Trump and accurately predicted Kamala Harris as Joe Biden's running mate. However, she would not be the type to disown a friend because of that person's political beliefs.

One of Sandy's favorite games was "Who Am I?" She always picked somebody you couldn't get. She was hard to play that game against because one would expect her to pick some Golden Age-era movie starlets, which she often did, but then suddenly she would diverge to the weirdest thing, like the president of the AFL-CIO, for the win. Sandy had a wealth of knowledge that was never flaunted or used to demean another.

She is survived by her brother, Bill Potoglou; her nephew, Cousin Paulette; her former partner, Christy Beck; and many dear friends.

Sandy was fortunate to live life and leave it, on her terms. Many hearts were broken upon her passing, but she left us all with a bank of incomparable memories and the certain knowledge that we were loved by Sandy for exactly who we are. She would have appreciated any donation to the Human Rights Campaign Fund or any LGBTQ organization. Be sure to toast to her at your next get-together or dedicate a showtune to Sandy at Sidetrack.

Chicago House moves central hub

Chicago House—founded in September 1985 as an organization committed to providing a home to individuals dying of HIV—has relocated its central hub to the South Loop, at 2229 S. Michigan Ave., Ste. 304.

The central hub includes the organization's administrative offices, the TransLife Care program and employment services.

Meanwhile, Chicago House's scattered-site housing as well as its HIV outreach and prevention teams have relocated to St. Bernard's Hospital, 326 W. 64th St.

This fall will bring several opportunities to engage with Chicago House, including a virtual conversation series about race, housing and segregation; and the AIDS Run & Walk community fundraiser.

See ChicagoHouse.org.



Rev. Gil Caldwell with Marilyn Bennett (left) and Rev. Lois McCullen Barr.

Photo by Matt Simonette

Former PFLAG board member Rev. Gil Caldwell dies

Former PFLAG National board member Rev. Dr. Gilbert H. Caldwell passed away, the organization announced in a press release.

A retired United Methodist Church minister, Caldwell participated in the 1963 March on Washington, the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer, the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March, the March in Boston protesting public school segregation and the 1968 Poor People's Campaign.

Caldwell worked to change the United Methodist Church's position on LGBTQ+ inclusion and, as a UMC minister, officiated his first same-sex wedding on the Sunday before Martin Luther King Day in 2014.

Former PFLAG National Board President Jean Hodges said, "I considered Rev. Caldwell a real role model for how to do the work within faith communities, and within communities of color. As a Methodist—and the mom of a gay man—I was moved and inspired by all that he did to bring more allyship and engagement within the

UMC. I will miss my dear friend, and PFLAGers everywhere have lost a real champion for inclusion."

Marilyn Bennett—director of the film *From Selma to Stonewall: Are We There Yet?*—said in a separate release, "Gil and I started our journey together while working together to change the anti-LGBTQ policies and practices of the United Methodist Church, including being arrested during a peaceful protest at the denomination's 2000 General Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.

"In 2003 we engaged in a conversation between Gil, an older Black, non-LGBTQ, retired pastor and Civil Rights Movement foot soldier and myself, a younger white, lesbian, author and activist. Our dialogue via letters addressed racial and LGBTQ topics, which led us to founding Truth in Progress.

"Gil called us the 'odd couple' and, going forward, I will greatly miss my odd partner. I believe he is now in the presence of the Divine, has exchanged his cane and freed both hands one for the Bible and the other for today's New York Times. You have broken our hearts, Gil, with your departure but not our spirits. No, we are still here and will move justice forward with your presence ever near."

WERQ! LGBTQ Job Fair now online Sept. 17-18

Center on Halsted and Brave Space Alliance will hold the annual WERQ! LGBTQ Job Fair on Friday, Sept. 17-18, at the Center. Sessions will be 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1-3 p.m.

Last year, more than 50 major corporations, small businesses, government agencies and nonprofits participated. More than 200 job-seekers were in attendance, ranging from entry-level, to those wanting change and/or advancement, and some looking for a second

career.

Based on considerations of safety for exhibitors, participants, staff and volunteers, WERQ! has been moved online to the Zoom virtual platform.

Exhibitors will have access to a Zoom Break-out Room for sessions. The number of available Break-out Rooms each day is limited and will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis. Exhibitors will have the opportunity to educate job seekers about their businesses, collect resumes, schedule interviews and recruit employee candidates.

See <https://www.centeronhalsted.org/werq-job-fair.html>.

Gay philanthropist Henry van Ameringen dies

Henry van Ameringen, a major donor to LGBTQ+ and HIV organizations, died Sept. 9. He was 90, according to a Plus magazine item.

Lambda Legal CEO Kevin Jennings said in a statement that Windy City Times obtained, "Henry van Ameringen was a thoughtful and indefatigable supporter of and advocate for full equality civil rights for LGBTQ people and everyone living with HIV. He was justly celebrated and will be long remembered as one of the greatest philanthropists our community, New York City, and our nation has ever seen.

"Quite simply, our movement would not be where it is today if not for Henry van Ameringen: There has been no major advance in the fight for justice for LGBTQ people and everyone living with HIV in which his philanthropy did not play a role."

Besides Lambda Legal, van Ameringen also donated to Gay Men's Health Crisis, New York City Anti-Violence Project, National Center for Transgender Equality, Ali Forney Center, Griot Circle, Movement Advancement Project (MAP) and New York's LGBT Community Center, Plus added. He

was also a funder of In the Life Media, which produced In the Life, a PBS series on LGBTQ+ people and issues.

Chris Cormier Maggiano—MAP's board chair as well as a longtime friend and advisor to van Ameringen—said in a separate statement, "As one of the first gay major donors, Henry gave at a level and in a way that made him a giant in philanthropy, but he did so with a humility that is rare and telling.

"Henry's true legacy is not just the hundreds of millions of resources that he gave away throughout his life, but also the way he took care of his community—and the inclusive way that he defined it."

Truth Wins Out Executive Director Wayne Besen also issued a release about van Ameringen. In part, it read, "He was our superhero and the or-

ganization would not exist without his support. I love this man, who was an indispensable donor for LGBTQ causes and incredible human being with giant heart."

Gay City News reported that van Ameringen is survived by his spouse, T. Eric Galloway, as well as six nieces and nephews. Donations in his name can be made to Fountain House (FountainHouse.org), a New York City mental health services organization, or Lambda Legal (LambdaLegal.org).

Midwest LGBTQ Health Symposium going virtual Sept. 16-17

The Midwest LGBTQ Health Symposium 2020—with its theme, "Being Healthy is a Radical Act"—will be going virtual Sept. 16-17.

The symposium (presented by Howard Brown Health's Center for Education, Research and Advocacy) brings together healthcare professionals,

educators, researchers and advocates from across the country to disseminate evidence-based practices and engage in discussion around issues relating to the health of the LGBTQ+ community.

Confirmed keynote speakers include:

—National Center for Lesbian Rights Executive Director Imani Rupert-Gordon, BS, MSW, who previously led Chicago's Affinity Community Services;

—Equality Florida Central Florida Development Officer and Media Relations Manager Brandon Wolf, a nationally recognized advocate for LGBTQ issues and gun-violence prevention;

—PleasePrEPMe Director/Founder Shannon Weber, MSW, who is a founding task force member for Prevention Access Campaign, responsible for the Undetectable=Untransmittable movement worldwide

The Midwest LGBTQ Health Symposium began in 2015 to address the lack of LGBTQ-focused curriculum in medical education and public health curriculum.

See [HowardBrown.org/event/2020-midwest-lgbtq-health-symposium/](https://www.HowardBrown.org/event/2020-midwest-lgbtq-health-symposium/).

Ruth Bader Ginsburg exhibit extended

The Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center has extended the run of its exhibit "Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg" through Sunday, Jan. 3, 2021.

Based on the New York Times best-selling book and Tumblr page of the same name, Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg is the first-ever museum exhibition focused solely on the U.S. Supreme Court justice.

Briefs and other writings by RBG, including some of her famously searing dissents, are woven throughout the exhibit. In keeping with the spirit of Carmon and Knizhnik's book, the exhibition riffs off the playful connection between Notorious RBG and rapper Notorious B.I.G. The name of each gallery section alludes to a song or lyric from the late hip-hop artist.

There are also virtual group tours available.

Museum admission is free-\$15/per person, depending on age. General-admission entry at the museum is Wednesdays through Sundays at 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (The museum closes at 5 p.m.)

See [ILHolocaustMuseum.org/rbg](https://www.IlHolocaustMuseum.org/rbg).



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Computer programmer/ Chi-Town Squares member Bill Klein passes away

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Longtime Chi-Town Squares member and COBOL computer programmer William “Bill” Michael Klein died Sept. 5 due to health complications after he fell down in his home a few days prior. He was 70.

Klein was born May 4, 1950, in Evanston and graduated from New Trier High School in 1968. He received his bachelor’s degree in linguistics from Indiana University and master’s degree in dance education from Northwestern University.

In 1998, Klein moved to Wilmette, where he was living at the time of his death. Klein previously resided in San Francisco and London for a number of years during the ‘80s and ‘90s.

Klein worked for several companies throughout his career, including his last job as a COBOL and mainframe issues senior consultant for Micro Focus until he went on medical leave and then long-term disability due to vision issues. His declining vision resulted in him only at times being able to discern between light and dark spaces.

This did not stop Klein from his online COBOL community participation, which he did until his death. Klein’s loss of vision spurred his involvement with the Village of Wilmette Commission for Persons with Disabilities, where he pushed for greater accessibility accommodations for all disabled people.

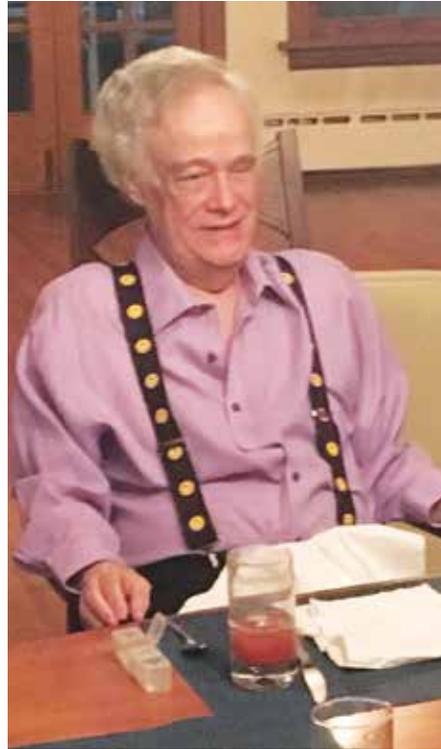
When Klein was not working, he was a very active member of Chicago’s LGBTQ square dancing club Chi-Town Squares. He joined the club immediately upon returning to the Chicago area in 1998 and stayed active with the group in various capacities for the next 20 years.

Klein was one of the top C4 (challenge level) square dancers in the United States. He was known for his expertise on the dance floor and taught many square dancers no matter their dance level.

Additionally, Klein was instrumental in the creation of Western Star Dancers, in San Francisco, and taught the group’s first two mainstream (entry-level) dance classes. Klein introduced modern Western square dance to the LGBTQ community in San Francisco.

Klein was also featured in chapter six of the book *Ten Years IAGSDC: A Collection of Pages From Our Memory Book*. The International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs (IAGSDC) history project wiki website has created a page in honor of his life with quotes of remembrance from fellow members. The site also mentions that Klein got 10-year and 20-year medallions at their annual conventions to commemorate the number of years of his involvement with the association.

Among the many other things Klein loved were musicals, reading science fiction and fantasy novels, using white zinfandel to make macaroni and cheese and taking naps. According to family members, Klein made the world’s best scrambled



Bill Klein.

Photo by Bob Siegel

eggs.

Klein was preceded in death by his parents William Henry Klein and Ruth (Goldman) Klein as well as his sisters Lori Adamek and Barbara Klein. He is survived by his nephew Donald Adamek, his wife Heidi and their daughter Jennifer; his niece, Elizabeth (Don) Adamek Ayres; and countless chosen family members and friends.

“He was especially close to his sister Barbara,” said Donald Adamek. “The two of them spoke on the phone at least once a day, no matter what else was going on in their lives. Barbara nominally lived in Tucson, but it seemed like she was in Wilmette to be with Bill more often than not, and when she was in Arizona, Bill would often go to visit her.

“Bill was a brilliant man with a passion for genealogy, and this led him to trace our family tree back for at least nine generations. He also loved square dancing, music theater and computers. Bill’s dry wit is something everyone who knew him will miss. We will miss having this human anthology in our lives tremendously.”

“Bill was passionate about square dancing for a long time, achieving the highest levels in the late 1970s and early 1980s here in Chicago, and was integral in the formation of one of the first LGBTQ clubs in San Francisco,” said longtime friend and Chi-Town Squares Secretary Bob Siegel. “Despite his many ailments including a nearly complete

loss of vision, he kept dancing as long as his health allowed, and continued to work as a COBOL programmer.

“Bill was instrumental in getting his late sister Barb involved with square dancing, both in Tucson where she lived, and with Chi-Town Squares. Just last month Bill arranged her interment ceremony, welcoming people to his home afterwards. He also supported the local theater group Music Theater Works, and organized groups to see shows. I will miss him dearly.”

“Bill was a unique blend of practical and theoretical in all parts of his life, including dance,” said Chi-Town Squares member and longtime friend Phil Davis. “He was an odd mix of ‘what is’ and ‘what could be’ that always left you with a better understanding of all the factors that made him tick.”

“Bill’s generosity of his time was amazing,” said Chi-Town Squares member and longtime friend Michael Maltenfort. “He designed square dance flash cards used by many, many people including me. In other square dance activities, he was an active member of the Definitions Committee (of which I was vice-chair), and his contributions were often quite insightful. His determination to do things the ‘right’ way was always impressive—something that strongly affected how he taught square dancing. Those who learned with Bill learned square dancing thoroughly.”

“Bill was the first high-level challenge square dancer I met while taking square dance lessons in 1977 with the Fascinat’ Singles square dance club of Wilmette, a club he helped found” said Chi-Town Squares member and good friend Barb Jarvis. “He was an ‘angel’ (experienced dancer) who supported us. Not only was Bill instrumental later in launching gay square dancing in San

Francisco, he executed a huge boost to the Chicago scene when, in 1988, Bill recommended that my now late husband, Lindle ‘Lin’ Jarvis, be named instructor for the newly-formed Chi-Town Squares.

“From Bill’s earlier time on the North Shore, he had danced to this prominent teacher-caller even swaying his parents to take lessons from Lin. As Bill lost his eyesight, he danced admirably for a long time due to his remarkable mental imaging ability (seeing within one’s mind where dancers are positioned). Upon his return to Wilmette, Bill drilled higher-level dancers, including his sister Barbara, whom I met at a local square dance. This led to a strong friendship that lasted until her passing in May. I now mourn both losses.”

“Bill was a marvel of persistence,” said Chi-Town Squares member and longtime friend Rick Simkin. “Once he had his mind set on a project, he saw it through to the end. I once saw a paper he wrote about an expansive new version of COBOL—his commentary ran to 75 pages. He reviewed a 200-page dictionary of square dance calls, and had something to say on almost every page. After his sister got started in square dancing, he helped her advance by setting up a plan of instruction, collecting a group to dance with her (since a square needs eight people to dance together), and running the practice sessions.”

A joint celebration in honor of Bill and Barbara Klein will be held in Wilmette at a later date due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The family has asked that donations be made to St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church in Wilmette (staschurch.org), Chi-Town Squares (ChiTownSquares.org) and/or Music Theater Works (MusicTheaterWorks.com) in his memory.

Submissions sought for Lambda Literary Awards

Submissions are now being sought for the 33rd Annual Lambda Literary Awards, which honors the best of LGBTQ+ literature.

Due to COVID-19, the organization has implemented an entirely digital submission process using Submittable.

Submissions are judged principally on literary merit and content relevant to LGBTQ lives. Specific guidelines must be met for each award category.

There have been two developments regarding categories. Given the significant increase in the number of LGBTQ books for younger readers, Lambda Literary split the LGBTQ Children’s/YA category into two categories: LGBTQ Children’s/Middle Grade and LGBTQ Young Adult.

Also, the organization expanded the mystery category to include bi, trans and queer books by creating a single LGBTQ Mystery category.

Submitted books must be published between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2020. The book must also be distributed (i.e., available in bookstores or online) in the United States during 2020. Self-published books are eligible—but books available only in ebook format are not eligible.

All the guidelines are at [Lambdaliterary.org/guidelines-categories/](https://lambdaliterary.org/guidelines-categories/).

The deadline to submit is Monday, Nov. 16. Submit items at [Lambdaliteraryawards.submittable.com/submit](https://lambdaliteraryawards.submittable.com/submit).

Pritzker launches emergency rental assistance program

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker and the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) announced that applications for rental assistance are now available for renters who have lost a job or income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, IHDA will allocate \$150 million to help income-eligible residents across the state pay their rent during this national emergency. Following the application period for rental assistance, IHDA will open applications for Emergency Mortgage Assistance, providing \$150 million to homeowners impacted by COVID-19.

Taken together, these programs are the largest emergency housing assistance programs in the nation and will help approximately 40,000 households before the end of 2020.

To apply, visit era.ihda.org.

Gerber/Hart informs people of future plans

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives, 6500 N. Clark St., hosted several relatively informal, socially distanced gatherings the weekend of Sept. 12-13 to let community supporters know about its plans for the next few years.

The various sessions—which consisted of a tour of both the archives and Gerber/Hart's new exhibit highlighting '90s activism, as well as updates from organization officials—were held instead of the archive's annual fundraising gala that usually occurs each September.

A key goal on the organization's radar is a move to a larger home from its current location in Howard Brown Health's Rogers Park facility, according to Director Wil Brant. Gerber/Hart is running out of room and would like a new space that is about 7,500-10,000 square feet. The expanded space would primarily be for special collections.

"We want our collections to better reflect the community that we serve," he added.

Gerber/Hart was closed to the public for about three months when the COVID-19 shutdown took hold. Brant said that staff used the time to continue digitizing collections. While finances have been a struggle, he added, Gerber/Hart expects it should come close to staying within its budget this year.

"We're operating cautiously and tightening our belts," he said.

Co-curator Veronica Rodriguez also introduced Gerber Hart's new exhibit, "Q: Activism in the Margins," which focuses on the '90s, an era whose memory is often dwarfed in LGBTQ histories by discussions of the '80s AIDS crisis, or the push for marriage equality in the early 21st century.

The exhibit looks at the rise of activist groups such as Queer Nation and the Pink Avengers, as well as the evolving depiction of the LGBTQ com-



Wil Brant.
Photo by Matt Simonette

An anonymous donor has pledged a \$10,000 matching grant for a relocation fund; the fundraising drive for the match lasts through the end of September. The organization "would be in a new home with the next two to four years," said Board President John D'Emilio.

Brant said that other key organizational goals included board development; expanded fundraising, particularly with respect to grants; and new collections development.

munity in the era's popular culture, among other facets.

A central theme in planning the exhibit was how the use of the word "queer" evolved in the '90s, Rodriguez noted. Long a pejorative term, it changed a great deal in the context of the era's activism, as the LGBTQ community at the time began embracing it "and not apologizing for who we are," she added.



Howard Brown Health officials and supporters at event.
Photo by Matt Simonette

Howard Brown breaks ground on new Broadway Youth Center location

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Officials from the Howard Brown Health organization, public officials and community supporters gathered in Uptown Sept. 10 to break ground on a new Broadway Youth Center location.

Projected for a 2021 opening, the five-story facility, at 1053 W. Irving Park Rd., will be about 20,000 square feet, said Howard Brown Health CEO and President David Munar, who moderated the event. He called the occasion a "crossroads in Howard Brown's history."

Broadway Youth Center (BYC)—which is operated by Howard Brown Health and mainly assists unstably housed LGBTQ youth—has spent years looking for a permanent home. After launching in Lake View, it encountered opposition from local residents in various locations, ultimately settling in its current location at 4009 N. Broadway in 2014.

Howard Brown attempted a few years back to combine BYC facilities with its primary Sheridan road location, but the logistics there also did not pan out. Munar said the new location has been in development for about four years, and would include primary-health services, among other features.

Illinois state Rep. Yoni Pizer discussed ef-

orts by state officials to assist in the funding for the new facility, calling the organization "a beacon for people throughout the Chicagoland area and beyond." State Sen. Sara Feigenholtz also delivered remarks, especially praising Ald. James Cappleman's advocacy for the project.

Robert Garofalo, MD, one of BYC's co-founders, also delivered remarks, paying tribute to many colleagues who helped bring the agency to eventual fruition, along with Howard Brown Health Board Chair Mario Treto Jr.

"It's not really the money that's building this project—it's the years of tenacity of the youth who have cycled through what will be this building and its other iterations," said House Majority Leader and state Rep. Greg Harris.

BYC Director Latonya Maley explained that BYC was powered by "magic" inherent in its staff, who continue to make the facility relevant for its constituency. She introduced some of BYC's peer advocates, a few of whom were at one time clients of the agency.

"I used to be a participant here back in '08 and '09," said Monica Brown, BYC's TGNC youth intervention specialist. "Getting a job with BYC is something I always wanted to do. Bringing up folks who are part of our community is something I've always wanted to be a part of."

Logan Pearsall during his competitive diving days.
Photo courtesy of Pearsall



Out Illinois State coach dives into new position

BY ROSS FORMAN

Logan Pearsall, an accomplished college diver who has since transitioned into master's level diving, was competing at the 2017 FINA World Masters Championships in Budapest, Hungary. He was doing a challenging inward dive from a one-meter platform and admittedly "had been not doing it very well in warm-ups."

A diver from Italy and Pearsall were tied going into the last round and the Italian did his last dive very well, but it was a lower degree of difficulty. "The thought in my head was 'You're either going to hit the dive or hit the board trying,'" Pearsall said.

"I did the dive for 7.5/8s. which is really good and ended up beating him by just over one point. I looked over at him and he was completely in shock while I was extremely excited."

Pearsall has had plenty of magical moments in his diving career that included stops at three different colleges. And now he's also transitioned into a diving coach. A Pennsylvania native who graduated from Clarion University in 2010, he spent the past six years at Colorado Mesa University.

He accepted the diving coach job at Illinois State University (ISU) this summer and started leading the Redbirds in Normal on Aug. 20.

"My diving career has been an exciting one,

that's for sure," said Pearsall, now 32 and living in Bloomington. "At Clarion, I was fortunate to win four NCAA titles while breaking the three-meter NCAA record twice. Since college, I have won 41 masters national titles. Diving has taken me all over the world and I am certainly fortunate for that. I have been able to become friends with people in so many different countries that I still talk to and stay connected with on social media, etc. It has been an incredible journey.

"I'm really excited for this opportunity to move into [NCAA] Division I with a coaching staff that is so absolutely supportive of diving and seeing it succeed. I really think with good coaching and recruiting, we have a gem in the making."

Pearsall said the two emotions that have been most prevalent since switching to ISU are excitement and fear. "I am very excited to move from DII to DI and prove myself and I know that I am capable of turning the program into one of the top in the Missouri Valley Conference and one that student-athletes are consistently looking at, but [also] the fear [that] always lingers in the back of one's mind. The 'what if' factor. I think that emotion is quickly being defeated each day that I am here with the coaching staff pushing me and the divers to be our best.

"My goals are to grow the team into a family, recruit top level athletes who can win [conference] championships and qualify for zones. An-

other goal of mine is to eventually have athletes regularly heading to the NCAA D1 National Championship."

He's proud to represent the LGBTQ+ community through sports.

"I think people seeing strong active leaders in athletics while being LGBT is helpful when they're either considering coming-out or looking for guidance," Pearsall said. "Being a voice in a community such as athletics as an LGBT individual has been rewarding in many aspects. I think it redefines what a leader looks like or means. I look forward to representing and contributing to the local community."

Pearsall was pushed to apply at ISU by his former swim coach at Colorado Mesa—and a perfect fit to move into the top-tiered Division I coaching ranks.

"I am very excited for a new beginning in Illinois and to close on my new house here. I have been a few times and have enjoyed getting to know my way around the state and the Bloomington/Normal area," said Pearsall, who has never, yet, been to Chicago. But that certainly will change soon as he has friends here and will be recruiting in the Chicago metro area, too.

"I am excited about getting to see all the things that make Chicago so amazing and why so many people love it," he said.

realizing I had just won my first NCAA National Championship."

—Being inducted into the Clarion University Sports Hall of Fame in 2019, with more than 50 family and friends present to support him.

—"After losing my final NCAA event by less than three points, which isn't very much in diving, I went up to the diver who had won and waited a bit while he celebrated to make sure that I personally got to congratulate him.

"My father who, bless his heart, has learned so much about the LGBT community over the last 15 years, came up to me and kissed me on the forehead and told me how proud of me he was, not only for taking the runner-up spot, but for being a man with pride but showing sportsmanship after defeat."

But is it scary to dive?

"I usually [try] to get my nerves out in warm-ups, but I habitually would get nervous for [select, challenging] dives," he said.

"When I started masters, I had just taken a year off from diving after college and I was certain that I was done and retired. I had met a few masters divers at a club meet in Connecticut while I was coaching and they did some convincing. After that, I started with one meet and dove as well, if not better, than my final meet in college, so I then went to master's nationals in

Logan Pearsall.
Photo courtesy of Pearsall



Pearsall's stint at Colorado Mesa included coaching his first NCAA National Champion and record-holder. He also led 34 All-Americans and 13 honorable mention All-Americans, "so I will always think of those athletes and the hard-work it took for them to get there."

Pearsall knows all about hard work. His diving career has been record-setting. The three favorite moments from his diving career are:

—"Hitting the water on my final dive at my first NCAA Championship, looking over to my coach [who was] jumping up and down, and then

2014. Since then, I have been hooked and could not imagine not having my masters diving family. It is a family you only see a few times a year, but you're just so happy to see them and have a great time. We are able to stay in touch during the year and it truly is like having an extended family."

Pearsall said he still has two diving goals: "To compete at the USA Diving Senior Nationals one more time and stay doing masters diving for as long as possible while staying healthy and in love with the sport."

Windy City Times moves to digital-only format

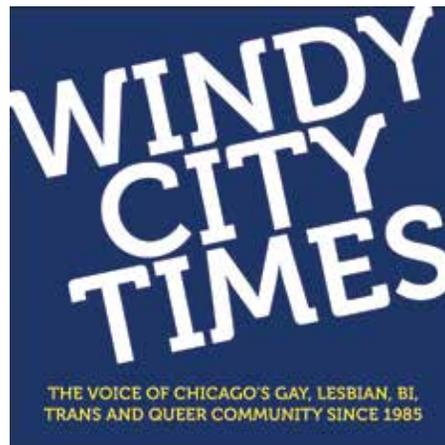
Windy City Times, Chicago's only LGBTQ newspaper, is moving to a digital-only format starting in October. The Sept. 30, 2020 edition, which marks the paper's 35th anniversary, will be its last regular free-standing print issue. The website WindyCityTimes.com will continue to be updated.

Windy City Times was founded in September 1985 by Jeff McCourt, Bob Bearden, Drew Badanish and Tracy Baim. Baim was the managing editor. In 1987 she left to found Outlines newspaper. Over the years, Outlines also launched Nightlines, BLACKlines, En La Vida and other LGBTQ media. In 2000, Baim purchased Windy City Times back from McCourt and she became publisher.

Baim, who is majority owner of WCT, joined the Chicago Reader as publisher in 2018. Her long-time staff took over WCT, including Publisher Terri Klinsky, Executive Editor Andrew Davis, Managing Editor Matt Simonette, Art Director Kirk Williamson, Director of New Media Jean Albright and Ripley Caine, bookkeeper.

"I am very sad to see the print edition go away," said Baim. "Our staff, freelancers and drivers have given so much to Windy City Times over the years. I thank the team for really working hard to sustain WCT. Hundreds of people worked at and supported this company through so many difficult times. Windy City Times is not closing, but losing the print paper is painful. We know many people prefer the print model, but the economics are just not sustainable."

Windy City Times, which is among only about two dozen weekly or biweekly LGBTQ newspapers left in the United States, has tried to hold on to print during the decline in advertising and support of newspapers in recent years, but COVID-19 and its impact on the paper's core entertainment advertisers meant continuing a print paper was not tenable. The Windy City Times' digital



footprint includes an average of 125,000 unique monthly visitors to its website, plus nearly 40,000 followers on social media.

As part of its 35th anniversary, the Sept. 30 final print edition will be a special collector's edition with a look back at 35 years. Windy City Times will also be putting out a book of covers of WCT and its related LGBTQ newspapers. See WindyCityTimes.com for details soon. Windy City Times will be inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame in October.

Several staff will be furloughed as the company seeks additional resources in its pivot to digital. The website, www.windycitytimes.com, will continue. It hosts hundreds of thousands of articles and photos going back to the mid-1990s. Donations are being accepted at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/donate.php>.

To advertise in the final print edition, contact advertising@windycitymediagroup.com or call 773-871-7610 ext. 101.



U.S. Rep. Val Demings.
Photo from official website

Quigley, Demings introduce blood-donation bias measure

U.S. Reps. Mike Quigley (IL-05), who serves as Vice Chair of the LGBT Equality Caucus, and Val Demings (FL-10) introduced the Science in Blood Donation Act of 2020, which would require the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to revise its blood donation guidance.

The legislation would specifically require the FDA to update its Guidance on Reducing the Risk of Human Immunodeficiency Virus Transmission (HIV) by Blood and Blood Products based on an assessment of current testing accuracy and individual risk-based analysis.

It would also require the FDA to revise the donor questionnaire based on an individual risk assessment of sexual behaviors upon which all donors are evaluated equally, without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity.

Quigley said in a statement, "Over the course of many years, we have made significant progress in rolling back an indefinite ban on blood donations from MSM [men who have sex with men], to a 12-month deferral to the current

three-month deferral. This is still not enough."

"This policy is based on fear, stigma and prejudice—not science," Demings said. "Expanding the donor pool by hundreds of thousands of healthy Americans would save lives every day in emergency rooms and hospitals around the country."

TAWANI Foundation's donations reach \$1.8M

In response to the current health crisis, the TAWANI Foundation, TAWANI Enterprises' philanthropic organization, has donated \$1.8 million so far to various organizations to help support COVID-19 relief efforts in Illinois.

The donations address the urgent needs of Illinois organizations and partners for immediate and significant philanthropic contributions to help alleviate costs and sustain local and state organizations heavily impacted by the global pandemic.

Some organizations the TAWANI Foundation has made donations to include: Greater Chicago Food Depository, Howard Brown Health Center, One Fair Wage Emergency Fund, YWCA Metropolitan Chicago, NAMI Chicago, Bunker Labs and the Children First Fund.

Additionally, the TAWANI Foundation donated 5,600 ViriMASK's to the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs that will be distributed throughout different veterans' facilities for use by healthcare professionals.

Founded in 2002 by Colonel (IL) Jennifer N. Pritzker, IL ARNG (Retired), the TAWANI Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that provides support in the areas of arts and culture, historical preservation, health and wellness, LGBT and human rights, education and environmental initiatives.

Wade among Streetwise's most inspiring Chicagoans

LaSaia Wade—the founder and executive director of Brave Space Alliance—has been chosen as one of Streetwise newspaper's 20 Most Inspiring Chicagoans of 2020.

Brave Space Alliance is a South Side organization that aims to empower and elevate queer and trans voices, particularly those belonging to people of color.

Some of the other honorees include David Dietz, the social responsibility program director for the National Basketball Association; Dr. Ngozi Ezike, board certified internist and pediatrician as well as director of the Illinois Department of Public Health; Britney Robbins, founder The Gray Matter Experience; and Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award winner Ella Jenkins.



LaSaia Wade.
WCT photo

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SciLine hosts intersectional briefing regarding LGBTQ+, Black communities

BY EMILY REILLY

Recently, SciLine held a media briefing discussing mental health in LGBTQ+ and Black communities.

Yale School of Medicine's Dr. John Pachankis and Tufts University's Dr. Madina Agenor were panelists who contributed to the conversation of racial LGBTQ+ intersectionality and the mental health effects of being a part of these communities. SciLine Director Rick Weiss moderated the briefing.

Pachankis is the director of Yale's LGBTQ+ mental health initiative and focuses his research on finding effective mental health treatments for LGBTQ+ people and its assessment. He began by defining structural stigma, explaining where it is seen today in LGBTQ+ populations and how that can be damaging to one's mental health. He cited a study of structural stigma by Mark Hatzenbuehler at Harvard University.

"Mark has elegantly shown this in a natural experiment that took place before and after certain U.S. states passed constitutional amendments against marriage equality in the 2004 election," said Pachankis. "The mental health of LGBTQ+ people living in those states became worse, whereas the mental health of LGBTQ+ people living in other states and the mental health of heterosexual individuals was unaffected."

Pachankis went on to reference findings that showed differences in the quality of life, suicide and depression rates in sexual minorities in highly structurally stigmatized European countries such as Poland and Russia, versus less stigma-

tized countries like the Netherlands. The stigmatized countries prompted more psychological demands for the LGBTQ+ population.

Possible solutions begin with destigmatization, LGBTQ+ empowerment therapies and the identification of supportive communities for them.

"These treatments have the power to reduce the shame and loneliness through which structural stigma jeopardizes mental health," said Pachankis.

Agenor spoke about intersectionality and the health of Black people in the US. She emphasized that intersectionality shows that Black LGBTQ+ people have unique concerns and lived experiences. They not only experience LGBTQ+ discrimination, but also anti-Black structural racism.

"In 2017, the National Center for Transgender Equality released a report showing that the burden of various health outcomes, including HIV, psychological distress, suicidal thoughts and behaviors and sexual victimization, was considerably higher among Black transgender and non-binary individuals compared to both their white counterparts and, also, to the US population overall," said Agenor.

Agenor pointed out that journalists and scientists often report health disparities but rarely include the reasons why. Social, political, and structural determinants of health, specifically income and housing, monumentally affect the health of Black LGBTQ+ people. Agenor cited a series of graphs emphasizing the reasons behind the health disparity. For example, a 2015 national survey of transgender and non-binary people



Dr. Madina Agenor.
Photo by Emily Reilly

found that 40 percent of all Black respondents had experienced housing discrimination or instability in the past year with the highest prevalence occurring among Black transgender women.

"We should really be thinking about addressing both the social determinants of health and the structural determinants of health and really seek to implement and develop laws, policies, rules, practices and institutions that promote equity and justice at the intersection of not only sexual orientation and gender identity but also race/ethnicity and social class," said Agenor.

SciLine also hosted a Q&A for media viewers

to pitch in their questions for the panelists. Questions sparked talking points about barriers for transgender mental healthcare, establishing widespread resources for LGBTQ+ patients, access to LGBTQ+ care during the current administration, research on microaggressions, police treatment of Black LGBTQ+ people and much more.

"Research shows that the sooner we can make our society more just, from institutional commitments to equality to our day-to-day interactions with each other, the sooner we can expect that no one population will bear a disproportionate burden of mental illness," said Pachankis.



Dr. John Pachankis.
Photo by Emily Reilly

HRC Foundation, HIT release study on voters of color, voting by mail

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation and HIT Strategies released the first results of a national survey of voters of color, including LGBTQ voters of color, to determine sentiment regarding voting by mail.

Conducted in partnership with major advocacy organizations—including Latino Victory Foundation, the NAACP, UnidosUS and Woke Vote—this survey shows key commonalities as well as critical differences in how voters from different communities view the current voting climate.

Key takeaways from the research include:

—Seventy-six percent of POC (people of color) voters think the coronavirus crisis will

affect who votes in the 2020 election, and 73% of POC voters think the protests following the death of George Floyd will affect who votes in the 2020 election.

—Sixty-eight percent of POC voters will either vote in person early or by mail, including 59% of APPI voters stating that voting by mail is their current voting preference.

—Seventy-five percent of POC voters, including 76% of Black voters and 79% of POC LGBTQ voters, are more likely to vote by mail in November if we still don't have a cure or vaccine for coronavirus.

The initial survey included a sample of over 800 individuals from across the country, including Florida, Wisconsin, Texas and Georgia. This research is still ongoing, and results will continue to be released through November.

See https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/Vote_By_Mail_Among_Traditionally_Marginalized_Voters_National_Online_Survey_July_2020_.pdf.



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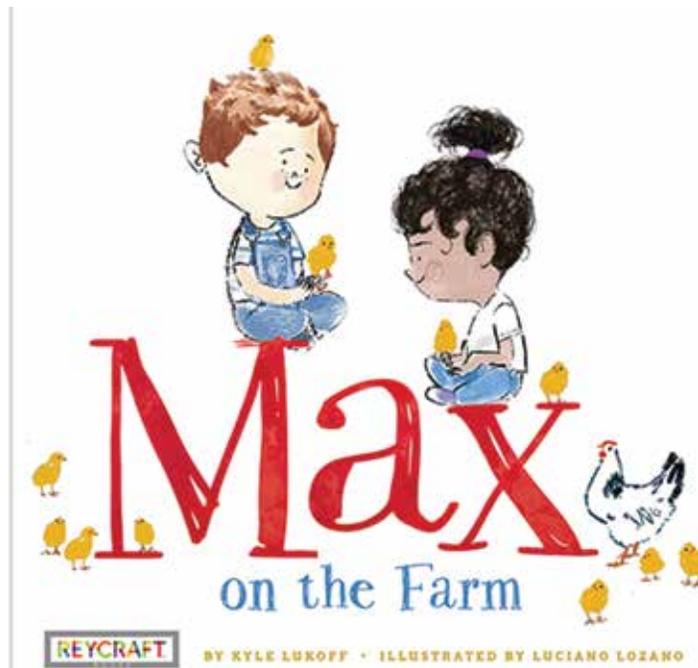
True stories, trans tales and more in new picture books

New books can be a delightful relief in these days of quarantine. Here are some of the many new LG-BTQ-inclusive picture books that just came out last month. (See Mombian.com for even more.)

The Fighting Infantryman, by Rob Sanders and illustrated by Nabi H. Ali (Little Bee), is the true story of Albert D. J. Cashier, a transgender soldier in the U.S. Civil War. At 19, Albert, an immigrant from Ireland who had been assigned female at birth but had long presented a male identity, enlisted in the Union Army. After the war, he was always proud of having been a “fighting infantryman..”When in his later years, he was admitted to a veteran’s hospital and his biological sex became known, he almost lost his military pension. His former comrades stood up for him, though, and he retained it—and upon his death, his gravestone reflected his military unit and chosen name. Sanders notes in an afterward that while transgender people have always existed, terminology has changed across time and cultures. Nevertheless, “it’s possible, even likely,” that Cashier was transgender. In the story itself, Sanders reinforces that the way Cashier lived his life “was more than a choice. It was who Albert D.J. Cashier was..”A rare and needed picture book of a pre-Stonewall LG-BTQ hero.

Max on the Farm, by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano (Reycraft), is the third book in Lukoff’s delightful series about a fictional transgender boy and his friends. In this one, Max, a white transgender boy, visits a farm with his class, including his friend Teresa, a Black girl. Lukoff makes a great point about gender by showing us that even cisgender girls like Teresa can bend gender norms—she likes to get “really dirty,” while playing outdoors and is willing to flout rules to find adventure. Max is more hesitant, but ultimately has fun during their gentle mischief. Max’s transgender identity isn’t a focus, but nor is it ignored completely; when the square dance teacher thinks Max belongs with the girls, he goes over to the boys’ side. “All the kids in my class know I belong there..”he says. Another charming book in the series.

My Maddy, by Gayle Pitman and illustrated by Vio-



Max on the Farm.

Photo by Reycraft books, illustrated by Luciano Lozano

let Tobacco (Magination Press), is a series of reflections by a child (who reads as female) about her parent who is “neither a boy nor a girl..”Throughout the book, the protagonist observes her Maddy’s love of things that are in-between, such as a sunrise, which is neither day nor night, but “kind of both, and something all its own..”Similarly, Maddy loves motorcycles (neither car nor bicycle, but something of their own) and, with a touch of humor, sporks. We also see how Maddy cares for their child, making dreams. Both the child and Maddy are white. It’s a loving portrait—and a detailed Note to Readers offers adults information and guidance from clinical psychologist Randall Ehrbar on intersex, transgender, non-binary, and other gender diverse parents.

Two young queer people are telling their own stories in two books. Be Amazing: A History of Pride, by “Drag Kid.” Desmond Is Amazing (Farrar Staus Giroux), is less a detailed history than a short overview of the Stonewall Riots and the first March one year later; brief biographies of Stonewall icons Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera; and a personal description of the influence Pride has had on Desmond’s life. A mention of President Obama’s declaration of Pride Month in 2009 makes it (incorrectly) seem as if that action legitimized the observance. The book is more effective when Desmond tells us about his first time

at Pride, becoming a “viral drag sensation..”and how he was inspired by RuPaul (who gets a short bio) and other LGBTQ icons (several of whom are named without further information). What it lacks as a full history it makes up for with an enthusiastic message to “Be amazing..”and with dazzling illustrations from Dylan Glynn.

I’m Not a Girl—by Maddox Lyons, a 12-year-old transgender boy, and Jessica Verdi, with illustrations by Dana Simpson (Roaring Brook)—is based on Lyons’ own journey as a transgender boy. “I know girls are cool..”the protagonist (who is white) says, in a thoughtful touch. “I’m just not one..”Picture day at school and Halloween (with highly gendered costumes) are particularly difficult. One day, he explains to some new friends that everyone thinks he’s a girl, though

he’s really a boy. The friends (who are Black) observe that he’s like their cousin, a transgender girl. Lyons gathers his courage and speaks with his parents about his true identity. They listen and support him in getting a haircut. A heartfelt and personal story.

For preschoolers, Kevin Keller’s Favorite Colors, from Little Bee Books, stars the Archie comics’ first gay character explaining the meaning of each of the colors in the Pride flag (including the recent additions of Black and brown), as other characters from the comic demonstrate. Three very similar books came out last year: Little Bee’s own board book Our Rainbow; Rainbow: A First Book of Pride, by Michael Genhard (Magination Press); and Robin Stevenson’s poetic Pride Colors board book (Orca). Aside from the use of Archie characters, this book adds little that is different—and one might wonder whether a comic depicting high schoolers will really appeal to children still learning their colors. Adult fans may want it for their children, though, even if the genre feels saturated.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (Mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.

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WINDY
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ARTS + THEATER

MOVIES

Reeling goes online
for 2020 edition

Pier Kids.

Photo courtesy of Chicago Filmmakers

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The pandemic did not stop officials from Chicago Filmmakers, the organization behind Reeling: The Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival, from planning a diverse program of feature-length and short-subject narrative and documentary films for the festival's 2020 installment.

After several months of deliberating on the possibility of hybrid in-person and online events—drive-ins were even suggested at one point—the Reeling officials decided in June that an exclusively online format would make sense for this year, said Chicago Filmmakers Executive Director Brenda Webb.

"Once we made the decision that it would be all

virtual, it was such a relief," she added. "It's always the uncertainty and anxiety around at what point we can book the theater or lose it. ... But there is an upside—the access to the filmmakers, for example. They don't all have to be in one spot and you don't have to get them hotels. On that end, it's really great. There will be Q&As for almost every show in the festival."

The festival kicks off Oct 24 and officially lasts through Oct. 4. Various films are licensed for online showings on specific days, so some films will be available to home viewers for a short while past the festival's closing. Feature films will be available for streaming across Illinois, while shorts will be available nationwide.

Despite the disruption laid down by the pan-

demic, and the pivot in formats, Webb said that the festival's 2020 curation was not all that different from previous years. Opening night features *Breaking Fast*, a romantic comedy about a Muslim American living in West Hollywood.

"It's a touching film," she added. "We like to open the festival with upbeat films as much as possible, something that makes people feel good and like they want to keep watching more films in the festival. It also speaks to diversity and breaks down stereotypes about Muslim Americans. This main character's family has no problem being gay. He's just more concerned with the cultural and religious aspects of being with somebody who just sort of understands his religion."

The closing-night film is the documentary

Ahead of the Curve, about the late lesbian-centered magazine *Curve*. Webb noted, "It's equally entertaining and interesting, and takes you on a journey about the ups-and-downs of a media publication trying to cultivate a lesbian readership. Then it goes very intimately into what happens when the publisher sells her magazine and sees her legacy possibly disappearing. ... It's not just a puff-piece about the magazine. It really is about the trials, tribulations and challenges."

Reeling features more international films than usual this year, she added. "The range of works is always one of the things that is important about an international film festival, and that we're not just showing films already on the radar, that everybody knows will come out on streaming."

Five out of the eight festival programs contain work from local filmmakers, Webb said. One of the themes running throughout the festival is "going back home." That is of course thematic material that LGBTQ filmmakers have long mined for narrative possibilities, but Webb noted its poignance in a cultural moment when, thanks to the pandemic, many viewers are thinking about what significance home has for them.

"That's in *Goodbye Mother*, about a young Vietnamese man going back to his family to come out to them and *A Skeleton in Closet*, for example," she explained. " ... That struck me as relevant because we're all sitting at home right now."

For a complete listing of films and purchasing instructions for online passes, see ReelingFilm-Festival.org.



Brenda Webb.

Photo courtesy of Chicago Filmmakers



Dramarama.
Photo courtesy of
Chicago Filmmakers

Reviewing the films of Reeling 2020

BY STEVE WARREN

For complete festival information and to buy tickets, visit <http://reelingfilmfestival.org/2020>. Ratings are on a ★★★★★ scale but I'm a tough grader, so nothing gets over ★★★.

Note: This year's installment of Reeling: The Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival officially takes place online and begins Sept. 24. The festival lasts through Oct. 4, although select films will be available for screening for a few days past closing.

Breaking Fast

★★★ (Sept. 24-27)

Breaking Fast provides a lot of insight into Islam, including the wide range of reactions among Muslim parents to their sons' coming out. Set in West Hollywood, this "romcom" is really more of a drama but does have some comic relief, including a major character who's the kind of flaming stereotype we rarely see anymore. A year after his partner marries a woman to please his father, Mo (Haaz Sleiman) meets Kal (Michael Cassidy), who isn't Muslim but is familiar with Muslim culture. It's Ramadan, the holy month of fasting. What develops is one of the better gay romances I've seen lately.

T11 Incomplete

★★★1/2 (Sept. 24-27)

The WTF title refers to the thoracic spinal nerve that affects a woman's uterus. "Incomplete" means there's still some sensation there. Home-health aide Kate Murphy (Karen Sillas, in a performance that deserves to advance her to the A-List) notes that problem area when she reports to help Laura (Kristen Renton). Both women have flaws, some alcohol-related, and Kate has a habit of robbing her clients; so it's not a simple mat-

ter of Cupid shooting Laura in the T11 to get a romance going. Melodrama fans will find much to like in writer-director Suzanne Gaucci's film. I especially liked Sillas.

These Thems (Season One)

★★★ (Sept. 24-27)

As a queer version of Friends, creator/writer Gretchen Wylder's first seven-episode season (mostly about ten minutes each) may not be ready for prime time (Who knew Pose was?), but it's closer than you'd think. Gretchen (Wylder) meets Vero (Vico Ortiz) at a gynecologist's office, where Gretchen, who is 30, realizes she's a lesbian. Non-binary Vero explains modern gender terminology to the doctor, triggering a new career as a "straight whisperer." Vero's friend Asher (Shaan Dasani) struggles with coming out as trans at work. Gretchen's roommate Kevin (Nick Park) crushes on Asher, not knowing they're trans. I'd tune in next week for more.

Cicada

★★★1/2 (Sept. 25-28)

This very festival-y movie is frustrating for a viewer who just wants to be told a good story. Since it's "Based on true events," we can assume writer-director Matt Fifer is playing himself as Ben, who has sex with men, women and himself, until he meets Sam (Sheldon D. Brown) and pretty much settles down. But Sam isn't out to his father or the world; and Ben is still traumatized from being molested as a child. There's no chemistry between the lead actors, as Fifer might have known if he hadn't tried to do too much himself.

The Strong Ones (Los Fuertes)

★★★1/2 (Sept. 25-28)

I couldn't watch Samuel González and Antonio Altamirano make love for more than three

weeks...without a lunch break. That's good, because there's little else of interest here. Lucas (González) is visiting his sister in southern Chile before leaving for Montreal to study architecture. He meets Antonio (Altamirano), who works on a fishing boat when he's not taking part in historical reenactments. Lucas' sister is having marital problems and each man has his own issues, but writer-director Omar Zúñiga stretches the plot pretty thin, with little development. This review would be far more negative if the leading men were less attractive.

Give or Take

★★★ (Sept. 26-29)

Give or Take deals with a situation that's thankfully less common than it was before we were allowed to marry legally. A gay man dies without leaving a will and his family swoops in, virtually ignoring the man he lived with for the last six years. His son Martin (Jamie Effros), who hardly spoke to his father after he came out, comes up to Cape Cod from New York and treats Ted (Norbert Leo Butz) like a tenant who's about to be evicted. It's a moving story presented in believable fashion and should remind some viewers they have unfinished business.

Goodbye Mother

★★★ (Sept. 26-29)

Probably the funniest and saddest film in the festival, and my personal favorite, Goodbye Mother tells of a young Vietnamese man who stayed in the U.S. after college, becoming a citizen. Van (Lanh Thanh) returns to visit his family, bringing along his "friend" Ian (Vo Dien Gia Huy). Van intends to come out to his mother but the time never seems right, when the family's trying to find "the right girl" for him to marry. Much hilarity comes from his demented grandmother (Nsut

Le Thien, my new favorite actress!), helping keep the mood varied enough that things never get dull.

Keyboard Fantasies: The Beverly Glenn-Copeland Story

★★★1/2 (Sept. 26-29)

I usually enjoy documentaries about musical artists for the music, but the reverse is true in this film about Beverly Glenn-Copeland, who lived as a female, an out lesbian from a middle-class Black family, for nearly 60 years before transitioning almost two decades ago. He achieved renown in 2015 after a Japanese collector discovered a 1986 recording of their unique blend of folk, jazz and electronica with touches of classical, gospel and blues. That's an acquired taste and I preferred hearing him talk about himself with his sparkling personality. Director Posy Dixon doesn't need visual gimmicks to hold our interest.

Tahara

★★★ (Sept. 26-29)

Tahara's plot is basically triangular. Carrie (Madeline Grey DeFreece) has a crush on her best friend, Hannah (Rachel Sennott), whose crush is a boy, Tristan (Daniel Taveras), who is crushing on Carrie. They're attending the funeral of a lesbian classmate out of respect, not caring. After the funeral there's lunch, followed by an extended Hebrew school class in Judaism and Grief, during which the main characters take long social breaks in different combinations. Hannah even goads Carrie into kissing her "for practice." Tahara's technically okay, it just didn't interest me.

Are We Lost Forever

★★★1/2 (Sept. 27-30)

Gay relationships in Sweden are assembled as easily as Ikea furniture, and fall apart as easily too, in this romantic drama by writer-director David Färdmar. Hampus (Jonathan Andersson) and Adrian (Björn Elgerd) can't live with each other and can't live without each other. They break up after three years but still care, even after Adrian finds a new boyfriend, Rasmus (Micki Stolttt), who looks so much like Hampus it's confusing at times. Färdmar makes the point repeatedly that relationships are difficult but ending one can be more difficult. It gets redundant, but it makes you care about the guys too.

Pier Kids

★★★1/2 (Sept. 27-30)

Elegance Bratton filmed most of this documentary in 2011 and added a postscript once he raised finishing funds. There's terrific material, not always edited to best advantage. Introductory stats say more than half of U.S. youth experiencing homelessness are LGBT, 40% of them people of color. We meet a couple dozen young people hanging near New York's Chelsea and/or Christopher Street Piers. Eventually we focus on three—Krystal LaBeija, Casper and DeSean—and settle in for their intimate portraits.

Taiwan Equals Love

★★★ (Sept. 27-30)

The good news: Sophia Yen follows three

couples —two women raising a young daughter, two twentysomething men and two older men — on their long trip to the altar during the two-plus-years it took Taiwan to become Asia's first country to legalize same-sex marriage. The bad news: Apart from these personal stories and some demonstrations, incompetent subtitling makes it impossible to follow details of the political battle in Taiwanese courts and the Legislative Yuan. Bulletins appear onscreen while someone is speaking and titles flash by trying to translate both, teasing us repeatedly with buildups to announcements we won't understand.

The Whistle

★★★1/2 (Sept. 27-30)

About a dozen lesbians and one trans man (producer-director-writer-editor StormMiguel Florez) talk about their Albuquerque high school days in the '70s and '80s. The city was behind the times, with police still raiding our bars, but many will find the stories relatable. A unique feature: the high-pitched whistle of the title they used to connect with others like themselves. There are horror stories of therapy and parental rejection; a heroine in lesbian teacher Havens Levitt, who counseled some of the girls; and happy endings as the women introduce their partners/wives of many years. Nice folks to spend an hour with.

Family Members (Los Miembros de la Familia)

★★★ (Sept. 28-Oct. 1)

Family Members is full of things I don't usually like, including long takes of people sitting or walking and a backstory revealed ever so teasingly. That I enjoyed it so much can only mean writer-director Mateo Bendesky is a bruja/witch. Siblings Lucas (Tomás Wicz) and Gilda (Laila Maltz) travel by bus from Buenos Aires to their small coastal hometown to dispose of their mother's remains. While working out Lucas meets Guido (Alejandro Russek), who believes the universe is a computer simulation. There's a song by an Israeli band called Mindfuck, which would have been an appropriate title for this film.

Gracefully

★★★1/2 (Sept. 28-Oct. 1)

This documentary gave me some new impressions of Iranian culture. Amir Voshtani is an 80-year-old dairy farmer who likes to dance in spangly homemade women's clothes of many cultures. He says he danced for a living until the 1979 revolution put a stop to it, but we still see him dancing in drag in wedding parties and rest homes. Amir has a wife (who hates his dancing) and six sons, so if there's a sexual component he's repressed it successfully. There are mixed messages in his stories but we get interesting glimpses of a country we don't know much about.

Lulu en el Jardín

★★★1/2 (Sept. 29-Oct. 2)

A film about psychiatry can drive you crazy. This "experimental documentary" would have benefited from being more traditional, at least explaining that it's director Jose Luis Benavides who's interviewing his likable lesbian mother, Lourdes Benavides, about her treatments as a teenager in the late '70s at the Chicago-Read Mental Health Center, where patients were rou-

tinely overmedicated and largely neglected or abused. In a parallel track "Lulu," who may be the teenaged Lourdes but doesn't have a Latina accent, tells how she tried to escape her feelings by spending time in nature; so we see a lot of flowers and trees.

Stone|Fruit

★★★1/2 (Sept. 29-Oct. 2)

Manny (Matt Palazzolo) and Russ (Rob Warner) don't act like intellectuals but that's what they talk like, and they talk a lot. After seven years of marriage, they're marking their "divorce weekend" by touring California's Wine Country on a tasting trip before Manny moves to Santa Fe to study on a fellowship. They spend most of a day with Byron (Thomas Hobson), who's taken advantage of their open relationship with each and both of them. As the guys seek closure by rehashing every argument they've ever had, the movie has its moments. Maybe quite a few, depending on your taste.

Galore

★★★1/2 (Sept. 30-Oct. 3)

You'll get a taste of Europe's drag scene in this documentary about Lady Galore, a.k.a. Sander den Baas. They're pleasant and entertaining but not as interesting as some of the things that go on in the background (European Gay Ski Week?) with little or no explanation. Despite their obvious Divine inspiration, Galore gets gastric bypass surgery to slim down by 60 kilos (132 pounds). They also tour a few countries from their home base in Amsterdam (where Pride is celebrated with a boat parade) and organize a workshop-filled weekend in a chateau. I just wanted more info and less chatter.

Dramarama

★★★ (Oct. 2-5)

Gene (Nick Pugliese) is a 17-year-old closeted gay agnostic who's made it through high school by hanging with fellow nerds in the Drama Club. That was me a long time ago, so I related like crazy to this tale of the 1994 going-away party before the first of Gene's gang of five leaves for college. Three of them are girls. Oscar (Nico

Greetham) presents as a ladies' man but enjoys "wrestling" with Gene and gets jealous when Gene goes out without him. Dramarama gets heavier as it goes along, as three years of repressed feelings come out — but Gene doesn't.

Ema

★★ (Oct. 2-5)

More like Tenet than a straightforward narrative film, Ema is from Chile's Pablo Larraín, who directed Natalie Portman in Jackie. Ema (Mariana Di Girolamo) is a dancer married to choreographer Gastón (Gael García Bernal). When not dancing or teaching children to dance, Ema and her girl gang go around Valparaíso with a flamethrower, starting fires. Ema and infertile Gastón had adopted young Polo, but returned him to the orphanage after he set Ema's sister on fire. Now the childless couple wants Polo back, and Ema's got a plan to get him. I've made it simpler to follow than Larraín does.

Single Street (Singel 39)

★★★ (Oct. 2-5)

Straight women are more likely than gay men to appreciate this well-made Dutch drama. Mo (Lies Visschedijk) is a respected, early-middle-aged cardiac surgeon without much of a love life. Then Max (Waldemar Torenstra), an artist, rents the space below her apartment for a studio/residence. But Max is gay. But he wants to father a child. It doesn't occur to Mo to volunteer until Max finds his "ideal match" on a website. Then Mo gets jealous. If you have any inclination to be a parent, this tale of gay and straight worlds colliding could open your eyes to opportunities around you.

The Capote Tapes

★★★ (Oct. 3-6)

Truman Capote (1924-1984) can't play himself as well as Philip Seymour Hoffman did in his Oscar-winning role in 2005's Capote, but he does okay in recordings, talk show clips and paparazzi photos. People who knew him are as eager to talk about Capote as he was to talk — and write — about them. His final novel, Answered Prayers, was never published, except for three chapters

that caused him to lose his friends in New York society for revealing their secrets through thinly-disguised fictional characters. The rest has never been found. This is an entertainingly gossipy look at the King/Queen of Gossip.

Drawn Back Home

★★ (Oct. 3-6)

In a Northern Michigan high school ten years ago, they were best friends. Drew (Paul Michael Thomson) was the closeted kid everybody picked on, Eric (Chicago's Mickey O'Sullivan) was his defender, and Sarah (Clare Cooney) was The Girl. Drew moved to Chicago after graduation and Eric and Sarah married. Now they're divorced and Drew comes back for a few days on an assignment. After an awkward reunion the three get close again. There are no prizes for guessing the ending. Debuting writer-director Thomas Awrey gives you too much time to think and the plot doesn't hold up to thoughtful examination.

The Many Lives of Kojin

★★★1/2 (Oct. 3-6)

As enlightening as it is frightening, Diako Yazdani's documentary sends Kojin, an openly gay 22-year-old Kurd living in Germany, back to Kurdistan to discuss with individuals and groups the diverse views of Muslims toward homosexuality—some surprisingly accepting, many lethal. Most colorful is an imam who claims to be able to diagnose and cure everything from AIDS to homosexuality; but if he can't cure the latter, Plan B is execution. Kojin explains his bravery in doing the film: if he's going to die he wants to have accomplished something first. Logistics and locations get confusing, but the conversations remain interesting.

No Hard Feelings

★★★1/2 (Oct. 3-6)

Born in Germany to Iranian refugees, Parvis (Benny Radjaipour) is looked down on for his race but accepted as gay. Recent arrival Amon (Eidin Jalali) doesn't dare reveal his gayness to his neighbors in a refugee shelter where he and his sister Banafshe (Banafshe Hourmazdi) are staying and Parvis is doing community service. They meet and become friends, then more than friends. We come to care about them as we go with them through some pleasant and unpleasant events; but the screenplay, co-written by director Faraz Shariat, omits so many details we often feel like strangers in a strange land.

Ahead of the Curve

★★★ (Oct. 4-7)

Three films in one: a course in modern lesbian history; a biography of Curve magazine founder Frances "Franco" Stevens, directed by her wife, Jen Rainin; and a questioning of whether glossy magazines are still relevant and if not, what should replace them? Curve began 30 years ago as Deneuve but changed in the mid-'90s after a certain actress sued over the use of her name, just as they were getting celebrities on the cover and national advertising. Melissa Etheridge, Jewelle Gomez, Lea DeLaria and others stop by to reminisce, helping a good story — or several — be very well told.

Ahead of the Curve.

Photo courtesy of Chicago Filmmakers



STREAMING THEATER REVIEW

Pride and Prejudice: A Virtual Play

Playwright: Adapted by Christina Calvit
from the novel by Jane Austen

At: Streaming online at LifelineTheatre.com

Tickets: Free with donation

Runs through: Oct. 4

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

For starters, what we've got are two wealthy young bachelors, two broke young bachelors, five genteel-poor young misses and one rich old battle-axe—but this is 1813 England, when only male heirs could legally inherit property, making the sole means of acquiring wherewithal (or “digging for gold” as we call it nowadays) sufficient to secure a comfortable future was to marry it.

Further complicating the negotiations necessary to remove the obstacles to true love bringing about a satisfactory match (a “happy ending” in modern parlance) was the snobbery discouraging fraternization between those boasting long and/or exalted lineage and those claiming pedigrees of more recent vintage.

Jane Austen's groundbreaking novel originated



Pride and Prejudice: A Virtual Play.

Image from Lifeline Theatre

the literary genre today known as the Regency Romance—a label often dismissed by our democratic age as frivolous costume-comedy. Austen's firsthand familiarity with the grim sacrifices engendered by a social and economic system punishing the privileged and underprivileged alike reveals a universe encompassing a multitude of choices faced by individuals of all classes in search of values, identity and lives of, if not precisely joy, then contentment at the very least.

These goals require numerous auxiliary agents—

parents, of course, and meddling kin, nosy neighbors and a bevy of servants—all mandating a crowded dramatic landscape. Fortunately, Lifeline Theatre has forged its reputation on big-stories-in-small-spaces arrangements and not even the cinematic live-stream format dictated by current social distancing restrictions can impede the narrative flow of Christina Calvit's compact, but still comprehensive, adaptation.

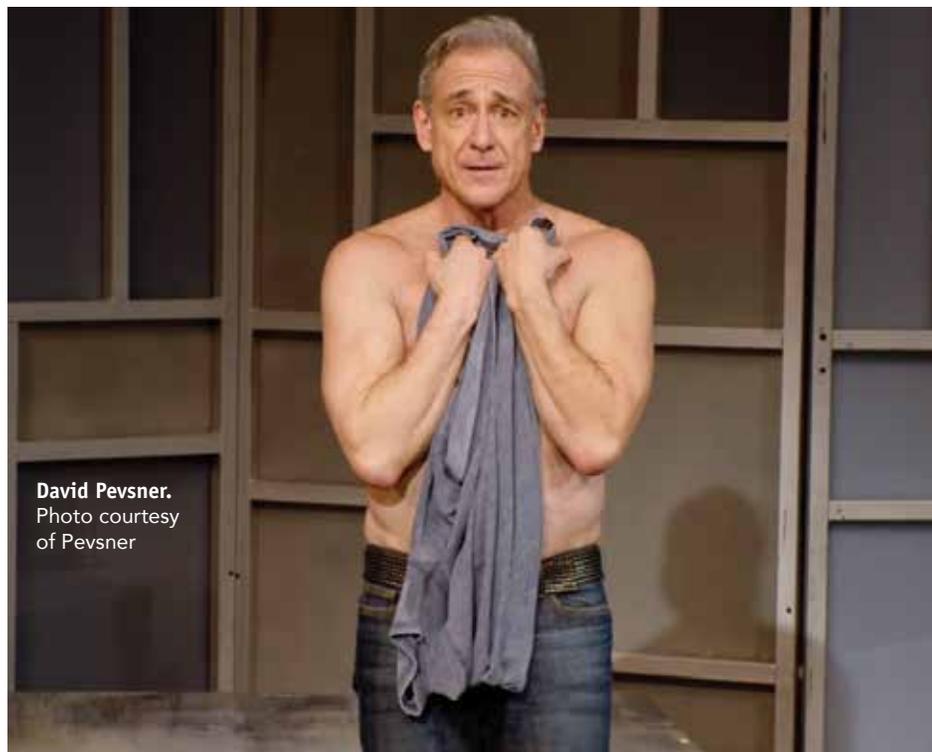
Director Dorothy Milne and film editor Harrison Ornelas have likewise learned from early-spring

experiments in video-staged performance: to prevent confusion arising from double-cast characters viewed in headshot range, each window opens on identification of the person it depicts at that specific time—a narrative device allowing us to witness reactions to the news taking focus, as well as enabling a vox-pop chorus of busybodies to keep us up to date on the expository gossip. Duet scenes employ Lifeline ensemble's several real-life cohabiting couples to permit us a view of ballroom dancers waltzing with their faces outside of the frame, or a husband waving casually at smartphone correspondents over his wife's shoulder. (Did I mention that the production decor is modern dress-casual?)

It's not all technizardry, however. The synchronicity achieved by actors after decades of experience swapping dialogue with one another, in a Rogers Park auditorium barely bigger than the “personal closets” (“bedrooms” to us) they now occupy, ensures a brisk pace and an intimacy enhanced by the close-up eye contact facilitated by the “asides” incorporated into Calvit's text. When Samantha Newcomb's irrepressible Lizzy asks us what we think of the latest contretemps, it's all we can do not to reply—though if you're watching from your sofa, feel free to roast the aloof Mister Darcy's well-begun but ill-concluded marriage proposal, delivered by Andres Enriquez with affecting aplomb.

MOVIES

David Pevsner brings performance to home screens



David Pevsner.
Photo courtesy
of Pevsner

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Although Los Angeles-based performer David Pevsner's solo performance piece Musical Comedy Whore is technically a one-man show, Pevsner takes care to differentiate it from others.

“I think people are kind of surprised by it, [thinking] that it's a ‘one-man show’ or a ‘cabaret act,’ and it's just not,” said Pevsner, who is a Skokie native. “It's so much more than that.”

Musical Comedy Whore opened on stage in 2016, and its title says it all: Pevsner worked as an escort in order to supplement his acting jobs when he was starting. “Everything in the show is true,” he explained. “There is a little bit of chronology I switched around for drama, but everything is true. The ‘plot’ aspect of the show happened in the mid-to-late-’90s, and right after it happened, I wrote a screenplay about it.”

He added, “I'm so not a ‘drama king,’ and I couldn't believe I had all that drama in my life.”

As the years progressed, the material from that screenplay took root as the basis of Musical Comedy Whore, the stage show. “I loved the whole idea of standing on a stage, telling stories and singing songs,” he said. “The script was originally called Dog Days, because there's a subplot about how the guy wants a dog to alleviate his loneliness. It eventually became Musical Comedy Whore, because I thought, ‘You know what? A, Dog Days is kind of generic, and B, let's just get to the crux: This is about a guy who does musical comedy, and he's a hooker.’”

Now, the show is available to home audiences as well. A film version of Musical Comedy Whore dropped on streaming services and DVD in early September.

One streaming service, Amazon Prime Video, threw a monkey wrench in Pevsner's plan, how-

ever. Its adult-content filters, driven by bots, wouldn't let the filmmakers use the word “whore” in the title, even though, as Pevsner pointed out, it has no problem offering Ken Russell's 1991 film that is simply titled Whore. So on that platform, Pevsner and his colleagues changed a word and added an exclamation point, making the show Musical Comedy Stud!

“The difficulty was, the title ‘Musical Comedy Whore’ is a double entendre,” Pevsner said. “I'm a whore for musicals and, while, I was doing musicals, I was a hooker.”

Besides stage appearances, Pevsner has stayed very active in film and TV over the years. Among his film roles was the 2012 film Scrooge & Marley, which was executive-produced by Windy City Times owner Tracy Baim. His television work includes appearances on Silicon Valley, NCIS, Modern Family and Desperate Housewives.

Some fans might know Pevsner from a more provocative realm: online erotica. Since the early 2010s, he has regularly been publishing online explicit photos and videos of himself. Pevsner calls himself a “recovering narcissist” and said that he's been appearing in such photos since he first posed for renowned photographer Tom Bianchi in 1989.

But it was only around 2012 that he decided to be more open about his modeling and began posting the photos to the Tumblr platform. He wants such photos to stand in testament against unhealthy preconceptions about age, body type and sexuality.

“I have felt shame about my body and about sex since the day I came out of the womb,” Pevsner said. “This is my way of fighting back.”

He added that the photos are now “very much

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WINDY CITY TIMES AT 35

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BOOK AVAILABLE SOON FROM WINDY CITY TIMES



Sarah Paulson in *Ratched*.
Netflix

TELEVISION

Actors talk about tackling 'Ratched' roles, working with Ryan Murphy

BY JERRY NUNN

It takes the winning combination of gay producer Ryan Murphy and lesbian actress Sarah Paulson to bring the fictional story of *Ratched* to life in unexpected ways. The new drama series on Netflix already has a built-in fan base, thanks to nurse Mildred Ratched from the unforgettable novel and film *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

Nurse Ratched is known for being a cold, complicated and controlling character in past portrayals. *Ratched* takes these traits to a whole new level and begins streaming on Netflix on Friday, Sept. 18.

Creator Evan Romansky returns *Ratched* back to her roots as a young nurse working in a psychiatric hospital in 1947. Jon Jon Briones portrays Dr. Richard Hanover, who runs the mental institution along with sidekick nurse Betsy Bucket, played by Judy Davis.

For queer audiences there is plenty to chew on over the course of season one. There are conversion therapy horrors to be seen and several patients wrestling with their sexuality during a very closeted time period in America.

Out cast member Cynthia Nixon displays many different dimensions to her character, Gwendolyn Briggs, on the series. Nixon spoke about Briggs on a Zoom call with *Windy City Times* and other reporters before *Ratched's* debut. Nixon said of Briggs, "She is very different from the people I am usually asked to play. Gwendolyn is so whole-

hearted and pure. She's up against the odds. She's a queer woman in 1947 and trying to make a life for herself in politics. She moves ahead without fear and wants Mildred to walk in the light."

When asked about the LGBT storylines, Nixon stated, "One of the overarching themes of *Ratched* is, not only the brutal treatment of people who were deemed ill, but what fell under the umbrella of mental illness. Being queer was front and center. We have so many examples of it in the story. One of the saddest parts of the show is played by Jon Jon's real son, who is forced to undergo a lobotomy because he could possibly be gay."

Paulson added, "There are many elements to this story that are queer-centric, but for Mildred there's a consequence of discovering that part of herself. It is not a story about a woman who is struggling with that identity. It is a story about a woman that wants to absolve herself from the guilt of abandoning the most important person in her life at a very young age.

"The only place where happiness lives is in her relationship with Gwendolyn. I love that element of this story. Within this show is the queer component of love. It is the first time that Mildred can feel seen and explore these parts of her. You see that all the confidence she has just goes away when she is with Mildred. She doesn't know how to access that part of herself. There is a great joy in playing that as a member of the LGBT community."

Some may call *Ratched* a comeback vehicle for actress Sharon Stone, although her pet monkey almost steals the show. She said that she has admired the women Ryan Murphy had worked with in the past, such as Jessica Lange and Kathy Bates, influencing her to accept the part of the quirky Lenore Osgood, "There were so many vague areas about my character and we got to explore why she is the person she is. What is her backstory and how did she get here? I had a monkey on my back both literally and metaphorically!"

British actress Sophie Okonedo plays the unbalanced woman Charlotte Wells. She confessed on the conference call when asked about preparing for her part, "I didn't do much research on mental illness, everything was in the script. I played each personality as a separate character. I didn't worry about Charlotte being underneath."

Many may recognize actor Finn Wittrock as Edmund Tolleson after he played several roles in the *American Horror Story* series and the Murphy film *The Normal Heart*. He explained on the phone that episode two with Briones was his most challenging scene to play: "I approached my character as someone who had never grown up. He was traumatized by the violence inflicted on him during his childhood. I never thought of him as a sociopath. He has a moral compass—but a warped one."

Briones explained that even though he had previously appeared in two series helmed by Murphy, *The Assassination of Gianni Versace*:

American Crime Story and *American Horror Story: Apocalypse*, he had never worked directly with Murphy in the past. He admitted he was at first intimidated by Murphy, describing the producer as someone who is sometimes hard to gauge if he's joking or serious, "The first time he looked at me, I was in my costume and wig for approval. He has a genius and a vision for his whole world of storytelling, which is exciting."

Wittrock concurred, saying, "I feel Ryan was even more meticulous this time. He was into the nuances of how it looked and felt. He was hands on in that way. He is generally fun on the set, although there are some people that cower in fear of him. Even when it is a sad, crazy and bloody scene, he brings a party atmosphere to it."

Paulson agreed that this time working with Murphy was different from past projects. "I had never played a titular character before or been an executive producer before. This was possible now because of him. That was why I was terrified to do it. I didn't have a ton of experience. He told me to step into my power, which made me want to take a hot shower and run screaming into the street! I wasn't sure if I was capable or ready. It was a myriad of things to contend with, but he has always been my greatest champion. There are challenges, but any relationship will have those. He gave me some power, but not all of it, which was healthy. If he had let me do what I want, that wouldn't have gone great for anybody!"

Paulson went on to say that as an executive producer she received the early edits first and Murphy would make adjustments afterward, "It was an interesting experience to think beyond my own narrow view of my performance and think about the show as a whole."

Nixon described working with Murphy as "mind-blowing." She remembered that *Pose* costumes were paraded out for approval when Murphy was on set and seeing storyboards for a new series. She recalled, "Ryan showed me a documentary he had been working on called *A Secret Love* about two women who were a couple for decades. You think that you know what Ryan Murphy does, then you see a new project that is not just a new chapter for him, but a whole other book!"

Stone told the group that Murphy took her out to lunch to offer her the role in *Ratched*, although she had some concerns, "I was excited, but you never know how big the cliff is that you are going to have to jump off of when Ryan Murphy offers you a part. I have seen his other shows, but I am not really used to working in television. I usually went to work with a director, a script and a plan. I go to work these days and don't have scripts or the same director. One day I am on episode six, then the next day on episode one with two different directors and not able to read the entire work."

Stone complimented Sarah Paulson as an executive producer: "In my generation, if I wanted to suggest something I would get a real talking to. My ideas would be shut down. When I started working, it was me and 300 men, even my dresser was a man. The experience of working on Ryan's show was very different. This time I had actresses and females in the crew. I had an opportunity to finally be in the company of fine, subtle, intimate, layered and tender women that were empowered. The men's roles even had a respect and

emotional intelligence that was just a different thing than in the past.”

Ratched is wound tight with unpredictable twists and turns while limiting the series to two seasons with a total of 18 episodes planned. Murphy directed the first and second episodes, setting the tone for the overall first season; he then relinquishes control for other directors to take over as the series progresses.

All the cast members on the conference call stated they are looking forward to getting back to work and completing season two. Roadblocks in the way of filming the followup season of Ratched include the hectic schedule of Ryan Murphy and the pandemic. Paulson said, “I believe I am working soon, just not on Ratched yet. I want us all to be together, including the crew. I love collaborating with all of these people that are just as invested as I am. I don’t know how we can access that with shields, masks and gloves. We have a lot to consider.”

Paulson told the group that she picked the project to explore the “porous parts” of Mildred Ratched, “In the original movie, she’s calcified and there’s a hardness. I remember thinking she was a villain and evil. When I rewatched One



Left: Sarah Paulson and Cynthia Nixon. Right: Sophie Okonedo and Jon Jon Briones. Netflix

Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest before shooting this series, I thought of her as a victim of a patriarchal infrastructure that is in this hospital. Possibly she didn’t have a choice to access her heart in her work or bring her femininity to her job. Maybe she is not a villain, but had no recourse.

If I were going to play it, she would have to be adhering to some rule that she believed was most right and limited to her era.

“I was interested in who the woman was in the movie that turns a key and goes into her house. Who is that woman at the door? There was no

backstory and that is an enormous freedom. We can give context and depth to things that weren’t there before. It was interesting to confront my prejudice of the character from the outset. I wanted to get in her head without being like, “She is so crazy!”



“The fact is, I’m a cheerleader for this country. I love our country. And I don’t want people to be frightened. I don’t want to create panic.”—**Donald Trump**. No offense to any leaders of cheers out there, but all the cheerleaders I knew growing up were at the top of the human pyramid ... and the bottom of the football team.

If you value gay media (like this column), the future is in your hands. Another gay paper is scaling back: **The Windy City Times** is shuttering its print version after 35 years on Sept. 30. To put this into personal terms—this column once appeared in over two dozen weekly gay publications nationwide. Do you know how many are left? Barely a handful. Please support your LGBT media ... and websites like BillyMasters.com. After all, we’ve serviced so many of you.

Speaking of media, **The View** is back. Meghan’s about to pop, Joy is on her way to (or from) an Italian wake, Sara has returned to the table and, wait a minute ... who is that? Oh, yeah—**Ana Navarro** is back on Fridays. We completely forgot about her. With a new season comes a new drama. On their third day back, **Joy Behar** said she’d get a COVID-19 vaccine after Ivanka gets one. Ivanka Tweeted, “Deal. I would come on your show to do so.”

Then there are some old subjects still rattling around. One of those is **Kevin Spacey**. You may recall his fall from grace happened shortly after he hosted the Tony Awards on June 11, 2017. Within months, **Anthony Rapp** revealed that when he was 14 years old, he was a target of unwanted sexual advances from Kevin. That’s when Spacey’s house of cards began to tumble. He was



Chris Evans got plenty of exposure recently, Billy says.

Photo courtesy of Marvel Studios

fired from most jobs, written out of others, and young men came forward with claims that led to court proceedings. The latest lawsuit comes from Rapp and an anonymous claimant.

More appropriate fun can be had on “Billy Masters LIVE.” Last Tuesday, we interviewed the marvelous **Marilyn Maye**—and featured some footage from her recent sold-out engagement at the Crown & Anchor in Provincetown. And on Thursday, we updated our “Broadway Bares” special by tackling the deliciously wicked Mark MacKillop—who was the top fundraiser of “Bares” for the third year in a row.

This Tuesday featured the risqué **Rhea Litre**—host of “Quarantine Queen,” the live Instagram drag show that just started its second season. Rhea and I go back a LONG way. We know where all the bodies are buried, so expect us to tell

tales and name names. On Thursday, we celebrate the 35th anniversary of “the Golden Girls with some very special guests. Join in the fun—on BillyMasters.com/TV or on our YouTube channel, Billy Masters TV.

Like your beloved Billy, lots of people have gone online with their own projects during the pandemic. Last week, a group of Black actresses assembled to raise money for Color of Change and to put a new spin on **The Golden Girls**. Using a verbatim script written by our bon ami Stan Zimmerman for season one of the classic sitcom, “Flu Attack” was reimagined with **Tracee Ellis Ross** as Rose, **Sanaa Lathan** as Blanche, **Regina King** as Dorothy, and **Alfre Woodard** as Sophia. Lena Waithe hosted the event.

As we were going to press, **Chris Evans’** penis was wreaking havoc. It was a shocking moment. On his Instagram account, Evans shared a video hanging out with a group of friends playing a game called, ironically enough, “Heads Up!” At the end of the video, the screen froze on a page showing thumbnails from his camera roll. And there, amongst other images of the actor, was a close-up of a penis. While I feel it’s declassé to discuss a semi-erect phallus, let’s simply say it makes up in girth what it may lack in length. Some people claim—rightfully so—that we have no idea who the disembodied penis belongs to. But riddle me this: Why would Chris Evans have a photo of someone else’s penis on his cell phone? Since an image is worth a thousand words, check out BillyMasters.com.

One of my proofreaders claims this week’s “Ask Billy” question: “I heard that **Aaron Carter** jerked off to completion on his OnlyFans. Do you have any video or images of this momentous occasion?”

First, let me correct you—it wasn’t on his OnlyFans page; it was on his CamSoda page. The difference? No idea. What did he do in the video? He took a shower; he showed off his stuffed animals; he peeled a banana with his feet; he played guitar; fingered some honey (not a euphemism);

and he did indeed jerk off to completion. And, yes, some titillating highlights can be seen on BillyMasters.com.

When we’re bringing you both a peeled and unpeeled penis, it’s definitely time to end yet another column. As I’ve said so often during these quarantined days—any penis in a storm. If you have other needs that need filling, head to BillyMasters.com—the site that always satisfies. Should you require more personal attention, I happen to have some time on my hands. Reach out to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before I finger some honey (which IS a euphemism). 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 PB&J

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Who didn't love a good peanut butter-and-jelly sandwich while growing up (unless you had a peanut allergy)?

Well, the folks at **PB&J** (205 N. Peoria St.; PBWestLoop.com) offer this popular item—although, of course, the restaurant has its own spins on that classic. However, “PB&J” also stands for “pizza, beer and jukebox”—and each is definitely represented here.

Just looking around the airy interior (which is where the three of us sat because the winds were gusting at about 40 mph that day) shows plenty dedicated to music/the jukebox. The lyric wall alone (with lines from dozens of songs) will have you guessing and staring for hours, but there are also other items such as the Rolling Stones logo and even a fixture featuring the late Queen frontman Freddie Mercury with reworked lyrics that reflect a pro-mask wearing stance. (However, there are plenty of TV screens showing sports if you're interested.)

Start things with a drink—and there's a lot available, from beer (of course) to wine to White Claw. However, I opted for the Pear Pressure



PB&J's Golden Goose.

Photo by Kira Anderson

cocktail—a refreshing take on a Moscow Mule that consists of Grey Goose Pear, ginger beer and lime. However, there are plenty of other options, such as Hot & Bothered (Cuervo Tradicional, pineapple, lime and habanero bitters) and This One's for Karen (champagne and passionfruit)—although, in these politically charged times, that name might have to be reconsidered.

The thing about PB&J's menu is that it offers

something for anyone. Shared apps include whole jumbo wings (in sweet chili, buffalo and BBQ varieties), truffle fries and even drunken mussels. And salads include the Not So Greek Salad and the provocatively named The Beet Down.

Now, back to the PB&J—as in the sandwiches. This spot has the standard Wonder Bread PB&J, Elvis Style (with toasted wheat bread, chunky peanut butter, honey and sliced bananas, with

bacon and candied bacon options) and the Not Your Mama's PB&J (a delicious item that's on oven-toasted multigrain, with almond butter, berry compote and maple-bourbon honey).

There are other sandwiches, however. One of my guests adored the Keep On Jammin' Burger, which has a patty with beet-onion jam, gruyere, crispy green tomato and bacon aioli, on a sesame bun. I almost got the country chicken sandwich, which features cornflake-crusting fried chicken, creamy slaw and chipotle slaw.

However, as the venue's name indicates, there's also Neapolitan-style pizza—which I ultimately chose. There are enticing choices, such as the delightful BBQ Mother Clucker, which sports smoked BBQ chicken, pickled red onion, mozzarella and cilantro. We also went with the Burrata & Balsamic (with a prosciutto option); on its own, it's fine—but it doesn't quite measure up to the other pizza, which dazzles the taste buds by comparison. However, I'm sure even the Mother Clucker might not fare well against the Chicago Heat Wave, which counts “spicy” pepperoni among its ingredients.

And then there's the Golden Goose (which we did not try). However, it stands out for at least one reason: It's \$350 (and must be ordered the day before being at PB&J). It consists of Maison Dutriez's red currant jam (the world's most expensive jelly, which is hand-seeded using goose quills), Adams All Natural Peanut Butter, toasted edible gold leaf bread and a drizzle of New Zealand Manuka honey. It's pure indulgence.

So if you get a chance, stop by (or order from) PB&J. Whether you get a pizza or an actual PB&J, you're bound to be satisfied.

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

'Under the Stars with Handbag' drive-in fest through Sept. 19

Hell in a Handbag Productions is hosting “Under the Stars with Handbag: A Drive-In Festival,” which is running Fridays and Saturdays through Sept. 19 at The Red Box Workshop, 4242 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., at 7:30 p.m.

Productions continue with Caged Dames (Sept. 4-5); Bewildered (Sept. 11-12); and the debut of Airport 1970SOMETHING (Sept. 18-19).

Patrons have the option of viewing from their vehicle or bringing their own lawn chairs/cushions to camp out in the parking lot—all in pre-designated, socially distant spaces. Cars will also have space in between for the option of outdoor seating. Tickets include popcorn and non-alcoholic beverages. No alcoholic beverages allowed.

The lot opens at 7:30 p.m. and the feature begins promptly at 8:30 p.m.

Advance registration is required, and sales end three hours before presentation. Ticket prices are \$40, \$60 or \$80, depending on the number of patrons in a party and the size of the space needed. Tickets are currently available via Brown Paper Tickets at handbagdrivein.bpt.me.

Red Stars player making history as part of men's team

Chicago Red Stars forward Yuki Nagasato is heading to Japan, where she will make history as the first woman playing professionally for Hayabusa Eleven, an amateur men's club, as part of the Kanagawa Prefecture League.

Nagasato arrived in Chicago in 2017. The 2011 World Cup Champion has made 52 National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) appearances with the Red Stars.

She had a banner year with Chicago in 2019. With eight goals, Nagasato finished as the league's eighth-highest goalscorer and she led the league in assists, with eight.

Nagasato's loan ends prior to the 2021 NWSL preseason.



Yuki Nagasato.

Photo by ISI Photography

'Iconic: A Broadway Hits Cabaret' on Sept. 25, 27

Oil Lamp Theater has announced the first event in its Onstage and Outdoors: A Live Performance Series—“Iconic: A Broadway Hits Cabaret.”

The shows will take place Friday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Sept. 27, at 3 p.m. in the parking lot of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, on the 1700 block of Glenview Road, Glenview.

Jonah D. Winston, Desiree Gonzalez, Gabriel Fries, Shayla Rogers and Eustace J. Williams are slated to perform as they sing tunes such as “Burn” (from Hamilton), “All I Ask of You” (The Phantom of the Opera) and “Love Is an Open Door” (Frozen).

Regarding COVID-19 safety precautions, all performers and Oil Lamp Theater staff members are screened before each performance. Face coverings and gloves are required for staff members at all times. Actors will wear face coverings when not performing and guests will be seated at least 27 feet from the stage.

Tickets are \$15-\$40; call 847-834-0738 or see OilLampTheater.org.

PEVSNER from page 16

an expression of me. People who know me [say], "That guy just can't keep his clothes on."

Tumblr officially banned sexually explicit images in late 2018, leaving Pevsner searching for a new platform on which to post his photos and videos. He decided to make them available to subscribers on the Only Fans platform.

"[At first] I did not charge for a subscription; it was only going to be a gallery," Pevsner recalled. "I accrued a lot of people. Then when the pandemic hit, I was like, 'You know what? I'm done. Life's too short. I have these videos. I want to put them up, but I don't want to put them up for the whole world. So I started charging for a subscription and I started posting videos.'"

Like most Americans, especially ones in creative fields, the pandemic has forced Pevsner to face numerous challenges as he shelters in place at home in Los Angeles. But he was already an introvert, he said, and can keep up a steady output of work.

"I'm just kind of somebody who's used to being alone anyway—I'm kind of a loner," he said. "This is just that, times 5,000. It's extreme. I've had projects I've been working on, and I've been waking up every day and I have something to do. ... I feel so lucky that I'm making a living as we speak."

See MusicalComedyWhore.com. Pevsner's OnlyFans page is at onlyfans.com/realguyla.

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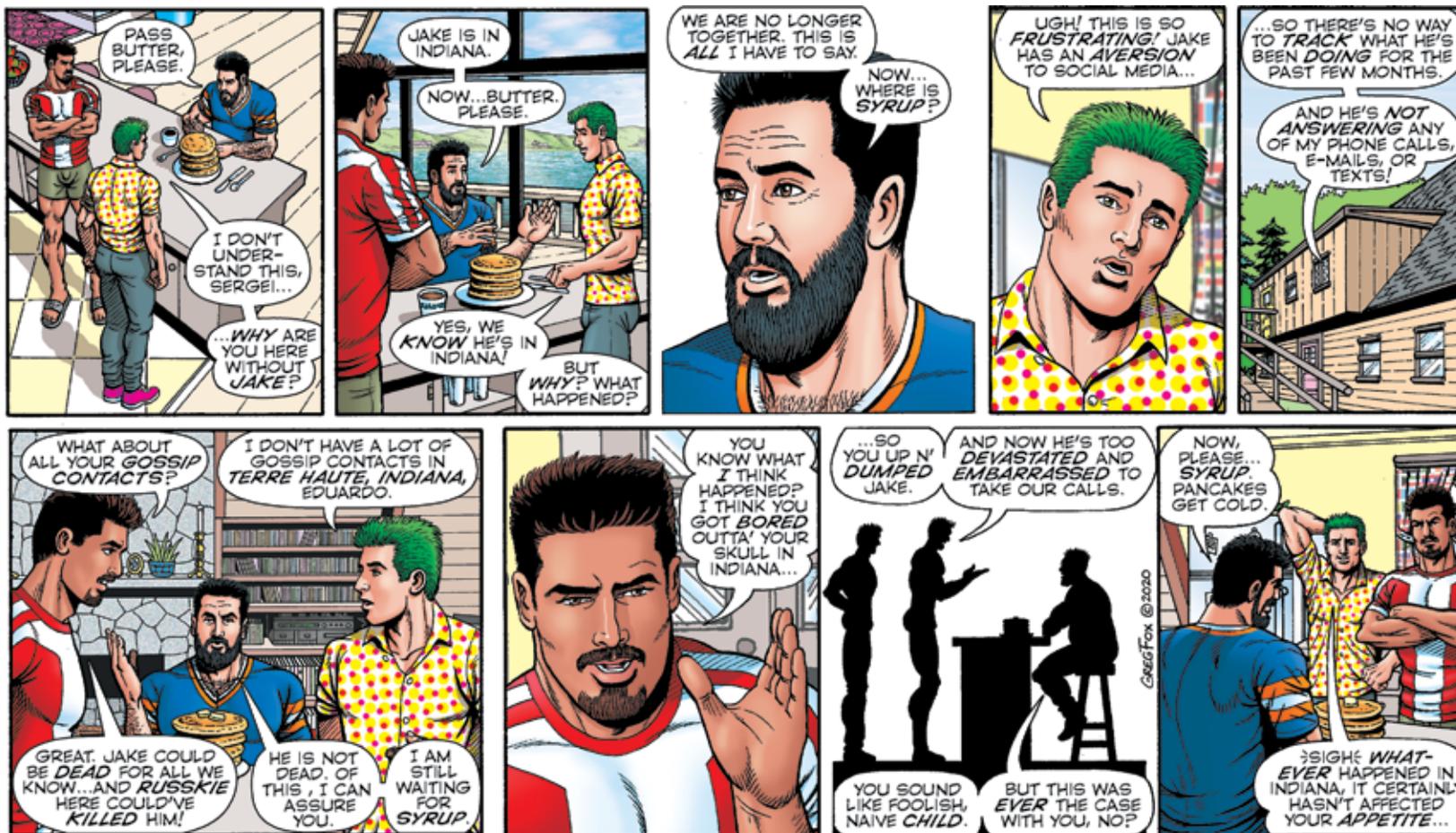
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KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



WINDY CITY TIMES

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Wed., Sept. 16

The Midwest LGBTQ Health Symposium 2020 Virtual Conference "Being Healthy is a Radical Act" a conceptual framework to explore the health and wellness of LGBTQ communities. ealthcare professionals, social service providers, advocates, and researchers will highlight innovative best practices in LGBTQ patient-centered clinical care Starting 8 a.m., and continuing Sept. 17 at 4 p.m. Visit <https://howardbrown.org/event/2020-midwest-lgbtq-health-symposium/>.

Living Room Chats at Affinity Brave conversations and bold voices. Monthly Facebook Live video podcast hosted by Kelly Suzanne Saulsbery the third Wednesday of every month. Find Affinity Community Services on Facebook 7:00pm. <http://affinity95.org>


**DISH NETWORK
Thursday, Sept. 24**

The Dearborn co-owner Amy Lawless is among the co-chairs for this year's Dining Out for Life.

Photo by Ed Negron

Thursday, Sept. 17

Down the Lesbian Music Memory Lane Old Lesbians Organizing for Change, panel discussion with panel of women's music legends as they discuss how they got started in women's music, what they are doing today, experiences with touring, festivals, activism, Lesbian issues. Alix Dobkin, singer/songwriter, writer; Gaye Adegbalola, West African traveling poet, storyteller, musician; Jamie Anderson, musician, Teacher, author June Millington, ounder, IMA and rock musician Margie Adam, inger, songwriter, pianist Maria Cora; bilingual lead vocalist for Azucar Con Ache, choral director; Melanie DeMore, singer/songwriter, composer, conductor, vocal activist 1:00pm Online Tickets: <http://us02web.zoom.us/j/91012000000>

WERQ! LGBTQ Job Fair Center on Halsted and Brave Space Alliance. Last year, more than 50 major corporations, small businesses, government agencies and nonprofits participated. Admission to break-out rooms is first come first serve. Sessions will be 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1-3 p.m. on Sept. 17-18. Zoom virtual platform: <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/werq-job-fair.html>

Saturday, Sept. 19

Rosh Hashanah Shofar pop-ups and other events Jewish spiritual community Mishkan Chicago creating unique pro-

gramming for Jewish New Year amid the pandemic. Shofar pop-ups and participants are invited to a socially distant, immersive ritual of Taslich, where Jews symbolically cast-off past mistakes and bad vibes by tossing pebbles into local bodies of water. See site for more events. 5:00pm Tickets: <http://MishkanChicago.org/shabbat-holidays/high-holidays>

Craft Brews at Lincoln Park Zoo LGBTQ POC event. Hosted by Lincoln Park Zoo and Lou Dog Events! Beer-tasting stations will be hosted outdoors 6:30pm - 10:30pm. Lincoln Park Zoo, 2001 N Clark St., Chicago Tickets: <http://www.meetup.com/Color-Chicago/>

Sunday, Sept. 20

PFLAG DuPage monthly meeting League of Women Voters Naperville (LWVN) followed by monthly support circle. Contact PFLAGDuPage@gmail.com for access code. 2:00pm. See [PFLAGDuPage.org](http://www.PFLAGDuPage.org).

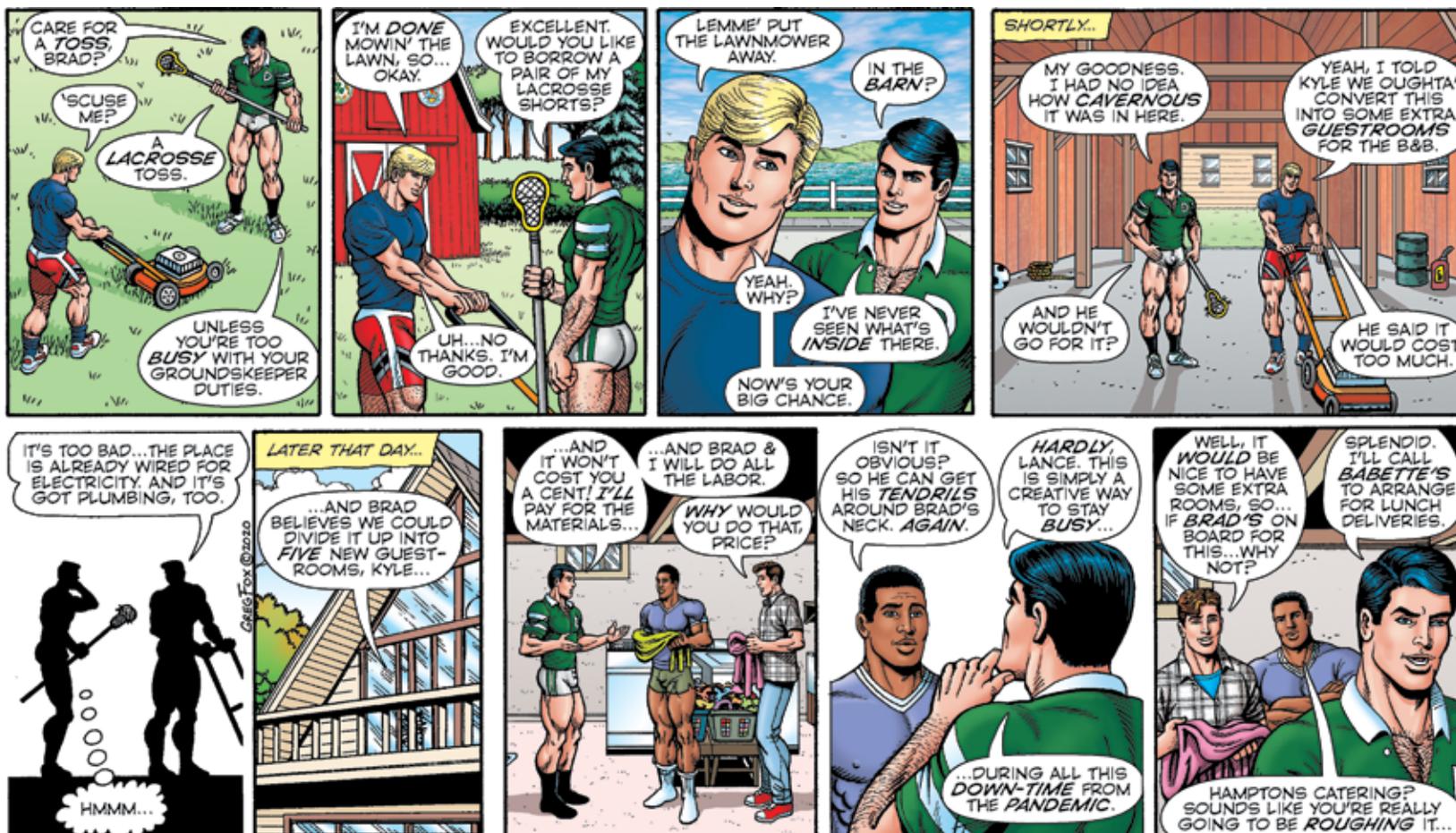
Thursday, Sept. 24

Reeling 2020 38th Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival. Reeling is the second longest-running film festival of its kind in the U.S. and prides itself on showcasing the best LGBTQ+ films and web series from around the world. From international feature films to social issue documentaries to experimental shorts, Reeling has always presented a range of genres that demonstrates the rich diversity of work being produced. Through Oct. 4, 12:00pm, [\[ingFilmFestival.org\]\(http://ingFilmFestival.org\)](http://Reel-</p>
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TPAN's Dining Out for Life virtual event Order in, get carry-out, or dine at participating restaurants to support the local restaurants that have stood by Chicago's LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities over the years. Dine and donate, and then today tune into an evening of online entertainment hosted by KiKi Queens, Chicago's only live-singing charity drag troupe 11:00pm. <http://dining-outforlife.com/chicago>

Saturday, Sept. 26

Artemis Singers 40th-anniversary panel Artemis Singers was the first women's singing ensemble in the U.S. to explicitly identify as a lesbian feminist chorus. Registration required 3:30pm - 5:00pm
2020 Illinois LGBTQ+ Business Summit virtual LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois panels, professional development and networking opportunities. Order lunch or dinner from any of these 3 restaurants on Sept. 24, and be reimbursed up to \$10 for your purchase (1 per person) 1:00pm - 4:00pm Zoom <http://glchamber.chambermaster.com/event-registration/register/4260>

KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST
by Greg Fox


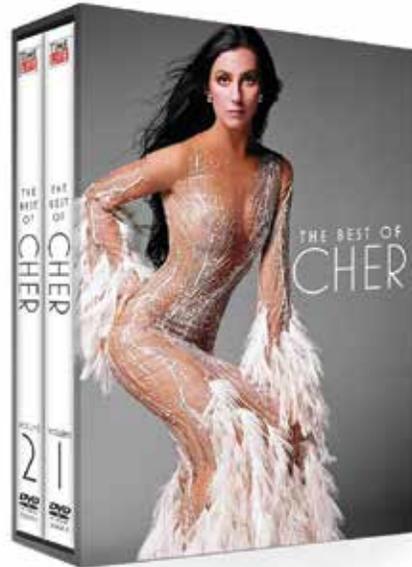
'The Best of Cher' on DVD

Time Life will release The Best of Cher on DVD was released Sept. 15. The SRP is \$99.95.

The Best of Cher brings together Cher's life in the spotlight across two volumes and nine DVDs, as well as a collectible lookbook featuring Bob Mackie's original wardrobe sketches.

Volume one (five DVDs) includes 10 episodes of her variety show, Cher (showing her perform with Ray Charles, Charo and even The Muppets) along with exclusive new interviews with Cher, Designer Bob Mackie, comedy icon Lily Tomlin and Cher executive producer George Schlatter; TV appearances on The Dick Cavett Show and Dinah; and a newly produced featurette, "Cher: Then & Now."

Volume two (four DVDs) features TV specials from the '70s: Cher ... Special (1978) and Cher ... and Other Fantasies (1979); two concerts in Las Vegas, live from the Mirage (1991) and MGM Grand (1999); the full-length documentary Dear Mom, Love Cher, offering a rare peek into Cher's family history; and bonus features, including a 2018 appearance on The Late, Late Show with James Corden.



Jeff Awards to be online this fall

The 52nd annual Jeff Awards, recognizing theater excellence among Equity theater productions, will be presented this fall as an online program.

In preparation for this program, the 2020 Equity nominations will be publicly announced Tuesday, Sept. 15, along with the date when the program will be available.

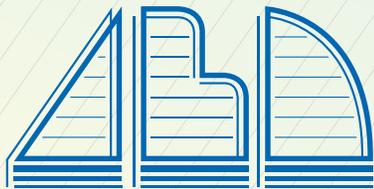
Chicago Equity theater company productions eligible for 2020 Jeff Awards were staged from Aug. 1, 2019 through March 13, 2020. Traditionally, the Equity season extends through July 31. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the eligibility period ended with the theater community's cancellation of shows after March 13.

During the shortened 2020 season, Jeff Awards members attended 78 of productions of eligible Equity theaters. (In an average season, members attend approximately 130 Equity theater performances.) Of the 2020 season, approximately 80% were designated as "recommended."

Left: The Best of Cher.

Courtesy of Michael Krause/Foundry Communications

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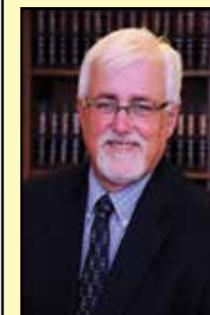
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REELING

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