



June 13, 2013 | Vol. 4, No. 16



Marriage rulings imminent

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to issue opinions in two cases this month that – in the best possible outcome – could clear the way for same-sex couples to marry throughout the United States, thus allowing those couples to access more than 1,100 federal benefits associated with marriage.

The justices in March heard arguments in challenges to Cali-

fornia's Proposition 8, the state's voter-approved constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman, and to the U.S. Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman for federal purposes.

Woman, and to the U.S. Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman for federal purposes.

WiG looks at the cases, the issues, the court, the potential outcomes and the history of the pursuit of marriage equality.

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Pride and prejudice Globally, LGBT celebrants face assault and worse

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

In cities, provinces and entire countries around the world, LGBT Pride event organizers risk becoming political prisoners and Pride celebrants risk becoming trauma patients.

"In some places, especially the United States where it all started, Pride is a celebration of how much progress has been made," said Zurich-based human rights activist Anna Gomes. "I have been to Pride in San Francisco. It is glorious. It is not like that everywhere. In some countries, where to be gay is a crime or taboo, going to Pride is an act of civil disobedience."

PROTESTS page 30

Chinese activists kiss as they take part in a gay Pride parade in Changsha in south China's Hunan province on May 17.



PHOTO: AP/CHINATOPIX



The second of three special issues celebrating LGBT Pride Month

FIRE ISLAND REBOUNDS

Memorial Day visitors to Fire Island saw how the legendary gay resort has rebounded in the wake of a 2011 fire and Superstorm Sandy. Two new books, one chronicling the area's architectural heritage, the other a collection of polaroids taken by Tom Bianchi during the resort's heyday in the 1970s (right) tell the resort's history from different perspectives.



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SECOND ARREST IN GAY BASHING

A second suspect has been charged in connection with the March bashing of Applebee's Rice Lake server Tim Phares, pictured right after the assault. The restaurant chain's response to the attack by the husband of a co-worker caused a national outcry.



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News with a twist

WIGWAG

By Lisa Neff & Louis Weisberg

CARMEL HIGH'S CUTEST COUPLE

Two boys, Dylan Meehan, 18, and Brad Taylor, 17, were named "cutest couple" in the class of 2013 in Carmel High School's yearbook. According to students, there was no controversy at the school in suburban Carmel, N.Y., and they carried on with the end-of-year business of signing yearbooks. Still, the couple gained Internet fame. "The whole thing has been a bit surreal," they said, issuing a joint statement to the press.

GET OFF MY CORNER!

A New Jersey woman says she was mistaken for a prostitute at a Miami hotel, but that wasn't the worst of it. Anna Burgese says in a lawsuit filed in federal court that a group of women she believes were prostitutes attacked her in the lobby of South Beach's W Hotel in January. She

filed a lawsuit charging the hotel with negligence, saying it offered a "prostitute-friendly environment."

YOU ARE NOT WEARING THAT

Russian officials have ordered Elton John to change his flamboyant concert outfits during a concert in the city of Krasnodar on July 14. The Communists of Russia party demands that he ditch his usual attire because it comprises "homosexual propaganda."

OH, HIM AGAIN...

Matthew Trehwella, a minister at West Allis' Missionaries to the Pre-Born, called gays "filthy" in a right-wing Web-TV program. He also expressed disgust for straight people with children who "have no problem with homosexuality or homosexual marriage. They are the most base people on the



planet to have totally abandoned every God-given vestige to protect your child from the filth of homosexuality – to blatantly go along with it is disgusting." Journalists call this a "dog bites man" story because, well, what else would you expect from a hardcore, right-wing militia promoter.

GAGGED TO PROTECT GAGA AND GROUPIES

A British judge has limited anti-fur protests outside Harrods in London after animal rights activists interfered with Lady Gaga's arrival at the store to promote her perfume. The judge said the protesters caused a "nuisance, annoyance and harassment." Meanwhile, in a poster for the new film "Machete Kills," the singer is holding a smoking gun and wearing a dead wolf-

like a boa.

TROUBLE IN EDEN

A controversial creationist museum in Kentucky is adding new, non-religious attractions in order to boost lagging ticket sales. The museum opened with a big bang in 2007 – drawing 400,000 visitors that year. But fewer and fewer people are making the trek to Petersburg, Ky., to sit on dinosaur models and watch Adam and Eve cuddle. So operators are adding new attractions, including a dragon exhibit and "Dr. Crawley's Insectorium."

CHIME IN

Beyonce and some famous friends – including John Legend, Jennifer Lopez, Madonna and Gloria Steinem – recently turned the home of English rugby into a fortress for women's rights. The concert at Twickenham raised money for Chime for Change, a campaign set up to empower girls and women around the world. Beyonce co-founded the group with actress Salma Hayek and Gucci's Frida Giannini.



THANKS, RICKY

Crediting Ricky Martin for inspiring him, Mexican soap opera star Sebastián Ligarde came out during an interview with the magazine TVyNovelas. The 59-year-old star, famous for his role as the villain of the telenovela "Quinceañera," formerly claimed to be bisexual. "It's a day of relief and a lot of courage," he said. "It takes courage to be honest. It's much easier to lie."



HOW YOU SAY 'FRENCH KISSING'

Kissing with tongues? We know it as the "French kiss." But there's been no word for it in the French dictionary until now. "Galocher" – to kiss with tongues – was added to the "Petit Robert" 2014 French dictionary released in late May. Laurence Laporte of the Robert publishing house told the AP, "We always had many expressions to describe 'French-kissing,' like 'kissing at length in the mouth,' but it's true, we've never had one single word."

HOW YOU SAY 'NO KISSING'

A gay Chicago couple says they were ejected from a cab for sharing a brief peck on the lips. Steven White told a CBS-2 reporter that he and his boyfriend Matt McCrea were on their way from O'Hare Airport May 30 when McCrea "leaned over to look at something on the phone and then he leaned in to kiss me." McCrea says it was a brief, closed-mouth kiss, but one that drew a strong reaction from the cab driver, who tried at first to throw them out of the cab on the Kennedy Expressway. He eventually turned off the highway and left them at a grocery store.

CABLE GOLD

The Nielsen company said the 2.4 million people who tuned in to watch "Behind the Candelabra," the movie about Liberace with Michael Douglas in the lead, represented HBO's biggest audience for an original movie since "Something the Lord Made" in 2004. Another 1.1 million people saw a

repeat after the first airing.

NO CURE

Apple has banned an app created by anti-gay, right-wing Christians to help users "cure" themselves of homosexuality. "Setting Captives Free," previously available in Apple's App Store, claimed to be a 60-day course that destroys users' same-sex desires. "Despite what you may have heard elsewhere, you do not have a 'homosexual gene,' nor were you born this way with no hope of freedom," state the app's makers. The app is still available for download by Google Android users.

BAD NIGHT FOR WILLY

A martial arts star is suing a Philadelphia sex shop for selling him a personal lubricant that he claims permanently disfigured his penis and left it dysfunctional.

In papers filed in court, Michael Waylon Lowe says the Kama Sutra Pleasure Balm Prolonging Gel burned and scarred his genitals. The gel's desensitizing active ingredient is benzocaine, which is safely used in a number of other products.



CHEEKY CHOCOLATE

An enterprising British chocolatier has created "Edible Anus," a line of handmade Belgian chocolates "lovingly cast and crafted" from the asshole of a butt model, according to a press release. The product, available at edibleanus.com, comes in white, milk chocolate, or dark chocolate. The company's tagline is "the anus that made Britain Great."

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2nd arrest in Applebee's Rice Lake gay assault

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

A former Applebee's employee has been charged in the bashing of a gay co-worker in Rice Lake.

Shannon Hendricks was charged on June 3 with substantial battery intended to inflict bodily harm, a Class I felony. Her role in the attack was identified as "party to a crime."

At a June 10 hearing, Hendricks was released on \$15,000 bond.

The incident occurred early on the morning of March 17, when Rien Hendricks, Shannon's husband, allegedly struck Applebee's

server Tim Phares in the head with a 2x4 in the parking lot of another local restaurant. Phares, who lost consciousness, suffered head and facial abrasions, as well as multiple facial fractures that will require the implantation of metal plates into his face, Phares said.

Rien Hendricks was apprehended shortly after the attack and charged with substantial battery intended to inflict bodily harm. But Shannon Hendricks, who drove her husband to the scene of the assault, witnessed it and then drove him away from the scene, was not charged until recently.

Both Shannon and Rien Hendricks face a \$10,000 fine and as much as three-and-a-half years in prison. Rien Hendricks has prior convictions for theft, false representation, distributing marijuana, bail jumping and violating unemployment law.

Phares' close friend Kari Lindau told WiG she's angry it took so long for the district attorney to bring charges against Shannon Hendricks. "Shannon called me at around 5 a.m. on the morning of the attack ... and said that her and her husband were driving around looking for (Phares and his sister Krista Kathrine)," Lindau said.

"She said, 'Where the fuck are they?'" Lindau recalled. "I said that I had no idea. She said, 'When we find them, Rien's going to kill them.'"

Barron County District Attorney Angela Beranek said the lack of adequate staffing in her office caused the delay in filing charges.

Phares said, "I'm pleased to see that justice is finally being served, though it took a long time for Shannon to be charged. What Shannon and Rien did to me was out of pure hate. I hope to see a hate-crime enhancer added to both of the charges."

According to Phares and Kathrine, Hendricks hollered, "Fucking faggot, I'm going to kill you," before striking Phares.

But despite the anti-gay slur, Beranek told WiG in April that there is not adequate evidence to prosecute the alleged assault as a hate crime under the law as it's currently written. No evidence had surfaced to change her mind, she said on June 5.

In addition to going nearly three months without being charged, Shannon Hendricks was allowed to keep her job at Applebee's for some time following the attack. Ironically,

it was Phares who was asked by restaurant manager Tara Steinberg not to return to work. According to Phares, Steinberg told him that the attack had attracted too much negative publicity to keep him on staff.

Phares did subsequently return to his job as a server after Greg Flynn, CEO of Apple American Group franchise, intervened.

In April, in the wake of growing publicity over the situation at the Rice Lake restaurant, Applebee's issued a statement to the press defending the restaurant's decision to keep Shannon Hendricks on the job.

"This very unfortunate personal situation involving two of our franchisee's employees occurred during their free time and entirely away from the restaurant," wrote company representative Dan Smith. "The husband of one employee has been charged by police with felony assault. The police have informed us that this individual's wife, who works at the restaurant, has not been charged and is not a subject in the investigation."

On June 5, however, the manager on duty said Shannon Hendricks no longer works at the restaurant, adding that he was prohibited from answering questions about her departure. Phares said she left the job before being charged in connection with the assault.

DISCRIMINATION?

Phares said Applebee's managers in Rice Lake have treated him badly since the attack, and he believes they are laying the groundwork to dismiss him. He claimed that he recently received absurdly low scores on a performance review in which he was wrongly accused of not smiling enough and other behaviors that he denied.

"I have been discriminated against by Applebee's and their management and ... I continue to experience discrimination," Phares said.

The relationship between Phares and his employer seemed to deteriorate rapidly after he returned to work following the bashing. Phares said he didn't feel safe on the job, claiming that the husband of another co-worker threatened to kill him.

As news of the attack drew widespread public attention, dozens of people posted comments on the restaurant's Facebook page — some sympathizing with Phares and others

criticizing him. Phares was incensed that one post referred to him as a "faggot." Despite his repeated complaints, he said, the restaurant refused to remove the slur until WiG brought it to the attention of corporate marketing manager Katy Sincko.

At first Sincko defended the remark, saying, "We aren't in the practice of hiding things on there (Facebook)." But about 20 minutes after dismissing the homophobic language, she called to thank WiG for bringing it to her attention and to say it had been deleted.

Sincko told WiG that Applebee's has a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity. She also said the company provided domestic partner benefits to workers in states where same-sex marriage and civil unions are legal.

But she noted that franchisees might have different policies.

Phares' case is not the first high-profile embarrassment for Applebee's. In February, a server at an Applebee's in St. Louis was fired after posting an image of a receipt left behind by a pastor on the online site reddit. On the receipt, the pastor wrote a complaint about the automatic 18-percent tip added to the bill (for a party of eight), saying, "I Give God 10 percent. Why do you Get 18?"

Applebee's firing of the waitress who posted the receipt prompted a massive Internet backlash against the company.

The company's YouGov Brand Index, also known as the "Buzz," tumbled from 35 down to 5 after Zane Terkel, CEO of one of the company's largest franchisees, announced earlier this year that he would not build more restaurants or hire more workers due to Obamacare. He said that he should not be forced to provide health insurance to his workers.

Also, Applebee's failed to meet any of the minimal guidelines tracked by the Diners' Guide to Ethical Eating, a consumer report on working conditions in American restaurants compiled by the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United.

Phares said despite all the negatives, he's continued to work at Applebee's because he likes the customers and earns good tips in an area where decent-paying jobs are scarce.

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Wisconsin reps seek legal protections for LGBT homeless youth

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

With a story to tell, Tim Clark headed to Washington, D.C. The Pathfinders board member appeared before a congressional panel on June 11 to talk about the risks runaway LGBT youth face on Milwaukee streets. He also shared some startling statistics about a population that should be experiencing the best years of their lives.

The story Clark told was that of D.J., a good kid whose family didn't accept his homosexuality. He left his home in northern Wisconsin for Milwaukee.

"It is important to note at this point that if we do not intervene with care within the first 72 hours that a kid hits the street, then that youngster is likely to fall into drugs, crime and survival sex," said Clark, a board member of Pathfinders. The Milwaukee-based nonprofit is dedicated to "empowering youth in crisis to make positive life choices" and assists with providing emergency shelter and education.

D.J. did fall into drugs, was house hopping and engaged in survival sex for money,

Clark said. And one Sunday morning, Pathfinders received a call from a police representative who said, "We believe one of your kids is dead."

"D.J., with all his youthful promise and life, was dead from a drug overdose," Clark said. "One of our staff had to go to the coroner's office to identify his body."

Clark's goal in D.C. was to advise congressional representatives and their staffs on changes needed in the federal Homeless and Runaway Youth Act to protect this at-risk population.

There are at least two House members from Wisconsin who need no convincing. Openly gay U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Madison,

made sure Clark had an audience when he reached the capital. And U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, is at work drafting an LGBT-inclusive measure for the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act this session.

The reauthorization work is in the mark-up stage, said Moore, whose role in guaranteeing the legislation is LGBT-inclusive is pivotal. She's widely credited with passage earlier this year of the reauthorized Violence Against Women Act and she's credited with making sure Republicans didn't strike LGBT provisions from that bill.

HOMELESS on next page



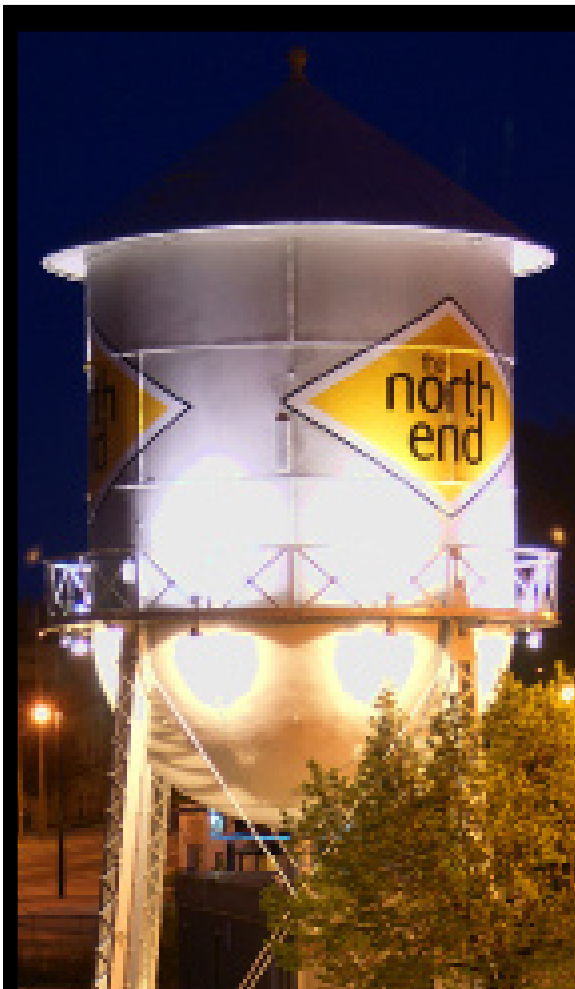
PHOTO: COURTESY

U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, is working to include LGBT protections in a reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

BY THE NUMBERS

- Nearly 1.7 million youth under the age of 18 run away from home each year.
- About 400,000 of these youth remain outside their home for more than a week.
- About 125,000 are homeless for more than a month.
- About 20–40 percent of runaway and homeless youth identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning.

Sources: National Alliance to End Homelessness, Center for American Progress



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HOMELESS from prior page

"I'm just very, very proactive at seeking and identifying gaps in our legislation," Moore said.

As she worked on the Violence Against Women Act, Moore realized it could not be assumed that service-providers would meet the needs of LGBT homeless people without federal requirements. She's taking the same approach with the runaway and homeless youth legislation.

"The number of LGBTQ homeless youth in the general population, that turns out to be 5 to 7 percent of the population," Moore said. "But when you look at the homeless, there have been some reports that up to 40 percent of homeless youth are LGBTQ. This is a very, very startling statistic."

"With gay youth coming out at much earlier ages, they are faced with family rejection, traumatic religious responses, bullying and violence," Clark said in testimony he prepared for the Washington visit. "All this occurs at a time when they are so young and fully dependent on their families for emotional, physical and material safety."

In addition to the threats that runaway and homeless LGBT youth face on the street, they also face heightened danger in the emergency shelters where they are supposed to find security.

"Legislative action is required to ensure that LGBT youth no longer account for a disproportionate part of the homeless youth population

and that they are treated the same as other youth when they seek help from shelters and other service providers," Clark said. "Congress can do this with the reauthorization of the RHY Act."

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, first enacted in 1974 as part of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, provides for three major programs – street outreach, drop-ins and transitional living – to meet basic needs, including safe living, counseling, clothing and food.

Moore has an understanding of those basic needs. She ran away from home the April 1968 night that Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered. "It was horrific enough," Moore said. "Full of trauma. ... A lot of what I do here is guided by my personal experience."

The congresswoman also has spent time with advocates for runaway youth, toured facilities and talked with kids and leaders in the LGBT community in Milwaukee, where a number of organizations embarked on the groundbreaking LGBT Homeless Youth Initiative, with support from the Cream City Foundation.

Moore said chief among the recommendations for the reauthorization bill is a requirement that service providers adopt and adhere to a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity.

"My bill would make a simple statement of non-



PHOTO: MARKPOCANBLOGSPOT
U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Madison, helped bring Tim Clark, an advocate for LGBT homeless youth, to Washington, D.C., this month.

discrimination required for grant applicants," Moore said.

This, she added, "will not be a slam dunk."

But neither was enacting an inclusive Violence Against Women Act.

"Coalition-building is key," Moore said. "We resisted the temptation to just get it done. ... Sticking together really works."

Also vital in a reauthorized RHY Act is that the government collect data about LGBT homelessness and that service providers get adequate training so they can help gay kids.

"It isn't going to be easy," Moore said of the work ahead in the GOP-controlled House. "But I

KEY LEGISLATION

Congress may consider four measures this session that could help homeless LGBT youths.

- The Student Non-Discrimination Act, which has been introduced, would help prevent bullying in schools. It establishes the right to an education free of harassment because of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The Safe Schools Improvement Act, which has been introduced, would require federally funded schools to implement policies against bullying and require states to collect and report statistics on school harassment.
- The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act would be reauthorized to require federal grant recipients to adopt non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The Reconnecting Youth to Prevent Homelessness Act, which has not been reintroduced, would improve training, educational opportunities and permanent placement planning for older foster-care youth.

don't think being easy is the criterion for taking action. ... You don't get to not do it because stuff is hard!"

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PHOTO: KAITLYN WEISENSEL

Anthony Brown of Milwaukee won a case of Wisconsin wine, a gift box of Wisconsin cheese and sausage, and a rainbow-themed serving set in WiG's PrideFest raffle.

Madison conference addresses issues of male sexual abuse

By Jay Rath

Contributing writer

"We are learning more and more each day that sexual abuse is far more widespread among males than was previously thought," says Christopher Anderson, executive director of MaleSurvivor, and one of the presenters at Madison's upcoming Paths to Healing conference.

"Current research indicates that approximately 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before the age of 16, and in some populations the numbers are even higher," he says.

MaleSurvivor is a national nonprofit based in New York City. It's committed to prevention and support involving all forms of sexual victimization of boys and men. That's also the mission of Madison's Paths to Healing conference.

The conference, scheduled for June 20 at the Sheraton Hotel will focus especially on survival and mending for male victims.

"There are more men who are survivors of sexual abuse

than have diabetes (one in 10) and heart disease (one in eight); yet as a society we are still largely unwilling to offer compassion, support and resources to male survivors," Anderson says.

He continues, "It should be noted in light of the current military sexual abuse scandals that one of the most shocking statistics that has not been reported is that the majority of military (sexual abuse) survivors are male – approximately 56 percent."

At the Paths to Healing conference, Anderson will be sharing information with the audience about some of the unique pressures male survivors face. He also will offer suggestions for effectively working with this population.

"In addition, I'll speak about a new paradigm for thinking and talking about recovery from trauma ... that we feel is a powerful tool for survivors," he says.

A variety of organizations are lending expertise to the conference. The tar-

PATHS TO HEALING

The Paths to Healing conference takes place on June 20 at the Sheraton Hotel, 706 John Nolen Drive. Attendance costs \$30 in advance or \$40 at the door and covers all sessions and lunch.

For more, visit the Facebook page for "Paths to Healing: Conference on Child Sex Abuse Survival" or go to www.wcasa.org and click on the events tab. A limited number of scholarships are available and can be applied for during registration. For additional information, contact Callen Harty at 608-469-6686.

get audience includes survivors, as well as partners, families, therapists, teachers, law enforcement professionals and others.

"Male sexual abuse can be a taboo topic even in the sexual assault community, and I felt that opening up the discussion would be helpful to many people," says Callen Harty, playwright and Proud Theater/Milwaukee artistic director. He's also the conference's lead organizer.

Harty will talk about healing through creative expres-

Other presentations include "Healing Families: When Sexual Abuse Hits Home" by Chris Wirth and Rainbow Marifrog, who are licensed family and marriage therapists at Madison's Canopy Center's Oasis program for the treatment of sexual abuse. Peter Isely, Midwest director of Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, will present "Choose Your Difficulty: Survivor Activism as a Path to Justice and Healing."

Stephen Montagna of the Wisconsin Coalition Against



Sexual Assault will present an introduction to survivorship. Kelly Anderson, executive director of Madison's Rape Crisis Center, will lead a community discussion on responses and ways to help survivors.

The day will culminate with "Dare to Dream," a MaleSurvivor program that

includes the film "Boys and Men Healing," followed by a panel discussion led by Christopher Anderson.

"The truth is that every survivor of abuse is capable and worthy of healing, but we need to be doing a better job getting that message out," says Anderson.



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Illinois House delays marriage equality vote

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Illinois representatives gave their gay colleagues standing ovations on May 31, in the final hours of the General Assembly's regular session. But those representatives would not give gay and lesbian citizens a vote on marriage equality.

The session ended with vows to call the bill in the late summer during a possible veto session or during a fall session in November. The session also ended with lots of finger pointing, apologizing and vowing to continue the fight.

"Fight back we must, and succeed we will," said Bernard Cherkasov of Equality Illinois, the state's largest LGBT civil rights group. "The moral arc of history is on our side."

The Religious Freedom and Marriage Act passed the Illinois Senate on Valentine's Day, and Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn has been eager

to sign it and make Illinois the 13th state in the nation to legalize same-sex marriage. Through late winter and spring, proponents and opponents of SB 10 lobbied lawmakers in the House.

Advocates of marriage equality built a coalition that included leaders in the state's business, political and religious communities, as well as civil rights activists. The coalition also secured endorsements — from many of the state's daily newspapers and some of the nation's most prominent politicians, including President Barack Obama.

Throughout the first five months of the year, openly gay state Rep. Greg Harris, the bill's sponsor, stressed he would not call the bill for a floor vote until he was certain he had the needed 60 votes.

That goal wasn't reached.

There was excitement on May 30, when advocates for the legislation began arriv-

ing at the Capitol about mid-day, and media reports contained speculation the vote was near. Throughout the day, thousands of supporters telephoned the office of House Speaker Michael Madigan, a supporter of the bill, urging him to schedule a vote. Thousands more tweeted #callthebill. But the House took an afternoon recess and, when it returned for an evening session, failed to take up the bill.

On May 31, proponents and opponents again rallied at the Capitol as the House began its last day of business facing a number of high-profile issues.

At about noon, same-sex couples and community leaders were invited into Madigan's box in the chambers, leading to more speculation — which proved wrong — that the bill was about to be called.

ILLINOIS on next page



PHOTO: AP PHOTO/SETH PERLMAN

Theresa Volpe, right, stands alongside her daughter Ava as her partner Mercedes Santos, left, holds their son Jaidon outside the office of Illinois Speaker of the House Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, in a show of support for gay marriage legislation at the Illinois State Capitol on May 30. The bill was not voted on.

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Door County to host mass commitment ceremony

All the colors of the rainbow will be on display this autumn in Door County. In addition to the spectacular foliage that marks DC's "fall color" season, the tourist destination will be the scene of a historic mass commitment ceremony on Sept. 21, when the leaves are beginning to change.

The ceremony, scheduled to take place on the waterfront at Stone Harbor Resort in Sturgeon Bay, is the centerpiece of a weekend of events Sept. 20-22 titled "Commit with Pride." The Rev. Richard Feyen, pastor at Hope United Church of Christ in Sturgeon Bay, will officiate.

County tourism officials say the purpose of the event is to promote tourism within a popular market niche by doing something that's supportive of that niche.

The neighboring states of Iowa and Minnesota extend marriage rights to same-sex couples, and Illinois is striving to take similar action. But Wisconsin voters enacted a constitutional ban on both same-sex marriage and civil unions in 2006.

Since then, popular support for marriage equality has mushroomed around the nation and the world. But it could take a decade or more to change the state Constitution again. Republicans, whose party officially opposes all rights for

LGBT people, gained a virtual lock on the Legislature through 2020 by gerrymandering political boundaries in their favor.

Door County has no official stance on the issue, but the Door County Visitors Bureau "believes this promotion is socially responsible, and it makes good business sense," said Jack Moneypenny, DCVB president and CEO in a press release announcing the event. "It creates a place for loving couples to publicly commit to one another, and we've scheduled it during a period when Door County can use more business."

"This new promotion comes on the heels of successful niche advertising campaigns to the LGBT travel market over the past few years," Moneypenny added.

An evening rehearsal will kick off the weekend at 6 p.m. on Sept. 20. Following the next day's ceremony at 4 p.m., there will be a cake and Champagne/punch reception. An optional hors d'oeuvre dinner reception also will be available, followed by a cash bar reception featuring music and dancing.

The events, to be held at Stone Harbor Resort, are open to participating couples, their families and friends.

Couples who register for the event online will receive complimentary ceremony flowers, a commitment certificate,

a \$25 Door County gift certificate and a bottle of Champagne.

Registration information and event details can be found online at DoorCounty.com/Commit. Participation is limited to the first 250 couples that register.

Special Commit with Pride getaway packages also are being offered. Area attractions, restaurants and retailers have also put together special packages and offerings for participating couples.

Details about packages and specials can be found online, also at DoorCounty.com/Commit.

— Louis Weisberg

wisconsin Gazette.com
updated all day.

ILLINOIS from prior page

There was a recess for committee meetings, followed by hours of debate on other bills, followed by another recess, and more debate on other measures.

Rumors began circulating at about 5 p.m. that SB 10 would not be called.

Then, shortly after 7 p.m., Harris made the tearful announcement that there would be no vote that night.

"Several of my colleagues have indicated they'd not be willing to cast a vote on this bill today," he said. "And I've never been sadder to accept this request, but I have to keep my eye, as we all must, on the ultimate prize. They've asked for time to go back to their districts, talk to their constituents and reach out to their minds and hearts and have told me they'll return in November with their word that they're prepared to support this legislation. And I take my colleagues at their word they shall."

He apologized to the families "who were hoping to wake up tomorrow as full and equal citizens of this state."

When he concluded his remarks, Harris received a standing ovation from other representatives and those in the gallery.

"Rep. Harris has been our stalwart leader in the General Assembly, masterfully leading the way for civil unions, funding for AIDS/HIV services, and other important initiatives impacting seniors, women and children," said Cherkasov. "Probably no one in that body ached more than he did in announcing his decision."

Openly lesbian state Rep. Deb Mell, D-Chicago, also spoke from the floor. She and her wife were married in Iowa but Illinois only recognizes their relationship as a civil union. "Today," she said, "we were hoping that our state could give our union the high recognition that society gives two people that want to spend their life together — and that's marriage."

Mell urged colleagues, when they meet later this year, to vote for the bill. "Hit that green button. Hit it for love. Hit it for equality, because we are more alike than different."

She also received a standing ovation.

Responding to the delay in the vote, Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBT civil rights group, said, "For months, LGBT couples and their children have had their lives put on hold throughout an exhaustive political process that ultimately came up short."

In the days after the non-vote, activists, lawmakers and editorial writers argued over blame — whether there was a shortage of votes from the black caucus, a failure to effectively lobby black and Latino lawmakers, over-lobbying on Quinn's part or disinterest on Madigan's part.



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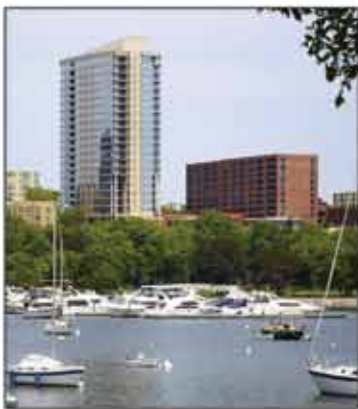
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Busting the turkey baster myth

Same-sex parenting

FUCSIA WOODS

When people find out that we decided to make our baby at home, one of the most frequent questions we get concerns turkey basters. When this question arises, I roll my eyes. Have you ever tried sucking up a minuscule amount of fluid with a turkey baster?

Newsflash: Most healthy men will eject one to five cc's of spoooge per ejaculate. That's all. Measure it out in water. Just try getting your best turkey baster to suck up that amount of fluid.

Some sperm banks offer syringes with a sterile tube attached. Or you can buy syringes at a pharmacy. Using a needle on the syringe allows you to draw up all of the semen. Then remove the needle and insert the syringe into the vagina.

It's important not to disturb the cervix, as it will naturally separate the sperm cells from the rest of the semen. Seminal fluid can cause cramping if it enters the cervix. When inseminating with fresh semen, you want the semen to meet the cervix but not be inserted into it.

If you buy sperm from a lab, it will already be spun and washed. That involves placing the semen into a centrifuge, then spinning it to separate out the sperm cells. The process removes misshapen sperm and sperm that are unlikely to complete the swim up the fallopian tubes. You or a medical professional can insert the processed sperm into the uterus.

Insemination is not a sexy experience, and

you may need lubricant.

But if you use lube, be careful. All commercial lubes kill sperm, even those that don't contain a spermicide.

Fortunately, there is one lube designed for getting pregnant. It's called Pre-seed, and you can find it locally at the Tool Shed. For women taking the medication Clomid to stimulate ovulation, Pre-seed matches a woman's fluids to facilitate the sperm's journey.

We tried our first insemination act in the bedroom. We lit candles, only to discover that we were going to need a lot more light and a place to lay out all the instruments.

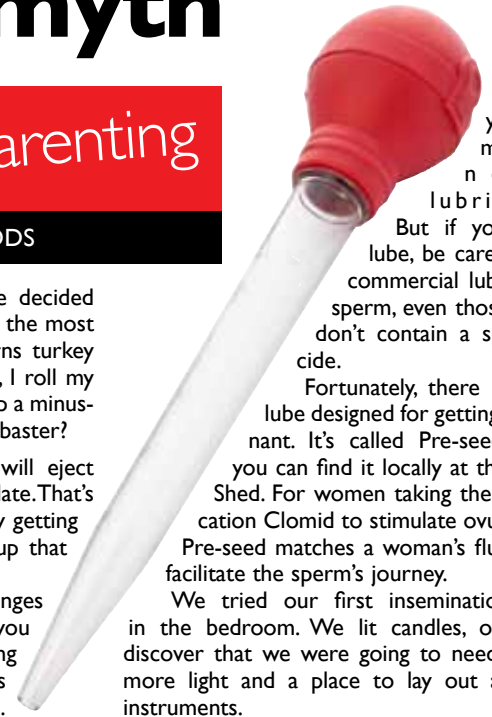
In addition to a syringe, lube, latex gloves and a sterile container of spoooge, you are going to need a vibrator. Yes, a vibrator. It is optimal to have an orgasm after insemination to draw in the semen.

Depress the syringe slowly. Many advise taking a full minute to release the fluid.

Of course, there are more creative and less scientific methods that are used to make a baby.

I know a couple who taped a Starbucks straw to the end of a syringe and got pregnant right away. I know yet another couple who used a syringe that came with Infant Motrin, along with a measuring cup as a semen collection device.

There are many ways to make a baby that do not involve high-tech procedures and the associated expense.



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Judgment on marriage equality

What's happened, what to watch for, what to expect as the Supreme Court prepares to rule

By Lisa Neff
Staff writer



IN THE BEGINNING

ALOHA FIGHT: Gay civil rights activists have fought for the freedom to marry since before the term "gay" was in wide use. But the push became better organized and more prominent in the mid-1990s, particularly in Hawaii, which was then expected to become the first state to legalize same-sex marriage.

Instead, the push for equality spawned the

reinvigoration of the Christian right, leading to the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and a rash of legislation and state constitutional amendments defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman and

EVOLUTIONARY: In 2004, Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage. The number of marriage equality states has increased to 12, as well as the District of Columbia. At first the progress was slow, but the pace in recent years has picked up. Last year, three states legalized same-sex marriage and, in May, three more states – Delaware, Rhode Island and Minnesota – did so.

REVOLUTIONARY: In 1996, when DOMA passed, 27 percent of Americans thought same-sex marriage should be legal. The numbers have changed dramatically over the years: 1999, 35 percent; 2005, 37 percent; 2007, 46 percent; 2009, 40 percent; 2011, 46 percent; 2013, 53 percent.

U.S. DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT

DOMA: The 104th Congress overwhelmingly passed the Defense of Marriage Act and President Bill Clinton signed the measure into law in 1996. DOMA contains two basic provisions – one allows states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages from other states and the second prohibits the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriages.

BENEFITS DENIED: More than 1,100 benefits and rights are tied to marriage at the federal level. These benefits, currently denied to married gay and lesbian couples, include Social Security payments to surviving spouses, surviving parent benefits, nearly 200 income tax provisions or deductions, family and medical leave, immigration rights and continued health care coverage.

LAW REVIEW: Judges in Massachusetts, New York and California have declared the federal marriage definition in DOMA

unconstitutional. In 2011, the Obama administration's Justice Department said while it is enforcing the law, it will not defend it in court.

BEFORE THE COURT: U.S. v. Windsor. The case involves 83-year-old Edith Windsor challenging DOMA's federal marriage definition. Because the government didn't recognize her same-sex marriage, Windsor paid \$363,000 in inheritance taxes after her

MARRIAGE on next page



PHOTO: COURTESY
U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder.

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MARRIAGE from prior page
wife died in 2009. Had her spouse been a man, there would have been no tax. Windsor is represented by a team that includes the American Civil Liberties Union.

DOMA is being defended by House Republicans who hired attorneys using taxpayer money.

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION: Does Section 3 of DOMA violate the Fifth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection as applied to people of the same sex who are legally married in their states.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES: During oral arguments, justices took an interest in whether House Republicans had legal standing to defend the law and why the Justice Department was not defending DOMA. But at this stage, most legal experts don't expect the court to simply dismiss the case and leave the lower court ruling – against DOMA – in place. Such a ruling is the first of several possible scenarios.

In scenario two, the court upholds the federal marriage definition and legally married same-sex couples still will be denied more than 1,100 federal benefits.

In scenario three, the court strikes down DOMA and married same-sex couples have access to federal benefits associated with that legal status. If the majority accepts the Obama administration's argument that discrimination based on sexual orientation should be unconstitutional, states could have a hard time justifying anti-gay marriage laws.

CALIFORNIA PROPOSITION 8

PEOPLE'S VOTE: After a state supreme court ruling in May 2008, same-sex couples were able to marry in the state for a brief period. Then, in November 2008, California voters approved Proposition 8 and amended their constitution to limit marriage to unions "between a man and a woman." Catholic and Mormon institutions invested heavily in promoting Prop 8.

LAW REVIEW: Prop 8 has been ruled unconstitutional by a U.S. district court and an appeals court.

BEFORE THE COURT: Hollingsworth v. Perry. The case involves two same-sex couples – Kris Perry and Sandy Stier and Paul Katami and Jeff Zarrillo – seeking the freedom to marry in California. Attorneys Ted Olson and David Boies with the American Foundation for Equal Rights represent the couples.

Prop 8's defense is being paid for by proponents of the ballot initiative, because California's governor and attorney general – the current administration and a prior administration – declined to defend the measure.

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION: Does the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment prohibit California from defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman?

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES: The justices, during oral arguments, showed interest in whether Prop 8 proponents had standing in the case. If not, the court could duck a decision. That's scenario one, and it likely would mean same-sex marriages would resume in California.

Scenario two is the court upholds Prop 8 and rules same-sex marriage is not a constitutional right. This would mean each state would decide how to treat same-sex couples.



PHOTO: COURTESY
Justice Anthony Kennedy

fifth vote – or swing vote – on the decision.

Scholars, bloggers and lawyers have been debating the scenarios and the possible votes since the High Court took both cases. The one clear consensus is that Justice Anthony Kennedy will be the key

In scenario three, the court rules narrowly and strikes down California's amendment. Depending on the language in the ruling, such a decision could only affect California or it could affect states with domestic partnership or civil union laws. AFER calls this the "seven-state ruling," a reference to the seven states that recognize same-sex relationships with full partnership or civil unions but deny marriage rights.

In scenario four – the best scenario for LGBT people in the United States – the court finds that the guarantee of equal protection means gays and lesbians have a right to marry. If the ruling is wide-ranging, every other state marriage ban could be overturned. AFER calls this the "50-state ruling" because same-sex marriage would be legal everywhere.

ON WATCH

TIME TABLE: The court has finished hearing oral arguments for this term and is expected to recess at the end of the month. Because arguments took place in late March, many court-watchers expect opinions in late June. But there is no advance notice for when a decision may be handed down.

IN WISCONSIN

HEY PARTNER: A domestic registry law – which faces a right-wing challenge in court – has provided some benefits to same-sex couples since August 2009.

The law was enacted after voters, in November 2006, amended the constitution to define marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

Wisconsin same-sex couples can marry in neighboring Iowa and soon in Minnesota, but the state won't recognize those marriages.

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{ Editorial }

Time to end reefer madness and legalize pot

Eighteen states and the District of Columbia now have laws legalizing marijuana in some form, mostly for medical use. The Illinois Legislature recently enacted a medical marijuana law that has been sitting unsigned on Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn's desk since May 17.

Legalizing marijuana, which is already widely used and more harmless than alcohol, is a great step forward toward ending the preposterous so-called "war on drugs." Just as the end of Prohibition was inevitable, so is the end of the drug war folly.

An estimated \$1 trillion has been spent on this "war" since President Richard Nixon launched it in 1971. The campaign has not only failed to reduce drug use in the United States, but it has also given rise to a brutal wave of international crime that's destroyed our inner cities, strained our relations with other nations, murdered hundreds of thousands of innocent citizens, corrupted law-enforcement officials and ruined millions of lives.

Drug offenses are responsible for nearly half of the 2.2 million people currently residing in the nation's prisons and jails. They are the reason why the United States has the largest reported incarceration rate in the world.

Young people sent to jail on drug-related charges begin life with two strikes against them. Saddling them with prison records and exposing them to hardened criminals at an impressionable age help train the next generation of criminals.

The drug war disproportionately targets African Americans. A report issued by the ACLU on June 4 showed that blacks were arrested for marijuana possession at six times the rate of whites in Wisconsin in 2010, despite having usage rates comparable with whites.

Wisconsin ranked fifth in the nation for racial disparities in marijuana possession arrests in 2010, according to the report. It also found that between 2001 and 2010, the disparity between the races for marijuana arrests increased by 150 percent, the third highest such increase in the nation.

As a result of all this incarceration, Wisconsin now spends three times as much on the prison system as it does on students. Since students who don't graduate from high school are eight times more likely to be incarcerated throughout their lifetimes than those who do, this ridiculous prioritizing of taxpayer money will lead to even less money for schools in the future.

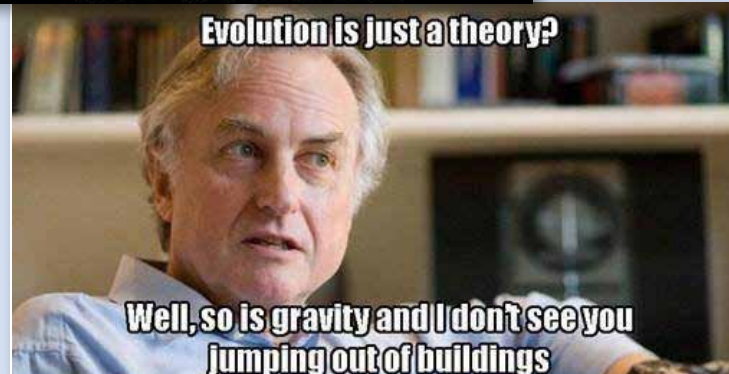
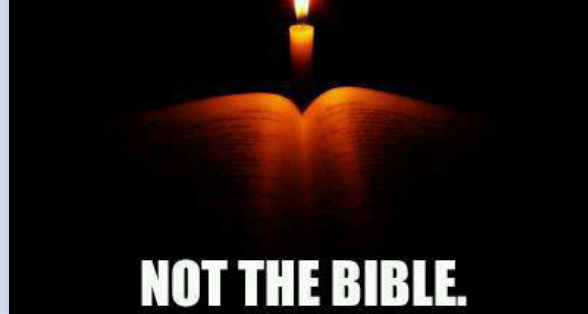
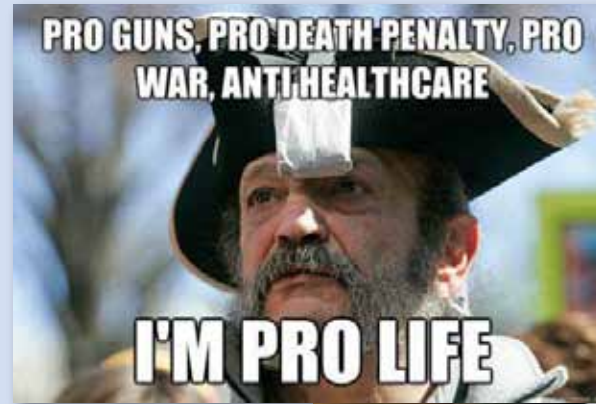
Clearly someone is benefiting from the drug war or this insanity would not be allowed to continue. From police officers on the take to politicians exploiting anti-drug demagoguery to "smaller government" officials who dole out lucrative prison contracts to the security companies that support them, there will be some sore losers when the war on drugs ends.

And end it must. Our government's addiction to the drug war is too costly to society in too many ways. In 2010, Wisconsin spent at least \$15.63 million and as much as \$73.1 million enforcing marijuana laws alone. And marijuana is only one of the many illegal and controlled substances.

We hope the marijuana legalization laws gaining traction across the country are the beginning of the end of reefer madness along with the entire black-market drug industry.

WiG's WEB PICKS

Some of our favorite recent pictorials from cyberspace



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ON THE RECORD



“The debate about marriage equality often centers, however discretely, on an appeal to the Bible. Unfortunately, such appeals often reflect a lack of biblical literacy. ...

They are looking for one ancient sound bite to convince people what they already believe. ... (A biblical) argument against same-sex marriage is wholly unsustainable. We all know this, but very few scholars are talking about it, because they don't want to take the heat.”

— Iowa University professor ROBERT R. CARGILL, talking to reporters about an article he co-authored for the Des Moines Register. The article elaborated what the Bible really extols about marriage, including the practices of polygamy and wedding rape victims to their rapists.

“I think that more important than that is making certain that women are recognized by those companies. ... They don't want the decisions made in Washington.”

— U.S. REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-Tenn., telling David Axlerod on NBC's “Meet The Press” that women don't want laws mandating that women receive the same pay as men for doing the same job. The gender pay gap has widened to 80.9 percent over the past 12 months.

“If you have a hang-up about it, I hope you can get over it, because it's real.”

— JOE NAMATH offering advice to professional athletes who don't like gays.

“I guess I don't care if people know. I'm not ashamed. A crime is a crime.”

— Chicago rape victim ALEXANDRIA CLARKE speaking at a press conference about being attacked in daylight on May 2 in Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood at a CTA bus shelter.

“I am 96 years old. I have many grandchildren. I would hate to leave them a world where guns are easily accessible. Children don't vote, adults do. It's time to do something to make our children safer. America's cowboy days are over.”

— Actor KIRK DOUGLAS, who often played cowboys in movies, issuing a plea for gun control in an essay he wrote for The Huffington Post.

“The attitude that it is no longer important to elect our own ... could not be more wrong. ... We need powerful and unyielding openly LGBT candidates in office. That includes electing Speaker Christine Quinn.”

— Gay former Clinton White House advisor DAVID MIXNER denouncing the detractors of Christine Quinn, the out lesbian running for mayor of New York.

“Kraft has gone too far and will push away loyal, conservative customers with this new ad campaign. The consumers they are attempting to attract — women and mothers — are the very ones they are driving away.”

— The anti-gay fringe group ONE MILLION MOMS commenting on Kraft's new advertising campaign for Zesty Italian dressing that features a nearly nude hunky male model.



The rough road to PrideFest

Opinion

JAMAKAYA

I've covered some wild stories related to Milwaukee Pride events over the years. Pride's growing pains are a fascinating part of our history.

Years before PrideFest, in 1987 or '88, the first open meeting of the Gay Pride Planning Committee of the Gay People's Union nearly degenerated into a riot. People outside the GPU were demanding input, and the GPU realized it could benefit from broader involvement to build a better event. What resulted, however, was a perfect storm of miscommunication between lesbian activists and the longtime, mostly male members of the GPU.

The first issue that set things off was limiting the voting rights of people in attendance. Because it was a GPU committee meeting, it was announced that only GPU members could vote on planning items. This sounds

reasonable, but it effectively disenfranchised the newcomers, who were mostly lesbians. Nothing is more likely to piss off lesbians than telling them they don't have the right to vote! There was lots of yelling and chaos.

A second furor broke out when a male presenter casually suggested that a “slave auction” would be a good fundraiser. Jaws dropped and the battle resumed, with accusations of racism added to sexism. The disagreements grew nearly physical. Half the room was spitting mad, the other half reverted to defensive mode.

Looking back, this acrimonious meeting represented the inevitable clash between gay men and lesbian feminist organizers, who had evolved politically on largely separate tracks. Many lesbians, veterans of battered women's and anti-rape campaigns, viewed men as the enemy, and some of what they heard at this meeting reinforced that impression. GPU members, for their part, felt they were making an honest effort to invite others into the pro-

cess. They were unprepared for the level of criticism.

These divisions healed over time. The GPU reluctantly but correctly moved toward relinquishing Pride organizing to a broader, more representative community entity. A series of crises, including anti-gay measures by the Milwaukee County Board and the Jeffrey Dahmer case, along with the desire for a community center, gradually drew Milwaukee's lesbian and gay communities together on common ground.

Another challenge to be overcome was Mayor John Norquist's veto of Pride Parade funds in January 1992. The mayor had encouraged the Pride Committee to apply for a \$5,000 grant from the city's Festival Fund, which would have covered part of the festival that year. Committee members applied for the funds and lobbied the Common Council, which approved the request.

But to everyone's shock, the mayor vetoed the allocation. As offensive as the betrayal was the patroniz-

ing lecture Norquist gave to gay leaders. The veto stung even more because it came in the context of a wave of homophobic attacks at the time of the Dahmer case.

Queer Nation led spirited protests against Norquist to no avail. Anger over the veto mobilized the community to secure new sponsors and funds for the Pride festival, which was held in Juneau Park from 1991–93 and moved to Veterans Park in 1994.

Although finances were still dicey, PrideFest made great strides in terms of logistics and attendance. Visionary leaders set their sights on Henry Maier Festival Park, the home of Summerfest and ethnic festivals, as the ultimate venue for PrideFest. When that goal was achieved in 1996, the Wisconsin Light ran a banner headline exulting: “Summerfest Grounds, Here We Come!” Our three-day PrideFest, featuring national, regional and local talent, is now a solid part of the summer festival season.

Honoring local heroes: Part 4

Opinion

JASON BURNS

Over the last eight weeks, I have profiled three remarkable individuals who are making a difference in the everyday lives of LGBT Wisconsinites. The activism of Ray Vahey, Denise Cawley and Jolie McKenna has and will continue to positively impact the lives of thousands.

Choosing the first three honorees wasn't easy. There are so many people who've played critical roles in the continued development of our community. So how can I pick just one final person?

The answer is, I can't. The fourth and final honoree is all of you!

Whether you are a supportive partner of a community leader or a person who volunteers for the

board of one of Wisconsin's many amazing nonprofits, you have helped to transform the region.

Support for the LGBT community has never been stronger in Wisconsin — or the United States. But while our future looks bright, our work is far from done. The path forward still has many challenges. So before we say that we can't give anymore, volunteer anymore or go to one more event, we must reach deep and find the strength to push through whatever barrier lies behind our hesitation and continue giving all that we can.

It has been truly remarkable to watch the community come together in so many ways over the last year and a half. Through the learned lessons of the past and the infusion of new leadership, we have built a stronger and more united LGBT community in Wisconsin than ever

before. Those of you who have — and will continue — to pursue the path forward are all local heroes.

Successful nonprofit membership organizations listen to and are accountable to their members. Over the last year, you have stepped forward in big ways to help steer the work of organizations such as Equality Wisconsin. You have saved and recharged the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, making it once more a hub of positive activities and a beacon of hope.

Marriage equality is taking the nation by storm, and while there is a clear path forward in Wisconsin, it will take time and significant resources to get there.

In the meantime, we can continue to advance our movement and our community by working locally to build the foundation upon which the eventual repeal

We can continue to advance our movement and our community by working locally.

of our anti-gay constitutional amendment will occur.

You are a part of this movement and a part of the community. At PrideFest, we celebrated all that we have accomplished as a community.

Now the party's over and we're back to work on the accomplishments that we'll celebrate at future PrideFests.

REGIONAL BRIEFS

WISCONSIN APPEALS COURT RULES VOTER ID LAW CONSTITUTIONAL

A Wisconsin appeals court ruled that a state law requiring voters to show photo identification at the polls is constitutional.

The decision reverses a ruling by Judge Richard Niess in March 2012 on a challenge filed by the League of Women Voters in Dane County Circuit Court.

But the legal dispute continues over the law. Another Dane County judge's decision blocking the ID requirement in a separate lawsuit still stands. Also, there are two federal lawsuits challenging the measure.

GUILTY PLEA IN SLAYING OF TRANSGENDER

Victor L. Stewart pleaded guilty on June 5 to second-degree reckless homicide in the death of Evon "Yung LT" Young, a 22-year-old transgender man. Stewart appeared in Milwaukee court with attorney Deborah Vishny and pleaded guilty to the reduced charge. He is due to be sentenced on July 23. Three others still face homicide charges and one went on trial on June 10.

IN OTHER NEWS ...

• **Appleton police** arrested a man for an alleged anti-LGBT attack on June 3 at Jones Park. The Fox Valley & Oshkosh Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer

Anti-Violence Project said the victim suffered "substantial injuries, including broken bones in the face."

• **The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** announced \$32 million in grants to assist more than 1,300 extremely low-income persons and families living with HIV/AIDS. The AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin was awarded a housing renewal grant of \$1,369,420 to continue providing tenant-based rental assistance and supportive services throughout the state.

• **Illinois Republicans**, after months of public infighting, selected a new leader on June 1. The party's central committee chose committeeman and lobbyist Jack Dorgan of Rosemont as the party's chair for the next year. He replaces outgoing chairman Pat Brady, who resigned last month after conservatives complained about his public support for gay marriage and other leadership issues.

• **St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church** in Crystal Lake, Ill., is dropping its sponsorship of Cub Scout and Boy Scout groups due to the organization's decision to accept gay boys. The Rev. Brian Grady sent a letter to the scouts' local council saying it was "not only unjust, but immoral" for boys to share tents on camping trips with gay Scouts.

— LN. and LW.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

POCAN, MOORE CELEBRATE PRIDE

U.S. Reps. Mark Pocan and Gwen Moore, D-Wis., ushered in June with statements celebrating the rainbow-splashed Pride month.

Pocan, co-chair of the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus and a lawmaker from Madison, stated in part, "As we reflect on the journey we've traveled — the struggles, the sacrifices, the stories of love and loss that have defined a decades-long crusade for justice — we recognize the tremendous progress that we've achieved, and look ahead to the obstacles that remain on our path toward full equality."

Moore, from Milwaukee, stated in part, "Since the Stonewall riots in June 1969, we have made great progress toward securing equal rights and opportunities for all Americans. While we recognize that there is more work to be done, I encourage all people to celebrate the achievements of the LGBT community and the diversity they bring to our great nation."



PHOTO: CITY OF RACINE
Racine Mayor John Dickert.

IN OTHER NEWS ...

• **Cream City Foundation** is making plans for its annual My Best Friend is Straight fundraiser and social. The event is July 25 at the North Point Lighthouse in Milwaukee. For more, visit creamcityfoundation.org.

• **Fair Wisconsin's** annual membership meeting takes place at 10 a.m. June 29 at AFSCME, 8033 Excelsior Drive, Madison. Attendees can expect to meet board directors, hear board reports and adopt revisions to the group's bylaws. For more, visit fairwisconsin.com.

• **The Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce** hosts a celebration in Racine at 5:30 p.m. July 23 at Henry & Wanda's, 501 Sixth St. Special guests include Mayor John Dickert and state Rep. Cory Mason. For more, visit wislgbtchamber.com.


— LN.

Visit **WiG**: wisconsin Gazette.com

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Award Winning Film

GEN SILENT




Tuesday, June 25, 2013, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Reuther High School, 913 57th Street, Kenosha

Bonus: Discussion with Barrie Atkin, Executive Producer following the film.

Gen Silent, a critically-acclaimed documentary, follows the lives of six LGBT seniors who must decide if they will hide their sexuality in the long-term health care system. Out of fear, both real and perceived, many LGBT seniors delay getting the care they need, leading to poorer health outcomes than their straight counterparts.

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 PRIDE
2013

PrideFest 2013: New sponsors, record numbers

Despite chilly and sometimes overcast weather, PrideFest Milwaukee drew slightly higher attendance this year than in 2012, when weather conditions were perfect.

PrideFest officials said 28,340 patrons came through the Summerfest gates June 7-9, about 277 more people than in 2012, which saw record revenue for the event.

A strong opening-night audience for gay performer Andy Bell, who drew 8 percent more people than last year's opening performer Belinda Carlisle, helped set the pace for a busy day on Saturday, which was headlined by the Indigo Girls.

Sunday, which threatened rain, was a quieter day.

In addition to increased attendance, the event attracted more sponsorships from more companies than ever before, according to PrideFest president Scott Gunkel. In a press release, Gunkel thanked new sponsorship committee members Denise Haussy and Tangia Stegall for their assistance. He also thanked Francisco Araiza, who sponsored the multicultural stage, Todd Slusar for bringing in increased support from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, J.R. Witt, for bringing in Baird and GE as first-time sponsors, Dan Italiano for bringing in Red Bull, and Jerry Johnson for securing support for the History Project.

A new vendor for the dance pavilion, brought it in by Tony Bilot, gave PrideFest "a huge discount" on enhanced sound and lighting effects, Gunkel said.

This year's PrideFest was larger and more varied than ever, featuring new venues and programs. The Riviera Maya Stage highlighted multicultural music, and the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center created a sort of mini version of itself in a two-story structure on the south end of the festival grounds near the Harley-Davidson Roadhouse Stage. The mini center featured performers, family-friendly activities and a giant inflatable slide.

Proud Theater, a Wisconsin LGBTQIA youth theater organization, brought its three troupes from Madison, Wausau and Milwaukee to PrideFest to perform together for the first time at the center's site. The event also marked Proud Theater Milwaukee's first public appearance since its initial soft launch in April.

"The Center received wonderful feedback about being much more visible and offering expanded programming to reflect the diversity of our community," said board member Denise Cawley. "We welcomed more than 50 new members and had more than 150 volunteers working over the course of the weekend."

PrideFest attendees were given the option of adding a \$1 donation to the center on their ticket prices as well as donations at the gate. The center raised \$839 through the program.

There was a minor disturbance during the Saturday hip-hop performance at the multi-cultural stage, where a fight broke out but was quickly contained.

"Unfortunately, a few people had to ruin it for everyone else," Gunkel said, noting that such incidents had occurred in the past, and he remains committed to having a hip-hop stage at future events.

Photos:
Dave Lauersdorf



PRIDEFEST
JUNE 7-9



Photos: Dave Lauersdorf



**PRIDEFEST
JUNE 7-9**

PRIDE 2013

Photo: Jon Salimes



Photos: Dave Lauersdorf



Photos: Dave Lauersdorf



PARADING
PRIDE
JUNE 9





PHOTO: TOM CRUZE/AP

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel at the 42nd annual Chicago Gay Pride Parade on June 26, 2011. The parade grew so long in 2012 that organizers scaled back this year's event to avoid overcrowding and security problems.

Activists try to bar politicians from Chicago Pride parade

From WiG reports

A Change.org petition launched after the Illinois House failed to vote on marriage equality before the end of its regular session calls for barring politicians from the upcoming Chicago Gay Pride Parade.

The annual celebration through heavily LGBT North Side neighborhoods draws many politicians from the city and throughout the state, even in non-election years. In fact, participation in Chicago's Pride has often been taken as an early signal of a politician's support for LGBT causes.

But the Change.org petition states that "105 days have passed in order to gain the amount of votes needed for SB-10 (Illinois' pending same-sex marriage bill) and then at the moment it needed to be called, we suddenly did not have enough votes so it has now been postponed till November. How could they not hear the people cry out for equality? So why should we be subjected to hear them cry out for votes and elections during our time of being proud of who we are and the battles we have overcome?"

The petition is addressed to the Illinois House and also the organizers of the 44th annual Pride march. It went online on June 3 and, as of June 9 had drawn 1,960 signatures.

On the final night of the session, openly gay state Rep. Greg Harris, D-Chicago, announced that the bill would not be called before the House adjourned. He said colleagues needed the summer to reconnect with constituents before a vote, possibly in the fall.

Later, House Speaker Michael Madigan announced an extension of the deadline so that the bill could be taken up if Gov. Pat Quinn calls a special session this summer,

ON PARADE

The Chicago Pride Parade, one of the world's largest, is scheduled for June 30. The parade kicks off at noon at Montrose Avenue and Broadway in Uptown and ends near the intersection of Diversey Parkway and Sheridan Road in Lincoln Park. A Pride music festival will be staged on North Halsted Street in East Lakeview on the preceding weekend, June 22-23.

possibly in August. Lawmakers left Springfield with a lot of unfinished business.

Meanwhile, the House co-sponsors of the state marriage equality bill have issued an apology to LGBT families who rushed to the Capitol on May 31 expecting to see history made.

The apology stated, "Like you, we are incredibly disappointed about what happened Friday in Springfield. But let's not forget something very important: Marriage equality is going to happen.

"The more united we are in the coming days and weeks, the sooner the bill will get passed – and the sooner our dream of full equality will become a reality."

The letter is signed by state Reps. Christian L. Mitchell, Maria Antonio Berrios, Kelly M. Cassidy, Deborah Mell, Sam Yingling, Lou Lang, Sara Feigenholtz, Naomi D. Jakobsson, Ann M. Williams, Robert F. Martwick, Mike Smiddy, Robyn Gabel, Barbara Flynn Currie, Laura Fine and Harris.

State Sen. Heather A. Steans, who sponsored the bill in the Senate, also signed the letter. The Senate approved the legislation on Valentine's Day.

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 PRIDE
2013

Island of seduction

Architecture, lifestyle of New York's Fire Island celebrated in two new books

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

The way a kid feels that day before the last day of school before summer vacation? That's the way Fire Island fans feel before the long Memorial Day weekend. The way a kid feels that day before the first day of the new school year? That's the way Fire Island fans feel about Labor Day weekend.

You can read it in the tweets city-dwellers broadcast before Memorial Day weekend – the longing messages about catching the ferry to Fire Island, slipping into flip-flops, soaking up some sun, welcoming summer.

"Beach-bound, baby," read one tweet.

"I heart Fire Island," read another.

And then "Missed you. #FireIsland," "Can't wait to get to #FireIsland," "Tingling thinking about #FireIslandPines," "Escape to #FireIsland."

The barrier island is about 5.5 miles across Great South Bay from Long Island and reached mostly by ferry. In the 2010 U.S. Census, there were 292 permanent residents, but the population swells in the summer; especially on the weekends, when thousands step off the ferry and head for a favorite spot on the seashore, a rendezvous at the lighthouse, a room at the Belvedere, an underwear party at The Ice Palace, a drag show at Cherries on the Bay, a Blanche Devereaux cocktail at the Blue Whale or a slice of cheese and pepperoni at Cherry Grove Pizza.

The island is a summer retreat from NYC for many. And it has long been a paradise for the gay community, particularly in Cherry Grove and the Pines.

In late May, after thousands of LGBT activists marched on Manhattan streets to protest a series of hate crimes, including the fatal shooting of a gay man on May 18, the serene seashore and peaceful pines beckoned with refuge and recreation.

Visitors on Memorial Day saw how much the island – largely through the Fire Island Revive campaign – has rebounded after Superstorm Sandy's high tides and strong surge damaged buildings and washed away much of the shore in October 2012.

Visitors also saw the progress at the muscular Pavilion nightclub, the legendary Fire Island Pines dance club destroyed by fire in November 2011 and rebuilt for "high tea," cabaret, theater, art exhibits and weddings.

"Although the new building has the same envelope and mix of uses as its predecessor, the similarities end there," said developer Matthew Blesso of FIP Ventures. "The new structure is modern and casual, bold and iconic. It is the first thing visitors seen when getting off the ferry, and we envision it to once again be the heart of the Pines community."

The Pavilion's resurrection comes as the Pines marks its 60th anniversary, which explains why the island's summer calendar is so crowded with events.

EXAMINING THE ISLAND'S PAST

Two newly published books explore the history and the culture of the community.

In "Fire Island Modernist: Horace Gifford and the Architecture of Seduction" from Metropolis Books, Christopher Bascom Rawlins writes how the overlooked gay architect's beach houses transformed the landscape and the culture of Fire Island.

Gifford grew up on the beaches of Florida and, in Rawlins' telling, the architect's deep connection to nature shows in the buildings he created for the shore just 50 minutes from the skyscrapers of New York.

Rawlins was exploring the Pines – "an urban invention, possessing a rustic-chic aesthetic that only a city-dweller could conjure" – when he caught a glimpse of a seductive home through a tangle of holly trees, then saw another intriguing home and another.

He began knocking on doors to inquire about the architect and,

FIRE ISLAND on next page



Photo: Metropolis Books/DAP

Above, a Tom Bianchi Polaroid from "Fire Island Modernist: Horace Gifford and the Architecture of Seduction." Below, the rebuilt Pavilion at the Pines, which was destroyed by fire in 2011.





FIRE ISLAND from prior page

in each case, was told the designer was Gifford. Soon Rawlins rented what turned out to be Gifford's residence and delved into a study of the architect's life and work, which were so evocative of the Stonewall era – seductive, liberating, modern. The author describes seeing a slideshow of Gifford's "ingenious homes flashed before me, tucked into lightly settled, utopian dunescapes. I was smitten, and determined to introduce this work to a broader public."

"Tom Bianchi: Fire Island Pines, Polaroids 1975-1983" from Damiani could serve as a companion to "Fire Island Modernist." Bianchi photographs even appear in "Modernist" to strengthen the ties.

Bianchi's book – he provided the text and never-before published images, while Edmund White wrote the introduction – tells the story of sun, sex, camaraderie and reverie in the Pines.

Bianchi first heard of Fire Island in the 1950s, when he purchased a 25-cent "physique" magazine at a newsstand in downtown Chicago that contained a photograph of bodybuilder Glenn Bishop on Fire Island. "Fire Island sounded exotic, perhaps a name made up by the photographer," wrote Bianchi. "I had no idea it was a real place. Certainly I had no idea then that it was a place I would one day call home."

In 1970, Bianchi spent a weekend at Fire Island Pines, where he became a regular, got a beach house, found a community and made friends. He used an SX-70 Polaroid camera to lovingly celebrate the people – men mostly, bronzed and buff, in Speedos or faded Levi's – in the Pines.

The sunny Polaroids end in 1983, as HIV brought disaster. Bianchi boxed the photographs and stored them at his Palm Springs, Calif., home for decades. He said the Polaroids became a record of a lost time and a lost world too painful to visit.

But when he opened the box years later, he found the lovers and friends, alive again, back on Fire Island.



PHOTOS: METROPOLIS BOOKS/DAP

Top, "Oasis of free love" from "Fire Island Modernist: Horace Gifford and the Architecture of Seduction." Below, The Kauth House in "Fire Island Modernist."

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TOM BARRETT IS A TRUE PARTNER
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All that glitters on Gatsby's Gold Coast

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

It's a short ride from New York City to Long Island's north shore and the Gold Coast mansions of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby."

Many of the old mansions remain open to the public – not for roaring, wild parties, but for visitors to wander about, eyes wide and jaws dropped, getting an idea of how the one percent of yesterday lived.

On the shore:

- Castle Gould at Sand's Point Preserve. The castle was modeled on Ireland's Kilkenny Castle and serves as the preserve visitor center. Howard Gould, son of railroad magnate Jay Gould, built the home in 1904 with fossil-laden Onondaga limestone quarried from upstate New York, according to the Long Island Convention and Visitor's Bureau. The preserve houses three mansions representative of the Gold Coast era and the famed "East Egg" of Fitzgerald's novel, including the Hempstead House with its 40 rooms, dramatic foyers, stone gargoyles and view of Long Island Sound. www.sandspointpreserve.org.

- Coe Hall/Planting Fields Arboretum. Planting Fields is the former estate of insurance magnate William Robertson Coe and Standard Oil heiress Mai Rogers Coe. It is one of only a few remaining Gold Coast estates that retains its original 409 acres, as well as its historic buildings and landscape. Coe Hall was built between 1918 and 1921 as a country home in the Tudor Revival style. www.plantingfields.org.

- Westbury House/Old Westbury Gardens. Old Westbury Gardens is the former home of John S. Phipps, wife Margarita Grace Phipps and their four children. Completed in 1906, the Charles II-style mansion is surrounded by 200 acres of formal gardens, landscaped grounds, woodlands, ponds and lakes. www.oldwestburygardens.org.

- Coindre Hall/West Neck Farm. Constructed in 1912 as a 40-room, 80,000-square-foot Medieval-style chateau, the castle on the water has sweeping views of Huntington Harbor, according to the LICVB. Coindre Hall was originally known as West Neck Farm and served as a country home for George



PHOTO: LICVB

Westbury House.

McKesson Brown and his wife Pearl, who owned a pharmaceutical company. It later became a boys' school for the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. www.suffolkcountyny.gov.

- Caumsett State Park/Marshall Field III Estate. Marshall Field III was an investment banker and heir to the Chicago department

store empire. In the early 1920s, he commissioned the 1,600-acre estate at Lloyd Neck. The English-style estate included tennis courts, stables, a dairy and a farm. Today, the estate is a state park. www.nysparks.com/parks/23/details.

- Vanderbilt Mansion and Museum. The site consists of a mansion, marine and natural history muse-

um, planetarium and park. William K. Vanderbilt II's will stipulated that the estate be dedicated to the "education and enjoyment of the public" and enhanced as a museum. www.vanderbiltmuseum.org.



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Chamber members networking at a downtown Milwaukee happy hour event



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Thursday, June 20 • Celebrating a Year of Firsts
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— Denise Ron

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MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE



'We won't allow these sick people to hold gay parades in our country'



PHOTO: AP/EFREM LUKATSKY

Riot police detain a protester trying to stop Ukraine's first gay Pride demonstration in Kiev on May 25.

PROTESTS from page one

Earlier this spring, on the International Day Against Homophobia, police in China arrested an 18-year-old man who organized a Pride march in Changsha. About 100 people paraded through a riverfront park carrying banners and a rainbow flag. The Pride event was promoted on a website, where it was declared that the march would "write a new chapter in the struggle for equal rights for comrades."

The organizer, identified as Xiang Xiaohan, was detained for 12 days for holding the march without approval, which rarely is granted by the conservative Communist government.

After his release, Xiaohan circulated a statement on the Internet: "Next time they might detain me for 15 days. If that's what it takes to hold another event, then that's fine by me."

In Tbilisi, Georgia, on May 17, another small

Pride rally took place to mark the International Day Against Homophobia. About 50 people came together for the rally. They were attacked by a mob that was led by priests of the Orthodox Church.

The anti-gay protesters, carrying signs that read "Not in our city," broke through a police barricade and chased the Pride celebrants. Twenty-eight people were injured.

"We won't allow these sick people to hold gay parades in our country. ... It's against our

'We still have a long way to go. People continue to be killed, arrested and harassed simply because of who they are or who they love. In too many places, LGBT people and their supporters are still attacked if they just attempt to stand up for their rights.'

traditions and our morals," Zhuzhuna Tavazde told Reuters. She was holding a bunch of nettles and said she was ready to fight.

Anti-gay protesters also attacked a group of LGBT ralliers in St. Petersburg, Russia, shouting "Death to faggots" and throwing smoke bombs.

About a week later, in Moscow, authorities refused a request for permission to hold a Pride parade, which they said violated the law and the need for "developing patriotism among the younger generation." LGBT activists rallied in defiance, unfurling banners denouncing Kremlin-backed anti-gay legislation in front of Russia's lower house of parliament before police moved in to make arrests.

The legislation passed June 10.

Meanwhile, in Ukraine on May 25, about 50 people defied a court order and joined in a first-ever Pride march in the capital, Kiev. The marchers, waving rainbow flags and carrying banners that read "Homosexuality is not a disease" encountered about 100 protesters and special forces police.

"Three hundred yards from where it had started, the march ground to a halt," reported journalist Andrew Connelly, who covered the event for vice.com. "Ukrainian Gay Pride had lasted almost an hour, yet had traversed a patch of land the length of a large swimming pool."

Secretary of State John Kerry remarked on the anti-LGBT violence in his statement for LGBT Pride Month. "Recent events underscore that we can't be content with the progress we've made," he said. "We still have a long way to go. All over the world, people continue to be killed, arrested and harassed simply because of who they are, or who they love. There are LGBT people of all ages, all races and all faiths, citizens of every country on Earth. In too many places, LGBT people and their supporters are still attacked if they just attempt to stand up for their rights and participate in peaceful rallies or marches, or



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
JON RICHARDS

Proud Supporter of Equality for all Wisconsinites

Congratulations on Pride 2013

Authorized and paid for by Citizens for Richards, Jason Rae, Treasurer

PROTESTS on next page

PROTESTS from prior page simply for being who they are.”

In condemning the violence, Kerry recalled the civil disobedience at the Stonewall Inn in 1969. “Forty-four years after Stonewall, we see incredible progress in the fight to advance the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBT people,” he said.

Pride originated out of the June 1969 riots at Stonewall in New York’s Greenwich Village. Those riots followed a police raid on the bar and marked a turning point in the modern LGBT civil rights movement. Months later, activists at a meeting in Philadelphia called for what would be remembered as the first gay Pride parade. The resolution adopted at the Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations stated, “We propose that a demonstration be held annually on the last Saturday in June in New York City to commemorate the 1969 spontaneous demonstrations on Christopher Street and this demonstration be called Christopher Street Liberation Day. ... We also propose that we contact Homophile organizations throughout the country and suggest that they hold parallel demonstrations on that day. We propose a nationwide show of support.” The first marches took place in June 1970 in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago. By the 1980s, dozens of U.S. cities were hosting Pride parades. Today, the celebrations take place around the world, in hundreds of cities. In some locations, especially the larger cities, Pride events are big tourist draws. “I like to think that because we’re so gay, we made Pride into a big holiday, a festive party,

‘I like to think that because we’re so gay, we made Pride into a big holiday, a festive party, a spectacle. That’s not to say it’s lost its political edge.’

a spectacle, a rainbow celebration,” said LGBT civil rights activist Leigh Nicole, who celebrated at the Utah Pride festival in Salt Lake City on June 2. “But that’s not to say Pride has lost its political edge.” There were two marching groups in the Salt Lake City parade that generated controversy. About 400 people – active members of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints – marched behind the Mormons Building Bridges banner. The Mormon church teaches that being gay is not a sin, but engaging in homosexual activity is sinful. Uniformed Boy Scouts and adult volunteers also marched in the parade, held just a week after the nonprofit adopted a resolution to lift its ban on gay youth but keep a ban on gay adults. “That was brave of those people,” Nicole said. “Pride is all about a good time, but it’s also all about standing up for what’s right, and our rights.”

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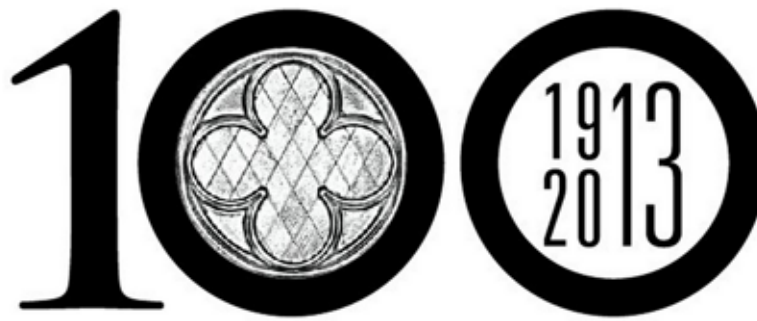
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Deborah Cox performs at Chicago Pride Fest

In her own way, Deborah Cox has redefined the modern soul diva. The Canadian singer got her big break stateside with the release of her eponymous debut album, containing the hit single "Sentimental." But it was with her second album, "One Wish," that Cox achieved superstar status. A pair of the disc's ballads, "Things Just Ain't the Same" and "Nobody's Supposed to Be Here" were transformed by remixer Hex Hector into dance-floor classics.

In addition to recording a couple more modern R&B albums, Cox turned her attention to the work of Dinah Washington on her tribute disc "Destination Moon." Cox, who also acts on TV and in movies, made another major career move when she performed the lead role in the Elton John/Tim Rice musical "Aida," and most recently in the Frank Wildhorn musical "Jekyll & Hyde."

I spoke with Cox, who takes the mic at Chicago Pride Fest on June 23.

Gregg Shapiro: What is the high point of your 20-year career?

Deborah Cox: There have been many high points. Because I've learned over the years not to take anything for granted, I've made a point to acknowledge all of the moments along the way. Getting the record deal and being in the studio with Whitney Houston. Presenting at the Grammys and being nominated for a Grammy. Landing my first time on Broadway in "Aida," originating a role, and re-originating a role on Broadway in "Jekyll & Hyde." There have been many moments that have been really monumental and career building.

Your hit single "Nobody's Supposed to Be Here" was one of the most successful dance remixes in history, elevating you to full-fledged dance diva status. How did you feel at the time about the changes being made to the song?

I remembered hearing the song for the first time and completely feeling like that song was going to be one that changed the game and changed my life. It was one of those songs that really resonated – the way it was written, the style. I felt like if I gave it the right vocal performance it was going to be one of those songs that stood the test of time. Then we talked about doing the remix for the song. At that point I had to remain open-minded. When Hex Hector played the track – we were all in LA at the time – we felt really good about it. Once I went in and started to sing it and give it this "new life" (laughs), it took on a life of its own. So that version really became its own stand-alone version along with the ballad version. I feel so blessed by it because it allowed me to be taken seriously as one who could do both, sing in all styles.

When did you first become aware of your following in the gay community?

The moment I noticed it, the moment for me was during a Pride weekend in New

Music

GREGG SHAPIRO

York City. I was standing on a huge stage at the Palladium at 5:30 in the morning (laughs), and I was looking at a sea of gay men. That was the moment when I realized that this is something that is not ever going to change. It's something that is going to be a part of my life and part of my legacy forever. I embraced it (laughs), and after the show went and had breakfast (big laugh).

It's been five years since your last studio album. Is there a new one in the works?

There is a new album in the works. I would like to have a nice vacation first before I go full on into recording.

What do you like best about your stage acting career?

The stage acting and dancing is what brings me back to what made me fall in love with this business in the first place, which was being a part of a huge production and singing songs with an orchestra. Seeing the audience being moved and taken on a journey during a show and leaving with an amazing message. That's what it's always been about from me. It's always been about connecting with people and moving people in a way that'll motivate them in a positive way.

You are performing at Chicago's Pride Fest. What does performing at Pride Fest mean to you?

Chicago is such a great city. I performed at (Northalsted) Market Days a couple of years ago. I remember it was really hot (laughs)! That was a really fun experience. I'm looking forward to Pride Fest. I think it's going to be a really fun show. It will connect me with the audience that discovered "Nobody's Supposed to Be Here." In Chicago, WGCI was the first radio station to play the ballad version. The very first station that believed in the song and decided to play it.

Minnesota just became the 12th state to legalize same-sex marriage and Illinois may become the 13th. If a same-sex couple asked you to sing at their wedding, what song would you sing and why?

DC: Usually that's a personal thing. I always ask the couple. I've done one (same-sex wedding) already. I'm an advocate (for same-sex marriage). To me, love is love.

ON THE STREET

Chicago Pride Fest 2013 takes place June 22-23, one week before the city's Pride parade.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Deborah Cox performs at Chicago Pride Fest on June 23, in East Lakeview. For more, go to www.northalsted.com.

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PHOTO: MARY SCHWALM/AP

NBA veteran Jason Collins, left, the first active player in one of four major U.S. men's professional sports leagues to come out as gay, shakes hand with Boston Marathon hero Carlos Arredondo during Boston's gay Pride parade on June 8. Looking on is former U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, second from left.

Jason Collins leads Boston Pride parade

NBA veteran center Jason Collins, the first active athlete in one of the four U.S. major men's pro sports leagues to come out as gay, marched on June 8 for nearly 3 miles in Boston's gay Pride parade with U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy III, his onetime roommate at Stanford University.

Collins wore a T-shirt that read #BeTrue when he joined thousands of marchers in the parade, chatting with well-wishers, greeting other marchers and holding babies as people came up to him to express their support.

The parade also featured former U.S. Rep. Barney Frank – the first sitting member of Congress to enter into a same-sex marriage – who also represented Massachusetts' 4th Congressional District before Kennedy. U.S. Rep. Ed Markey, the Democratic U.S. Senate candidate seeking the seat once held by John Kerry, who stepped down to become secretary of state, also marched.

In April, Collins wrote in an article for "Sports Illustrated" that his decision to go public came when Kennedy marched in last year's Pride parade and Collins didn't feel that he could join him.

He also said the Boston Marathon bombing reinforced the notion that things can change in an instant, so he should live truthfully.

Collins played for six teams in 12 seasons and becomes a free agent next month. The Celtics dealt him to the Washington Wizards in a mid-season trade.

Collins also threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the Red Sox game on May 30.

Kennedy said in April that he's proud to call Collins a friend.

Collins said at the time he "endured years of misery and gone to enormous lengths to live a lie."

– AP

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Pulitzer Prize for drama has ties to Wisconsin



By Elle Fausel

Contributing writer

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play “Disgraced” was written by former Wisconsin resident and author Ayad Akthar and directed off-Broadway by Kimberly Senior, who also directs Door County’s Peninsula Players.

The main character is Amir Kapoor (Aasif Mandvi of “The Daily Show”), a prosperous Pakistani-American lawyer who has distanced himself from his cultural roots. The play takes place during a casual dinner party hosted by Amir and his wife Emily (Heidi Armbruster), a white artist whose work is heavily influenced by Islamic imagery. Over the course of the evening, a heated political discussion turns ugly.

Senior, 40, has been with the Peninsula Players since 2011, when she directed a production of “A Few Good Men.” Born in New Jersey, she has fond memories of visiting Door County as a child. She currently resides in a suburb

of Chicago. This summer, she will direct “Games Afoot” for the players.

WiG talked with Senior about her involvement with “Disgraced,” the Peninsula Players and the theater in general.

WiG: How did you get involved with “Disgraced”?

KS: The play was slated for production at American Theater Company in Chicago. I had a phone interview with Ayad and the producers and we clicked immediately. We have very complementary natures.

What was it like working with Akthar?

We had a great time together, to be sure, but mainly because I’m not sure there’s a collaborator in the world I trust as much as Ayad. I love the way he sees the world. He is sensitive and empathic in one moment and then with a laser sharp singular focus in another. He

makes me better at what I do (and hopefully I do the same!), because we can match each other with passion, rigor and tenacity. I learn so much from him. We come from different backgrounds and have different perspectives – religion, geography, gender – but most of the time I feel like I get to go to work with my brother.

How would you describe Akthar’s work style?

I feel like when Ayad is in a room with collaborators ... there is great conversation where Ayad provides insight, actors share their personal way into the material, a director offers insight. Then as a result of that conversation, Ayad sculpts the script to best achieve the intention behind the moment, scene, etc. He thrives on input from others! We are complementary because Ayad is very academic and philosophical. ...I work from a gut place – on a very human level about what we want and

need. Together you get a little bit of everything I think!

What surprises you most about “Disgraced”? What would you change?

I wouldn’t change a thing! We worked on the play a full year together! What surprises me most is how people respond to it – everyone finds something different in which to make a connection. It provokes fantastic conversation in a really universal way.

How has winning this award changed you, inspired you?

I believe that Ayad has captured an American moment, if you will. It is a portrait of our time, our thinking. I love that this award cements (the play’s) and Ayad’s place in our history. I’m inspired

PHOTO: KIMBERLY SENIOR

by all of the people who have found so much to love in this play, have supported Ayad in his journey writing it and by those who have been inspired to begin conversations of identity themselves.

What do you love about directing the Peninsula Players?

It would take a long time to really enumerate all that I love about the players. I love the setting and Door County. I think our audience has a special connection to the place – they come back year after year, eager to see the offerings. The trips with my family every summer were so magical – they are much what the theater provides, ritual, community and occasion. I love the theater family that exists at Players. We’re in it 24/7, living and working together. The work becomes

more specific and meaningful

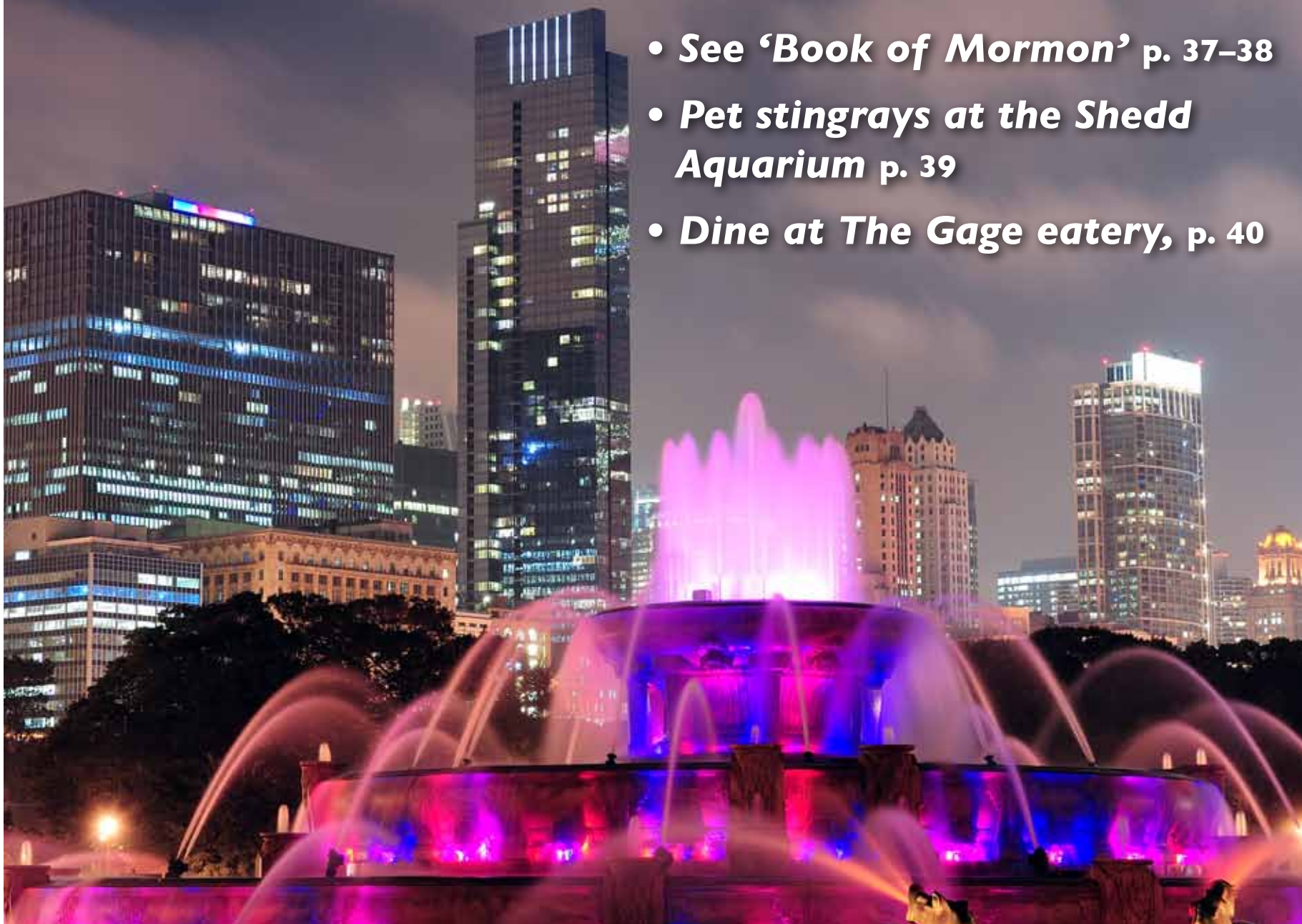
Why is theater so important to you?

I moved to Chicago and, in the last 20 years, have directed over 100 productions professionally, both in Chicago and other places in the country. It has always been important to me to tell stories that move us. I love the feeling of sitting in the dark next to strangers and having a shared experience. We’re less alone that way.

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Three things to do in Chicago this summer

- See 'Book of Mormon' p. 37-38
- Pet stingrays at the Shedd Aquarium p. 39
- Dine at The Gage eatery, p. 40



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'The Book of Mormon' is a distinctly modern musical



PHOTO: JOAN MARCUS

Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

"The Book of Mormon" is one of the funniest and most profane shows to appear on a musical stage. Maybe that's to be expected, considering it's the brainchild of Trey Parker and Matt Stone, co-creators of "South Park," working together with "Avenue Q" co-creator Robert Lopez.

What's unexpected about this Tony Award-sweeping hit, playing through Oct. 6 at Chicago's Bank of America Theater, is the sometimes sweet Rogers and Hammerstein-style innocence that adds a novel dimension to the production.

The storyline is simple. Elder Price (Nic Rouleau) and Elder Cunningham (Ben Platt, see p. 38) have just graduated from Mormon missionary training. They, along with the other new missionaries, eagerly await their assignments. Squeaky clean Price, a young go-getter probably voted most likely to succeed by his high school class, wants to do his mission work in Orlando, Fla. Fuzzy-headed bumbler Cunningham, probably voted least likely to even be noticed, is happy to go anywhere.

The pair ends up assigned to Uganda, which, they quickly discover, is nothing like the Africa of "The Lion King."

Price and Cunningham join an existing Mormon mission – headed by closeted Elder McKinley (Pierce Cassidy) – that hasn't baptized a single Ugandan. Their would-be converts live with crushing poverty, rampant

AIDs and a local warlord (David Aron Damane) intent on circumcising every female in the village.

Price decides he will deliver the mission from its ineffectiveness, but it's the bumbling Cunningham, with his "colorful" take on Mormon theology, who saves the day, so to speak. In his version of Mormonism, the prophet Joseph Smith is in the same league as Darth Vader and the Angel Moroni descended from the starship Enterprise. The natives find this brand of the religion far more appealing and approachable.

Despite its offbeat nature, "The Book of Mormon" plays like a classic musical. "Hello," the show's hilarious opening number, features a singing cadre of doorbell-ringing Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints missionaries. They populate the stage with their traditional short-sleeved white shirts, conservative neckties and bright, eager smiles.

The 150-minute production ends on a similar note, with a host of numbers in between, including expressing the Ugandans' longing to visit paradise in "Salta-Laka-City."

Strong performances carry the show, and few are stronger than that of Ben Platt as Elder Cunningham. His buoyant naivety, sifted through a Bobcat Goldthwait-brand of psychosis, provides the perfect channel for his mixed-metaphor theology.

As Price, Nic Rouleau offers a perfect, yet human blend of vanity and sanctity. He helps make the musical number "Spooky Mormon Hell Dream" – complete with dancing demons, a four-armed Satan and familiar Hades denizens Hitler, Genghis Kahn, Johnny Cochran and Jeffrey Dahmer – a true showstopper.

The Chicago cast of "The Book of Mormon."

Casey Nicholaw's choreography is simple but strong, and the show's energy runs nonstop through to the traditional feel-good Broadway finish. But the profanity and irreverence make the production very non-traditional and decidedly adult fare.

"The Book of Mormon" successfully sets Parker and Stone's uniquely sassy "South Park"-style humor to music, creating a distinctly 21st century work.

ON THE STAGE

"The Book of Mormon" plays through Oct. 6 at the Bank of America Theater, 18 W. Monroe St., Chicago. For tickets, visit www.chicago-theater.com/theaters/bank-of-america-theater/the-book-of-mormon.php.

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Starring turn in 'Mormon' marks big step in young actor's career



PHOTO: JOAN MARCUS

Syesha Mercado, left, and Ben Platt in "The Book of Mormon."

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Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

After being accepted at New York's Columbia University two years ago, actor Ben Platt was forced to defer his college career – not once, but twice. Fortunately, he's been skipping school for all the right reasons.

In fall of 2011, the Los Angeles-born performer was Columbia-bound when Hollywood came calling. Platt was awarded the role of nerdy, "Star Wars"-obsessed Benji Applebaum in the Universal film "Pitch Perfect," starring opposite Anna Kendrick and Rebel Wilson. By all accounts, his performance was a hit.

In fall 2012, Platt once again postponed his education to re-manifest his inner geek, picking up the role of nerdy, "Star Wars"-obsessed Elder Cunningham in the Chicago production of "The Book of Mormon." The gig has made the 19-year-old actor a star in one of the hottest shows in Chicago.

"The Book of Mormon" is the story about perhaps the most perfect Mormon, played by Nic Rouleau, paired with the most screwed-up, weird Mormon, which I play," says Platt. "I didn't have to do too much research for the part."

In the story, Elder Price (Rouleau) and Elder Cunningham (Platt), two eager Mormon missionaries, are assigned to save sinners in Uganda, a cynical population that does not believe the Mormon god or anyone else can ease their struggles. While Elder Price fails, Elder Cunningham succeeds by preaching his own brand of Mormon theology, one that borrows heavily from "Star Wars," "The Lord of the Rings" and other pop fantasy works. To non-believers, those stories sound no less plausible than the Book of Mormon.

As a man-child adrift in a not-so-promising land, Platt delivers a delightfully lunatic performance. Josh Gad, who earned a Tony nomination for his portrayal of Elder Cunningham on Broadway, used his ample girth as a comedic device to separate his character from the other elders. Platt's trim frame does not afford that opportunity, so he created his own brand of crazy to make his character stand out from the other Mormon elders.

"My character is inappropriate, wants to be everyone's best friend and says wrong things at wrong times," Platt says. "He is more than a little ADD and doesn't know when to stop talking, but he has the best intentions."

Originally from L.A.'s Westwood neighborhood, Platt is the son of theatrical and film producer Marc Platt, perhaps best known as the producer of Broadway's "Wicked."

Platt has been acting on stage since he was eight years old, making him more seasoned than many of his contemporaries. He appeared in Tony Kushner's "Caroline, or Change" and "Irma La Douce" opposite

Katie Holmes. "Pitch Perfect" was his first major film, and it presented a host of different challenges from his stage work.

"I'd been brought up on stage, and I'll never love anything as much as I love stage, but I enjoyed the film experience," Platt says. "The good part is you're working on this project piece by piece and can really concentrate on perfecting only a few lines at a time. On the flip side, there's nothing like experiencing the whole character chronologically as we do on stage."

Platt's Elder Cunningham, Platt's character is fully realized and surprisingly appealing as a counterpoint to the other elders. Platt commends Parker and Stone for avoiding taking cheap shots at Mormonism for the sake of laughs, despite their obvious obsession with the religion.

"The interesting thing about the show is how much heart it has," Platt says. "It's a big, riotous evening out, but audiences fall in love with the show because they care about the narrative, and people become very invested in Price and Cunningham and want to see them get along."

If there's a moral to "The Book of Mormon," Platt says it's about finding faith in the community and the people you know rather than fantastic tales and things that can't be known. For the character of Elder Cunningham, it's also about accepting people as they are and for what they can contribute.

While "The Book of Mormon" marks another big success for the young up-and-comer, maybe next year he'll find time to get back to school.

Happy Pride Month!
- Sandy

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Catching some rays at the Shedd Aquarium

By Michael Muckian

Contributing Writer

Petting a stingray is something I decided to do for the experience rather than the pleasure. But as I discovered at the Shedd Aquarium's current exhibit "Stingray Touch," the sensation of touching a stingray's back as it glides effortlessly through the water is anything but unpleasant.

Open through October, "Stingray Touch" is the Shedd's sole exterior exhibit. Housed under a brown canvas tent outside the aquarium's octagonal main building, the exhibit consists of a long, wide and relatively shallow open tank populated with schools of some 40 cownose and yellow stingrays. Visitors must wash their hands and arms before coming into contact with the animals.

The yellow rays appear to bury themselves in the bottom sand and rarely come within reach of people. The cownose rays, however, are more sociable, gliding just beneath the surface in schools of two to 10 like a gang of gray ghosts. It sometimes takes a bit of effort, but virtually everyone is guaranteed a touch.

The ray's skin is soft and fleshy – human-like skin but with a lubricant covering. The sensation of touching it is comforting, probably due to the familiarity of its feel.

It only occurred to us after stroking seven or eight of the diamond-shaped creatures that they are named "stingrays" for a reason. Fortunately, as one museum official told us, the poisonous barbs in the tail had been clipped, a process he described as similar to trimming fingernails.

"Stingray Touch" is a quick visit that, like many others at the Shedd, exits through an impromptu gift shop. Fortunately there is a great deal more to see and do at the aquarium, not the least of which is an amazing display of jellies that easily trump the rays in their ethereal, otherworldly appeal.

Sea jellies, or jellyfish in more common

parlance, also fall into the stinging categories. Their trailing tentacles of various lengths – from mere inches to over 100 feet – enable them to feed as well as protect themselves from predators. One of the few beneficiaries of global warming, jellies are booming in many areas of the world's oceans, and massive "blooms" of the creatures have clogged harbors and closed beaches, making transportation difficult and swimming unsafe in some places.

Jellies, which are technically invertebrates and not fish, can be as small as grapes or as big as beds. Floating through the Shedd's tanks in slow motion, they're visually arresting. In the wild, some varieties generate their own light, while others go through reproductive cycles that allow their own rebirth – a form of primitive immortality. Those on display at the Shedd's special exhibit, which has been extended through 2013, are absolutely fascinating.

Other attractions this season add to the Shedd's appeal as a top destination for visitors to Chicago. The Abbott Oceanarium's "One World," a new aquatics show, features the aquarium's dolphins and Beluga whales interacting with other performers and stressing the relationship between animals and humans. Residents of the Shedd's 70-bird penguin colony have begun hatching this season's chicks in nests built out of rocks. (Call ahead to check on the chicks' status for viewing, if that's a key attraction for you.)

Opened to the public in 1930, the Shedd offers one of the world's most comprehensive sea life collections. With more than 32,500 animals on display in addition to the visiting stingrays, the Shedd guarantees a fascinating afternoon.

The aquarium's regular collection includes life from various lakes, rivers and oceans around the world. The varieties of sharks in the Wild Reef exhibit are a crowd favorite.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Cownose stingrays range over a large part of the western Atlantic and Caribbean, from New England to southern Brazil.

Also popular are the ornate and colorful horse family. Weedy Sea Dragons, members of the sea- For more, visit www.shedaquarium.org.

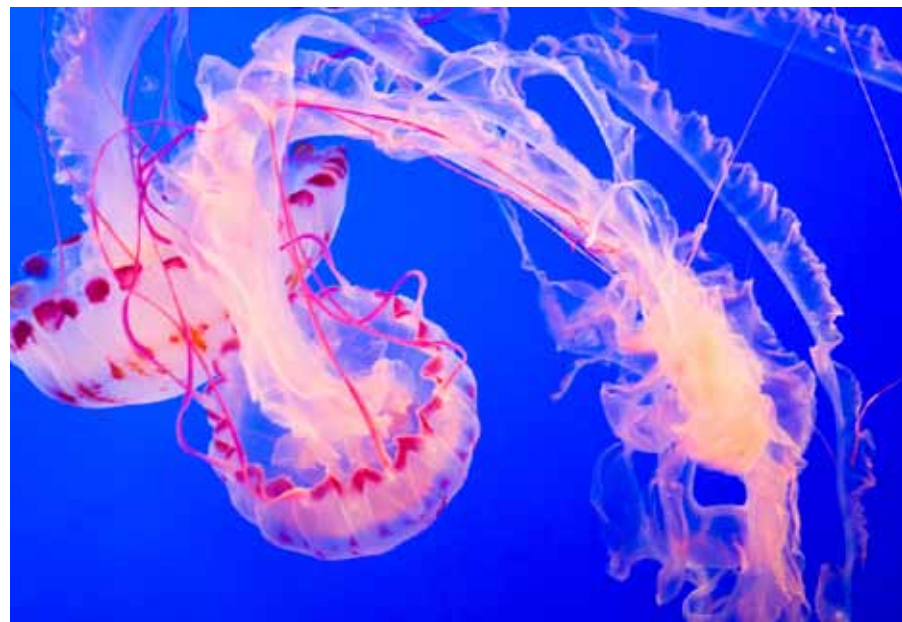


PHOTO: PHOTOPEDIA

Purple striped jellyfish exist mostly off the California coast in Monterey Bay.

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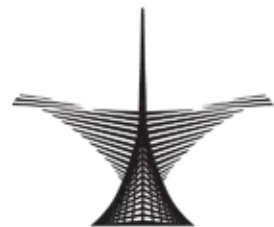
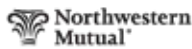
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Kehinde Wiley, *Equestrian Portrait of the Court-Duke Olivares*, 2005 (detail). Image courtesy Rubell Family Collection, Miami. Photo by Chi Lam.

Gauging the fare at The Gage Chicago

ON THE TABLE

The Gage
24 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago
312-372-4243

Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Thursday-Friday 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

Entrees: \$11-\$41

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

Even in downtown Chicago, Tuesday night is not a time you'd expect to find a waiting list at a restaurant offering upscale comfort food, as The Gage Chicago calls its fare. But the pre-theater crowd we joined on a recent Tuesday night literally spilled out into the street, and when a table in the 300-seat restaurant emptied, it didn't stay vacant long.

Much of this may be owing to the restaurant's proximity to Chicago's theater district. But the kitchen plays the leading role in the restaurant's success, producing some true wonders that make The Gage a stop worth making, and the slightly upscale prices worth paying.

The restaurant is named after the historic Gage group of buildings, one of which it occupies. An 1889-90 collaboration between the architectural firm Holabird & Roche and architect Louis Sullivan, the buildings anticipate Chicago's skyscraper boom and were among Sullivan's last commissions. The historical cachet adds to the restaurant's appeal.

The Gage was opened in 2007 by the Lawless family, a group of restaurateurs from Ireland who also own Henri, The Gage's sister restaurant at 18 S. Michigan Ave., and The Irish Oak Tavern in Wrigleyville. Referring to The Gage as an Irish pub, while technically correct, would be a significant understatement.

The dinner menu divides into first, second, third and fourth selections, with each ascending group offering more elaborate and pricier options. The only thing difficult about the menu is how to narrow your choices.

We jumped right to the "third" section of the menu and ordered an appetizer of seared sea scallops (\$17) to share. The three perfectly grilled mollusks were prepared with a decidedly Asian spin and nestled next to Chinese broccoli, deboned Korean BBQ short ribs, toasted whole peanuts and kimchi. As good as the scallops were, the side vegetables

GAGE on next page



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PHOTO: PHOTOPEDIA

The Gage is located in a building that dates to an 1888–1890 collaboration involving architect Louis Sullivan.

GAGE from prior page were that much better, each distinctive and offering a unique zest, including the kimchi, which we enjoyed in moderation.

We chose cheap on the wine menu, but a Terre Rouge Syrah Côtes de l'Ouest (\$42) pleasantly surprised us. Billed as winemaker Bill Easton's New World homage to Rhone wines, the Terre Rouge ("Red Earth") drew from a palate of dried red fruits and occupied the mouth lightly, but with a delightful spicy-peppery quality. It was robust enough to match our heartier entree, but both subtle and supple enough to accommodate the lighter one.

And what were those entrees? We tried both the asparagus and leek ravioli (\$21) and coffee-rubbed pork (\$29), and it's hard to say which dish exhibited more finesse.

The ravioli, four flattened pockets bathed in a Parmesan sauce, was served with grilled spring onion, cherry tomatoes and basil. The sauce did an excellent job providing a base to the dish, while the flavors of each vegetable emerged individually and in combination for a very satisfying vegetarian offering.

The pork – rubbed with espresso grounds that added a rich, roasted garnish – was comprised of slices of the "secreto" cut. Literally "secret" in Spanish, the secreto is the tender strip of pork hidden beneath the thick layer of belly fat. My secreto was flavorful, tender and substantive, with a veal-like tenderness. It is a cut I will look for again.

The pork was served on a bed of grits with sautéed ramps (wild leeks), fava beans, shaved prosciutto and small bits of grapefruit. As with

the ravioli, the combinations of flavors and textures made the dish exceptional.

We don't often order dessert, but we couldn't pass up the rhubarb shortcake served with pistachios and lychee-basil seed sorbet. The rhubarb had been poached in Campari and steeped in a mixed-berry compote for a delightful new turn on an old favorite. The shortcake was tender and crumbly,

and the sorbet was surprisingly savory rather than sweet. The complex mix of flavors was ably supported by the lychees. It was hands-down the most interesting dessert we have ever tried.

We're not sure where The Gage can go from here, but we'll always look for opportunities to go along for the ride.



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Dish it Out!

Wines add sizzle to summer grilling



By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

Nothing says summer like food sizzling on an outdoor grill. If you have a skewer of fresh organic vegetables and sushi-grade cut of Ahi tuna sizzling on the grate, chances are you'll want something more refined than a cold one to wash it down.

Fortunately, whether you've got steaks or scallops on the barbecue, wine can bring a level of sophistication to your al fresco feast. Following are some recommendations to please your palate and raise the quality of this summer's outdoor dining experiences.

THE ZEN OF ZIN

U.S. wine lovers crow about the American heritage of Zinfandel grapes, and that's true when it comes to our native hybrid. Although grape geneticists have traced zin's roots to both Italy's Primitivo and Croatia's Crljenak Kaštelanski grapes, we're still happy to claim zin as our own.

The grape produces what's known as a "rustic" red wine – full bodied and a little wild around the edges, which makes it a perfect match for grilled steaks, burgers, roasts, ribs and other red meats.

The Rancho Zabaco 2010 Sonoma Heritage Vines Zinfandel (\$15) offers hints of black pepper and blackberry jam,

Although grape geneticists have traced zin's roots to Italy and Croatia, we're still happy to claim it as our own.

characteristics of the classic zin profile. The Sonoma Valley wine is blended with 7 percent Petite Syrah grapes, which adds to the wine's strength and dimension.

The 2010 Brazin (B) Old Vine Zinfandel (\$16) from California's Lodi region follows a slightly different profile, as befits its terroir. Expect a spice and mocha nose underscored by a palate of plum and chocolate laced with rich tannins for added strength.

The 2008 Artezín Zinfandel (\$23) pushes the blend, adding 15 percent Petite Syrah. The Dry Creek Valley wine pours a deep garnet with mixed-berry aromas and a jammy palate with pepper, cinnamon and mocha highlights. Youthful tannins help soften the finish.

MAKE MINE MALBEC

Although native to France, the Malbec grape has come into its own among the vineyards of Argentina. The hearty red wine displays different characteristics than Zinfandel, but still offers a great accompaniment to most things you can pop onto a grill.

The 2011 Michel Torino Malbec Don David (\$18) is a subtle riot of aromas and flavors. The nose presents with hints of plum, raisin and pipe tobacco, leading to a palate of spicy dark fruits with almond and toasted vanilla notes. It ends with a rich mouthfeel and long finish.

The 2009 Alamos Selección Malbec (\$19) is a blend from four different vineyards in Argentina's Uco Valley. The result is a lush palate, with a generous texture and concentrations of fresh fruit and subtle cocoa overtones.

The 2010 Don Miguel Gascón Reserva Malbec (\$23) is tempered with a little bit of Petit Verdot to slightly change its character. An aroma of dark fruit leads to a flavor profile that includes plum, blackberry and cherry, with hints of black pepper and dark chocolate on a long finish.

WINE on next page



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WINE from prior page

SASSY SAUVIGNON BLANC

It's name is French for "wild white," but despite its Gaelic heritage, the Sauvignon Blanc grape is cultivated successfully worldwide. Some of the best come from Chile and New Zealand. Light, bright and a little sassy on the palate, Sauvignon Blanc is a wine that stands up well to seafood and grilled vegetables of all types.

The 2011 Veramonte Sauvignon Blanc La Gloria (\$12) shows just how sophisticated Chilean winemakers have become. The wine's tropical-citrus profile offers notes of lime and white grapefruit, balanced by a light straw color and a lightly acidic mouthfeel that is characteristic of good food-pairing wines.

The 2012 Kunde Magnolia Lane Sauvignon Blanc (\$17) shows what a little Sonoma County winemaking know-how can accomplish. The bright, crisp wine offers a flavor profile that includes melon, guava and maybe even a hint of banana.

The 2012 Kim Crawford Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc (\$14) is a personal favorite. This New Zealand import opens with aromas of cut grass and citrus fruits, followed by a well-rounded, complex palate of stone fruits, passion fruit and other botanicals. There is more to this wine than you expect, which is why it is often love at first taste for those who discover it.



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Melissa Ferrick performs at women's music fest in Middleton

Melissa Ferrick, once known as the other Melissa – arriving, as she did, just a few years after Melissa Etheridge – has been out from the beginning of her career, unlike Etheridge. Ferrick made a name as a riveting live performer, famous for busting strings as she worked over her guitar. Initially a major-label artist in the early to mid-1990s, when the record execs thought it was profitable to have female singer/songwriters on their rosters, Ferrick later did time on an indie label, as well as her own.

Now comfortably at MPress, which is run by fellow queer singer/songwriter Rachael Sage, the prolific Ferrick returns with “The Truth Is,” on which she explores her torch and twang side. Not an easy listen – no one does heartbreak like Ferrick – her latest release shows that she hasn’t lost her knack for making the personal universal and framing it in memorable musical arrangements.

I spoke with Ferrick about the new record earlier this month.

Your new disc “The Truth Is” opens with the Nashville twang of “Wreck Me,” a sound that resur-

Interview

GREGG SHAPIRO

faces on the title track. How did Nashville find its way to Massachusetts?

Melissa Ferrick: I think what first sparked it, the pedal steel specifically, was touring with (Americana act) Field Report ... as I was beginning to write this record. There is a pedal steel player in that band. By maybe the third show of a solo tour I was doing after that, I asked them to sit in with me, particularly on a song called “I Don’t Want You to Change.” It certainly wasn’t the first time I thought about pedal steel. I’m a huge Ryan Adams and Lucinda Williams fan. Not using any electric guitars on this album was also a conscious decision. I wanted to make a wider, more Americana record, that’s for sure.

You play the flugelhorn on “Wreck Me.” Was that an instru-



PHOTO COURTESY

ON STAGE

Melissa Ferrick performs at the National Women’s Music Festival on July 6 in Middleton. For more, go to wiaonline.org.

ment you played in school as a kid, or was it something you picked up as an adult?

I started playing trumpet when I was in first grade. That’s the instrument I was on scholarship for at Berklee (College of Music in Boston). I’ve been playing horn for a very long time.

In addition to Paula Cole, there are other amazing musical guests on the disc, including Natalia Zukerman, Rose Polenzani, Anne Heaton. What does it mean to have a com-

munity of talent such as this from which to draw?

It’s enormous, as I’m sure you know. I had a terrible breakup with someone I had been back and forth with for a few years. As soon as I started writing, I wrote “Pity Song” and “Everything You Were” and “Overboard.” Then I reconnected with Paula and Natalia and Rose, and Anne Heaton came back. (These were) friendships I had for decades – people that had been in my life and loved me (but) were not in my life when I was in this relationship. Rightly so. I was not the fullest

FERRICK on next page

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FERRICK from prior page
self I could be. A lot of the most important relationships in my life had fallen to the wayside because of that. To then call on them to come play on this record was an effort on my part (to say), "Will you come be a part of this beautiful thing I'm making?" And, of course, their answer was yes. The making of this record was so joyful that any pain I had been in at the beginning of the year was erased by the time I was able to make this record. It's really nice to have my friends and their talents on this record.

Do you ever wonder if there are women out there thinking, "I'm not going to get into a relationship with Melissa Ferrick – she's going to write about me when we breakup"?

I know! I actually joked about that onstage in New York the other night after I played "Overboard." I said, "I bet you're glad you're not her." I'm not really all that concerned at all, just because I don't think that person would ever buy a record by me anyway.

Well then good riddance!

Exactly (laughs)! I did a podcast with (musician) Teddy Goldstein, and we talked at length about is it imperative to

be in pain and frustration or to be going through things as a writer? My instinctive answer is yes. I write better from pain.

Equally as intense as "Overboard" is "Take in All the Plants" which sounds like a song about a natural disaster crossed with a personal disaster.

It is, yes. It's a metaphor for where I was. That song was written two weeks before Hurricane Sandy hit, which was weird. Trina Shoemaker, the woman who mixed this record, lived through Katrina. She experienced carrying her infant son through floodwaters. She lost her entire house and her studio. That song means a lot to her, but for me it was a reflection of how I felt at the end of 2011, the beginning of 2012. It was a devastating New Year's. That whole idea of getting into an interior room (during a storm) ... was a reflection of how I felt. I usually put the piece I'm most proud of lyrically last on my records.

You have upcoming dates playing at the Backlot Bash in Chicago and the National Women's Music Festival in Middleton. As a regular performer in the Great Lakes region, what do you like about performing here?

I've said this so many times before, but it's the truth: If (not

for my family), I'd live in Chicago. It's my favorite city in the United States, hands-down, period. I love everything about it. I love the people there. I love the architecture and the art. I love the music, the scene there. It's always been strong. I love the food (laughs). I have another important part of my life – my recovery is very strong there. I love that. I know that when I go to Chicago I feel at home, in more ways than one. The audiences are incredible. They're great listeners. There are great rooms to play. I haven't played National Women's Music Festival in years. They asked me to play this year, and I said yes.

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ON THE SMALL SCREEN

In celebration of LGBT Pride Month, Netflix is featuring the following:

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- "Another Gay Movie" (2006)
- "Brokeback Mountain" (2005)
- "Camp" (2003)
- "Far from Heaven" (2002)
- "Gayby" (2012)
- "Keep the Lights On" (2012)
- "Kissing Jessica Stein" (2001)
- "North Sea Texas" (2011)
- "Queer as Folk" (1999, UK version)
- "The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green" (2006)
- "The L Word" (2004–09)
- "Tomboy" (2011)
- "We Were Here" (2011)
- "Weekend" (2011)
- "Were the World Mine" (2008)

BEST GAY TV CHARACTERS:

- "Brothers & Sisters" – Scotty & Kevin
- "Dawson's Creek" – Jack McPhee
- "Desperate Housewives" – Andrew Van de Kamp
- "Glee" – Kurt & Blaine
- "Greek" – Calvin Owens
- "Noah's Arc" – Noah Nicholson & Wade Robinson
- "Skins: Season 1 & 2" – Maxxie Oliver
- "Ugly Betty" – Marc St. James & Justin Suarez
- "Torchwood" – Jack Harkness & Ianto
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ACROSS

- 1. CCCP
- 5. Slippery sort
- 8. New Mexico art community
- 12. Find new tenant
- 14. Turkish military leader
- 15. Oscar-winner Jessica
- 16. Kunta Kinte of "Roots," e.g.
- 17. *Peyton or Eli to Archie
- 18. Eight performers
- 19. *"Married... with Children" dad
- 21. *"All in the Family" dad
- 23. For every
- 24. _____ or swim
- 25. *"Modern Family" dad
- 28. *Aaron Spelling's daughter
- 30. Oxygen holder
- 35. 3rd and 5th in Manhattan, e.g.
- 37. Court of law opener
- 39. "_____ Circus"
- 40. Give a traffic ticket
- 41. Walkway
- 43. eBay offers
- 44. Twig of willow tree
- 46. Ticket leftover
- 47. Nose-in-the-air type
- 48. Home to Sarajevo
- 50. Seaward
- 52. Give it a go
- 53. Civil rights concern

- 55. Put two and two together
- 57. *Kiefer's dad
- 60. *Pa to Laura Ingalls
- 64. Pertaining to the ear
- 65. Actress _____ Thompson
- 67. Dolphin home
- 68. Work the dough
- 69. Aggravate
- 70. Become established
- 71. Immeasurably long period
- 72. Busy flyer
- 73. Network of nerves

DOWN

- 1. Sky bear
- 2. Auction off
- 3. Block of granite, e.g.
- 4. Increase rpms
- 5. "Piece of cake!"
- 6. I, to Claudius
- 7. Hawaiian veranda
- 8. It measures rpms
- 9. Not in favor of
- 10. Curved molding
- 11. Workout segment
- 13. Proclaimed true without proof
- 15. Make so one can't get out
- 20. Be limp
- 22. DNA transmitter
- 24. Tropical naps
- 25. *Father of the twelve tribes of Israel
- 26. Dispatch boat
- 27. Abominable snowmen
- 29. Swedish shag rugs
- 31. Barbecued anatomy
- 32. Time on the job
- 33. Eagerness
- 34. *He played Cliff Huxtable on TV
- 36. "As _____ on TV"
- 38. *Greek father to all gods
- 42. African sorcery
- 45. Off-color
- 49. Afflict
- 51. *Presidential and Founding father
- 54. Wing it
- 56. Comparative of dry
- 57. Buggy terrain
- 58. Three-layer cookie
- 59. Indian bread
- 60. Devil's _____
- 61. Better than never?
- 62. Give off
- 63. Cosine's buddy
- 64. *Jenna's presidential dad, _____ "W"
- 66. "But I heard him exclaim, _____ he drove out of sight, Merry Christmas to all..."

CROSSWORD

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 Jun 20-Aug 9 Concerts in the Park
 Jun 21-Sep 6 Peg Egan PAC Sunset Concert Series
 Jul 3-4 Independence Celebration
 Jul 20-21 Door County Triathlon

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