H2B a Success

Submitted by Harbor to the Bay

On Saturday, September 15 hundreds of riders made the bike trip from Boston to Provincetown to raise funds to improve community awareness of HIV/AIDS care and services, support those organizations that advance the quality and accessibility care, help prevent HIV infection and to positively serve New England’s LGBTQ Communities.

Where we all reside

“Between Riverside and Crazy”

Rev. Irene Monroe

Stephen Adly Guirgis’s 2015 Pulitzer Prize-winning play “Between Riverside and Crazy” now adds to the SpeakEasy Stage Company’s illustrious list of performances. With a packed audience at each performance “Between Riverside and Crazy” is a comic drama where Guirgis’s characters are raw, complicated, vulnerable and very human. In other words, they are flawed in the ways we all are, and they are broken in places that are all too familiar.

Anti-trans ad renews fear-mongering

by Chris Johnson

The campaign in Massachusetts seeking to repeal a law barring discrimination against transgender people in public accommodations is resorting to old tactics of stoking unfounded fears about male sexual predators being allowed in women’s restrooms.

The ad is unveiled as Massachusetts voters are poised to vote in November on Question 3, which will decide whether the state will retain its non-discrimination law against anti-trans discrimination in public accommodations, including restrooms and locker rooms. The law was signed by Republican Gov. Charlie Baker in 2016 and has been on the books for two years, but placed on the ballot as a result of a voter-initiated referendum.

Although similar anti-trans ads have stoked fears about children being molested in public restrooms, the 30-second ad made public Wednesday by the “No on 3” campaign, which has dubbed itself “Keep MA Safe,” features an adult woman entering the locker room as a sinister-looking male predator wearing a hoodie awaits inside a stall.

“What does the Question 3 mean to you?” asks female voice in the ad. “It means any man who says he is a woman can enter a woman’s locker room, dressing room or bathroom at any time, even convicted sex offenders, and if you see something suspicious and say something to authorities, you could be arrested and fined up $15,000.”

As the woman is beginning to undo her clothes, the camera pans to her frightened face as the man snaps the stall open and releases a menacing, throaty gasp.

The female voice concludes: “Vote No on 3. This bathroom bill puts our privacy and safety at risk. It goes too far.”

Say hello to the Mass. LGBT Chamber of Commerce

By Sue O’Connell

On Monday Federal Reserve Bank of Boston housed the launch of the Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce. Governor Charlie Baker and Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse delivered keynote addresses.

The new chamber’s mission is “to promote economic growth and viability for LGBT-owned and allied businesses, corporations, and professionals and to serve as the voice of the Massachusetts LGBT community.”

The new chamber will also provide a range of programs and services that span the entire spectrum of business needs. It will serve as a powerful advocate on behalf of LGBT-owned and allied businesses, corporations, and professionals.

The new chamber will also serve as a powerful advocate on behalf of LGBT-owned and allied businesses, corporations, and professionals.

"America's Got Talent' got a bigger audience than the Emmys. Write your own punch line. It's a Jewish holiday."

— Perennial awards show scribe Bruce Vilanch’s quip on the ratings for the Emmy Awards.

find Billy Masters on page 8!
Police: 2 men injured in anti-gay beating

NEW YORK (AP)—New York City police are searching for a man they say injured two other men in an anti-gay attack in Brooklyn.

WABC-TV reports the attack happened early Sunday in Brooklyn’s Williamsburg section.

Authorities say the suspect made anti-gay comments as he approached the men. Police say the suspect punched one man in the face and threw the other victim into a tree.

Both victims were knocked unconscious during the attack. Police say the suspect fled the scene.

One victim suffered a broken shoulder and the other victim sustained a broken finger.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the New York Police Department.

Information from: WABC-TV, http://www.wabc.com

Chicago archbishop removes priest who burned rainbow banner

CHICAGO (AP)—The archbishop of Chicago has removed a priest as head of a North Side church after he burned a rainbow banner, angering the LGBT community.

The Chicago Tribune reports that Cardinal Blase Cupich announced Rev. Paul Kalchik’s removal in a recent letter to parishioners and staff at the Resurrection Catholic Church.

Cupich said he acted “out of concern” for Kalchik and parishioners. He said the 56-year-old priest needed “time away from the parish to receive pastoral support.”

Kalchik told the newspaper on Friday that he’s not anti-gay and that he was “about as much of a gay basher as Mother Teresa.”

An archdiocese spokeswoman told the paper Saturday that the priest’s removal wasn’t “directly due” to banner’s destruction and had been “in the works.”


Former Michigan corrections officer sues over discrimination

HOLLAND, Mich. (AP)—A former Michigan corrections officer has sued the state Department of Corrections, alleging the agency discriminated against her based on sexual orientation and race.

Ashley Menchaca, who is Hispanic and gay, worked at Woodland Center Facility in Claremore Lake from January 2016 until she resigned May 2017, the Livingston Daily Press & Argus reported. The original complaint was filed in March and then amended in June to list the corrections department as the sole defendant.

The lawsuit alleges that Menchaca’s supervisors restricted her bathroom access, disciplined her for using the bathroom, threatened her with disciplinary action if she continued to work at the facility, and spread rumors that she’d left the country.

Menchaca also alleged that her supervisors made her use a hard stool at her work station, but would replace the stool with a cushioned chair when others were assigned to the station.

MDOC’s written response to the complaint denies any discriminatory conduct or practices. The agency is seeking the complaint’s dismissal because it “does not fit within the prohibitions of the law,” the agency said.

The lawsuit says the alleged actions violate the federal anti-discrimination statute. Michigan doesn’t currently recognize sexual orientation as a protected class.

“To us, it is important because, beyond the fact that what happened to Ashley, employers are technically allowed to discriminate based on sexual orientation,” Andrew Laurila, one of Menchaca’s lawyers, said.

MDOC spokesman Chris Gautz declined to comment on the case specifically, but said employees attend anti-discrimination workshops.

Theater

Continued from page 1

Pops is battling with the New York Housing Authority to hold on to his spacious Manhattan’s rent-controlled apartment on Riverside Drive on the Upper West Side. Also, he is feuding with the NYPD for a hefty settlement to compensate for injuries he sustained when a white cop shot him, rendering him disabled and out of work.

Pops’s epic battles, however, are further complicated by a motley cast of characters all living with him and can easily be labeled as social misfits: Junior, his son, who’s recently released from prison; LuLa, Junior’s girlfriend, who says she’s pregnant; and Osvaldo, Junior’s friend, a homeless recovering addict. Their struggles to overcome their demons—internal and structural—are as epic as Pops’s struggle for survival.

Guirgis’s play can be troubling if viewed only topically. For example, critics have talked about Guirgis’s use of profanity, suggesting it might be gratuitous. However, I find Guirgis’s profundity in his use of profanity. Guirgis who see it as part of his artistic expression explained his use of expletives in the following way: “In between the adjectives and modifiers that are colorful, [my expletives in the following way: “In between the adjectives and modifiers that are colorful, [my characters] also say things that are pretty interesting, pretty human and oftentimes, pretty funny.”

Osvaldo explained to Pops why he altered his eating habits, is one such example. And the dialogue is comical.

“The King Dongs and Baloney and Fanta Grape, it turns out, that’s what doctors and People Magazine call ‘Emotional Eating’ on my part — on account of I only ate that shit because those foods made me feel “safe and taken care of” back when I was a kid who was never “safe or taken care of”. But now, I’m a adult, right? So I don’t gotta eat like that no more, and I can take care of myself by getting all fit and diesel like how I’m doing from eating these almonds and making other healthful choices like I been making. And so, I’m not trying to get all up in your business, but maybe that’s also the reason you always be eating pie — because of, like, you got Emotionalisms — ya know?”

Another example, Lulú, and Guirgis’s use of stereotypes, that, in my opinion, all the characters are in some way. Lulú is the stereotype of a thick-accented Bronx Latina scarily clad hoochie-looking sister who has no inclination to work and says she’s pregnant. LuLa, however, delivers a line that disrupts the conventional assumptions about her stereotypical appearance.

“I may look how I look, but that don’t mean I AM how I look.”

Moreover, Guirgis’s use of humor and profundity throughout the play serves both as a salve and catharsis when touching on thorny and still unresolved present-day social issues, like shooting and killing unarmed black men by predominately white officers, unjust and corrupt tactics of the NYPD, and the swift and rampant gentrification of minority-majority neighborhoods.

While many will think the inspiration for “Between Riverside and Crazy” is the 2014 shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the chokehold death of Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York, the play is actually based on an incident that occurred twenty years earlier when a white officer mistook an undercover black cop for a criminal in 1994.

Unlike today, in 1994, it would have been a lot harder to convince the American public that police shootings and beatings of unarmed black men are rampant and reflect structural racism and implicit bias - albeit the Rodney King cop beating and the 1992 Los Angeles riot was just two years before this incident and aired internationally. Guirgis doesn’t have to give his audience any commentary about police misconduct because we are now living in 2018, and the problem is front and center.

Pops’s eight-year-old lawsuit against the NYPD does not end as he had hoped with a hefty settlement, and he doesn’t get the justice he so rightly deserved given his thirty years of service on the force. However, he does keep his rent-controlled apartment, and he does gain new insight and energy about life that neither the apartment nor a financial settlement could give him. Pop calls it grace.

“Whatever the hell happened that night, it got me to here. And I didn’t do nothing to deserve it. You gave that to me. You gave me Grace. "Always be free," right?”

Between Riverside and Crazy runs from Sept. 14 - Oct. 15, at the Calderwood Pavilion at the Boston Center for the Arts, 527 Tremont Street in Boston’s South End.
Trans

Continued from page 1

Opponents have resorted to fear-mongering over sexual predators in the restrooms and locker rooms again and again in the efforts to derail transgender non-discrimination measure.

In 2015, a similar ad aired in Houston as the city considered the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance and resulted in the votes rejecting the non-discrimination measure — which would have prohibited discrimination on the basis of numerous characteristics, including race, religious, sexual orientation and gender identity — by a large margin at the ballot.

After that loss, transgender advocates started airing their own ads about the personal stories of transgender people in defense of non-discrimination laws. Earlier this year, a similar bathroom ad in Anchorage as voters in the municipality considered was repeal of a transgender non-discrimination ordinance. Despite the fear-mongering, voters decided to retain the measure on the books, marking the first time a transgender non-discrimination was upheld at the ballot.

It’s not the first time the anti-trans Massachusetts campaign has resorted to stoking fears about bathroom use, but that ad is no longer available to the public. In May, “No on 3” aired an ad the campaign was subsequently forced to edit because it was revealed to have been filmed in a Wegman’s store without the consent of the owners and over their objections. The ad has since been removed entirely.

Concerns laws against discrimination enabling sexual predators to have been unfounded based on the lack of problems in jurisdictions with such laws on the books, including 20 states and D.C.

Just last week, the Williams Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, made public a study that found after passage of these laws, there were actually fewer incidents of privacy and safety violations than in places without gender-identity inclusive public accommodations laws.

Kasey Suffredini, co-chair for the “Yes on 3” campaign, said the new anti-trans ad “flies in the face of the indisputable facts that show women — or anyone else for that matter — are absolutely not at risk by this law.”

“This law simply protects transgender people from discrimination in public places and that is why law enforcement leaders from across Massachusetts and the leading sexual assault prevention groups support upholding this law,” Suffredini said. “The ‘no’ campaign has no data to back up their claims, and yet it is attempting to scare voters, which is truly unfortunate.”

The “Yes on 3” campaign has already made public a 2-minute video featuring transgender people in Massachusetts and their families who feel they would be subject to discrimination and physical danger if the law prohibiting anti-trans discrimination in public accommodations was repealed. For more information visit malgbtcc.org.

Mormons to stay outdoors after split with Boy Scouts

By BRADY McCOMBS
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—The Mormon church’s new youth program, which will roll out in 2020 when it cuts all ties with Boy Scouts of America, will still include outdoor and adventure activities even as the initiative becomes more gender-focused, the faith confirmed Friday.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints provided a few more details about the initiative in a news release that said a full and detailed description will come later because different aspects of the program are still being tested.

The Utah-based faith announced in May it was leaving the Boy Scouts of America at the end of next year in a move that ends a nearly century-old relationship between two organizations that were originally brought together by shared values but diverged in recent years.

Amid declining membership, Boy Scouts of America recently opened its rms to openly gay youth members and adult volunteers as well as girls and transgender boys. The Mormon faith, which has long been the biggest sponsor of Boy Scout troops in the United States, has clung to its opposition of homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

The church has also seen significant expansion in countries outside the U.S. where Boy Scouts wasn’t offered and said it wanted to create its own uniform youth program it could use around the world and tailor specifically to its gospel. More than half of the church’s 16 million members live outside the U.S. and Canada.

The news release reiterates that the faith’s program will be similar to Scouting with an emphasis on outdoors, service work and character building. It won’t have a ranking system like the one culminating in an Eagle Scout recognition that many generations of Mormons strived to achieve as a life milestone. It will be for boys and girls.

Camps and other outdoor activities have always been and will continue to be a prominent feature.

According to the “Yes on 3” campaign, the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association and the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence have come out favor of the statewide protections.

Although municipalities have previously held votes on transgender non-discrimination protections, Question 3 marks the first time such a vote will be considered at the statewide level.

Observers have said a loss would green light further erosion of LGBT rights, but majority support for the law at the ballot would help advance LGBT rights elsewhere.

One poll shows things are looking good for the transgender non-discrimination law. On Wednesday, a Suffolk University Political Research Center/Boston Globe poll found 73 percent voters favoring keeping the law as it is, 17 percent want the law repealed and nine percent are undecided.

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Why can’t puppets Bert and Ernie be gay?

by Rev. Irene Monroe

"Sesame Street’s" most famous duo Bert and Ernie first appeared in 1969, the same year as the Stonewall Riots, which to the nation’s surprise catalyzed the LGTBQ Liberation Movement. And at that time, the idea of partnering these two lovable striped-sweater-wearing puppets as gay was as inconceivable as the idea of legalized same-sex marriage.

But four-plus decades later with Bert and Ernie’s relationship outliving many heterosexual living arrangements-roomsmates or married-and mirroring the subtle ways in which LGBTQ couples discreetly went about their lives back in the day, the question of whether the guys are gay is not only apropos, but so, too, is the question of their nuptials.

"They are not gay, they are not straight, they are puppets," President and CEO of Sesame Workshop, Gary Knell said. "They don’t exist below the waist."

The funny thing about the dominance of heteronormativity in society, I’ve learned as a lesbian, is that it is always assumed-whether it’s above or below the waists of people or puppets. And, oddly, heteronormativity is also assumed without questions, expected without exception, and explained even in its silence.

But Knell is not entirely truthful in his reply that the puppets are neither gay nor straight.

My favorite Jim Henson Muppet is the over-the-top heterosexual prima-Donna, femme fatale, and sex-siren Miss Piggy. And the love of her life, Kermit the frog, unwittingly marries her in "The Muppets Take Manhattan."

"Sesame Street" has always moved and grooved with the times. Its concept of "Muppet diplomacy," a term coined to depict "Sesame Street’s" efforts to educate children around the world, has tackled tough social issues like HIV/AIDS, child obesity, 9/11 and military deployment, to name a few, and has danced and sang with mega rock stars and hip-hop artists like Bono, Beyonce, and Justin Bieber.

Is it possible that my "gaydar" is off about "Sesame Street?" Perhaps. But hasn’t "Sesame Street" over the years, in a tongue-in-cheek fashion, winked and nodded to the LGBTQ community?

For example, was it mere coincidence that during "Coming Out Month" of October 2010 African American lesbian comedian Wanda Sykes appeared on the show? But Sykes is not the only openly LGBTQ person who appeared on the show. Openly gay guest stars like Neil Patrick Harris played a "shoe fairy," and will.i.am of the "Black Eyed Peas" sang "What I Am?" a song about self-acceptance, creating an online kerfuffle about its underlying message.

Is it now time for "Sesame Street’s" under-the-radar winks and nods to the LGBTQ community be replaced with a full-throated statement of support?

"Sesame Street" has a long history of teaching children

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Nevada detective fired after sex abuse charge in Utah

MESQUITE, Nev. (AP)—A veteran Nevada police detective was fired Wednesday following his arrest last week on charges accusing him of sexually abusing a southern Utah teen he met on a social networking app geared toward gay and bisexual men.

Gary Erickson, who was arrested Sept. 12 in Las Vegas, is awaiting extradition to St. George, Utah, on one count of sexual abuse of a minor, one count of dealing in material harmful to a minor and three counts of sexual exploitation.

Mesquite Police Chief Troy Tanner said in a statement released late Wednesday the completion of an internal affairs investigation has resulted in his termination. The department said earlier in the day he’d been placed on administrative leave. He had worked there since 1999.

The St. George Spectrum, citing court documents, reported Erickson arranged a sexual encounter with the 15-year-old boy in an aquatic center locker room in St. George in August.

A St. George police detective was assigned to investigate the incident Aug. 20 after the boy’s parents contacted the department, according to a court affidavit filed in Fifth District Court. They indicated he has been sending and receiving nude photographs from an unknown man.

The boy told St. George police he initially represented himself as being 18, the legal age of consent, in personal messages sent to Erickson, the newspaper reported.

It’s not clear if Erickson has a lawyer or will be appointed one at a pending court appearance.

Police Sgt. Quinn Averett said in an email to The Associated Press they don’t know if he has legal representation. Court records don’t list a lawyer.

Funerals held for 2 women allegedly killed by border agent

LAREDO, Texas (AP)—Friends and family gathered for funerals in Laredo, Texas, for two of the women authorities say were killed by a Border Patrol agent who has been described as a serial killer.

Funerals were held Friday for 42-year-old Claudine Luera and 28-year-old Janelle Ortiz, a transgender woman whose birth name was Humberto Ortiz.

Authorities say Border Patrol supervisor Juan David Ortiz is accused of killing four women this month. He was arrested Sept. 15 and remains jailed on several charges, including four counts of murder.

The Corpus Christi Caller-Times reports that during Janelle Ortiz’s service, the Rev. Edmundo Lopez Jr. said, "we’ve seen so many families afflicted, hit down, a life too short."

The two other victims were Melissa Ramirez and Guiselda Alicia Canu.

Court: Anti-gay preachers had right to protest outside Pride

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—The U.S. Court of Appeals says the city of Nashville violated the First Amendment rights of anti-gay preachers at a 2015 LGBT pride festival.

The Tennessean reports the decision filed Wednesday reverses the district court’s ruling. John McClung and Jeremy Peters filed the lawsuit against the city in April 2016, asserting their freedom of speech was violated when they were made to leave the sidewalk in front of the park where the festival was being held. They had been protesting using amplification equipment.

Nashville had argued the protesters’ messages intersected with that of the festival. But the decision says that explanation makes it clear that they wouldn’t have been excluded if they weren’t spreading an anti-homosexuality message.

One judge dissented, saying the use of bullhorns was sufficiently disruptive.


EEOC accuses Arizona company of racial and sexual harassment

PHOENIX (AP)—The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has filed a lawsuit against an Arizona industrial and commercial painting company.

The EEOC’s suit says Riddle Painting and Coatings violated federal law when it allegedly subjected employees to a hostile work environment based on race and sex.

It says at least one employee complained about the harassment and the Phoenix company knew or should have known of the racial and same-sex harassment, but failed to take any actions to stop or remedy the abuse.

The EEOC filed suit last Friday in federal court in Phoenix and is seeking undisclosed monetary damages for the harassment victims plus injunctive relief intended to prevent and correct discrimination.

A law firm that represents Riddle Painting and Coatings says the company has no comment at this time.
impact people living with HIV/AIDS, and to donate 100% of rider-received pledges to our beneficiaries.

It seems like it was just yesterday that the Harbor to the Bay Ride 16 was kicked off at sunrise in Copley Square, cheering continued to motivate the 193 riders across the Sagamore Bridge and over the hills of Truro, and into Provincetown.

Whether it was the 68 miles ride, the full 125 mile ride or crew at pit-stops, each and every person should be proud of the difference made for the four Beneficiaries: Fenway Health, AIDS Action Committee, AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod, and Community Research Initiative. Harbor to the Bay continues to give a voice to those lost to and still fighting HIV/AIDS, with 100% of the money raised going to prevention, treatment, and care. Harbor to the Bay will continue to raise funds and awareness until we get to zero.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone, and we hope you will join us September 14, 2019 for Ride 17. There’s still time for you to donate. Visit www.harbortothebay.org

Photo Credit Christine M. Hurley

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Monroe
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about diversity and acceptance; so, why should the issues impacting our LGBTQ children be excluded? Moreover, many of the children watching the show are not only LGBTQ, but so, too, are their parents and households.

In other words, could it be that “Sesame Street” needs to come out of the closet? In many ways, their famous duo has. And Bert and Ernie have not only been roommates, but they have also been sleep-mates, sleeping next to each other like any long-term committed couple. I realize, however, in a culture that constantly sexualizes the coupling of same-gender relationships as gay, we ignore our friendships with our “best friends forever” (BFF), which is what producers of “Sesame Street” are stating about Bert and Ernie.

For example, for over two decades Oprah and her gal pal, Gayle King, editor-at-large for O, The Oprah Magazine, have denied rumors they are lesbians, but instead have publicly stated they are each other’s BFF, just two sistah-girls being sister-friends.

After 30 years of four-times-a-day phone calls, and frequent sightings of where you see Oprah you also see Gayle, the public continues to question Oprah and Gayle about their relationship. “No, I’m not a lesbian, I’m not even kind of a lesbian,” Oprah stated on “A Barbary Wàlters Special: Oprah, The Next Chapter.” “The reason why it irritates me is because it means that somebody must think I’m lying. That’s number one,” Winfrey told Walters. “Number two...why would you want to hide it? That is not the way I run my life.”

I also realize that constantly labeling same-gender relationships as gay, it diminishes and distorts the romantic relationships we LGBTQ people have with our significant others. As a matter-of-fact, constantly labeling same-gender relationships as gay not only wrongly assumes that the only reason for two people of the same gender getting together is for sex, but it also keeps in place the myth of the hypersexual and predatory LGBTQ person.

However, “Sesame Street’s” is an open classroom for our kids, reflecting the times. Same-sex marriage is one of the social issues of the day. How will “Sesame Street” explain to children in same-gender families and households why Miss Piggy and Kermit the frog can marry, but Bert and Ernie can’t?

I’m going with Mark Saltman’s said that when he wrote Bert and Ernie episodes for Sesame Street, he thought of them as gay. “I, do, too!”

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Continued from page 7

Photo Credit Christine M. Hurley
If you missed the Emmy Awards, you weren’t alone. Not only were the ratings down 11 percent from last year, they hit an all-time low. But don’t take these numbers as a waning interest solely in television—ratings for this year’s Oscars telecast were down 19 percent, while the Grammys tanked more than 25 percent. The decline for a televised awards show about television is also deceptive—the vast majority of nominees were for cable and streaming services, while the show was hosted by “Saturday Night Live” cast members on NBC. Relevancy is as hot a topic as diversity, which was the theme of the Emmy’s opening musical number.

Since most of you missed the show, here are some of my highlights. Jennifer Lewis showed her support for Colin Kaepernick by arriving clad head-to-toe in Nike (and she threw in a high kick on the red carpet just to show those bastards she still could). After his first nomination 42 years ago, Henry Winkler finally won an Emmy! I’m not entirely sure Betty White knew where she was, but she managed to pull it off...even though she was dangerously close to exclaiming, “Gladiator!” RuPaul presented an award with Leslie Jones. Girl, would it kill you to wear a gown? Yes, I’m talking to you, Leslie! As to Ru, congrats on making history by winning the “Reparation Emmys” sketch. Why is it that Ru never misses an opportunity to remind us he’s straight. I LOVED Darren Criss recently starred in a reading of Nick Jonas’ new play, “The Hunt for the Trump Tapes with Tom Arnold”. Both men arrived at a pre-Emmys party at the same time. Arnold claims Burnett attacked him. Police were called, and Arnold Tweeted: “Mark Burnett just went ape-shit & choked me at this huge Emmy Party then he ran away with his porn Pink shirt & missing gold chain. I’m waiting for LAPD.” We got an eyewitness account from Alyson Hannigan, who Tweeted, “Walked n2 party behind Tom Arnold and saw him & Mark Burnett get into a fight! Thought it was a joke until security jumped in.” Security did indeed step in, spoke to both Arnold and Burnett, and then allowed both men to enter the party, Burnett’s wife, Roma Downey Jr., also chimed in via Twitter. “Got this bruise tonight when Tom Arnold tried to ambush my husband Mark and me at an Emmy party. Is your TV show worth it Tom? Please stop.” Arnold, never one to not fight back, said, “Bullshit. You lie your crazy husband attacked me you psycho. I’m filing police report & suing you for defamation.” Reportedly the fight started when Burnett overheard Arnold bragging to onlookers that he got his hands on “Apprentice” tapes and passed them along to Ronan Farrow. I’ll believe that when I see it.

One expose which Farrow will probably skip is an extensive feature of his "father" (cause with Mia Farrow, who really knows) Woody Allen and half-sister Soon-Yi Previn which ran in "New York" magazine (as opposed to "The New Yorker", which publishes Farrow’s pieces). The timing of Soon-Yi’s emergence from the shadows is curious since many consider her the original #MeToo poster child. But that’s not how she sees herself. She once again reminds us that she was adopted by Mia Farrow and never treated the same as the actress’ biological children. “There was a hierarchy,” She first met Woody Allen at 10. It didn’t go well. “Woody wasn’t interested in meeting us children. And the feeling was mutual; we weren’t interested in meeting him. I hated him because he was with my mother, and I didn’t understand why anyone could be with such a nasty, mean person. I thought he must be the same way.” While Mia and Woody dated, they never lived together—Woody maintained an apartment across Central Park and never even spent the night. “We didn’t think of him as a father, and he didn’t even have clothing at our house, not even a toothbrush.” But Allen and Soon-Yi eventually did bond over sports—in fact, it was Mia who suggested the girl accompany Woody to Knicks games. Still, she just saw him as a family friend. “I already had a father. He was André Previn, and Mia never married Woody, nor did they ever live together. He was my mother’s boyfriend, plain and simple,” And from those little sprouts. They’ve now been together close to 30 years.

I am proud to announce what is likely destined to be one of this year’s Billy’s Holiday Gift Giving Suggestions—the Stormy Daniels Comic Book, "Political Power: Stormy Daniels" is available.
World briefs

Singapore DJ mounts challenge of colonial-era anti-gay law

By ANNABELLE LIANG
Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP)—A Singaporean disc jockey is challenging a law that bans sex between men, a holdover from British colonial days that conservatives insist on keeping but authorities have promised not to enforce.

The case brought this week by Johnson Ong, whose stage name is DJ Big Kid, is the first against the anti-gay law since an appeal by his lawyer was dismissed not to enforce.

days that conservatives insist on keeping but authorities have promised not to enforce.

The law, known as Section 377A, states that acts of “gross indecency” between men are punishable with a jail term of up to two years.

Homosexuality is quietly tolerated in Singapore. However, discrimination remains rife, although it is often subtle and masked under the need to protect a pro-family Asian culture.

Singapore’s leaders have said they will not enforce Section 377A, but have been reluctant to remove it from the books for fear of angering conservatives.

This uncomfortable balance was rattled last Thursday, when India’s Supreme Court struck down a British colonial-era law that made intercourse between members of the same sex punishable.

The judges held that sexual orientation was a “biological phe-

They felt like an hour, and I wondered if I’d had a psychotic break. I felt only fatigue, the result of a poor night’s sleep, and nothing more.

I was almost back home when the edibles hit. Evidently, they made intercourse between members of the same sex punishable.

By Monday morning I was no longer high, but I wasted two days that conservatives insist on keeping but authorities have promised not to enforce.

I sat around, hung out, and felt nothing, so I went to another booth, which featured pre-packaged gummies. The gummies looked like candy, but according to the twenty-something man who was selling them, they (the whole package) contained about as much marijuana as three or four joints. I did the math (not very well, as it turned out) and popped one in my mouth. I walked around some more, and as I prepared to head home I took another one, since I felt only fatigue, the result of a poor night’s sleep, and nothing more.

I was almost back home when the edibles hit. Evidently, they take time to have the desired effect, or in my case, to get much more than I bargained for. Suddenly I wasn’t sure what was real and what was on my mind’s distortion.

By Monday morning I was no longer high, but I wasted two more days as I slowly tried to regain my energy and some sense of balance while recovering from my ‘trip’. Now, looking back on the whole experience I am surprised—almost shocked -- by my naivete. I’m a sixty-year-old man making the rookie mistakes I could (and perhaps should) have made when I was in my twenties.

Still, a week later, I can say that I emerged relatively unscathed. And that recreational marijuana will not be part of my golden years.
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nomenon” and that discrimination on that basis violated fundamental rights.

Ong said Wednesday that the Singapore law has weighed on his relationship with his family.

“Though they love me and treat my partner with respect, they do not accept my homosexuality, so our relationship is constantly strained, and I am not able to completely share my life, struggles or successes with them,” Ong said in an interview.

“I am considered a criminal in the eyes of the law and that is an emotional and psychological burden that I carry around as I go through life that no heterosexual Singaporean has to.”

Ong will be represented by lawyer Eugene Thuraisingam, who filed the case on Monday. Thuraisingam said he aims to prove the law violates the Constitution. An online petition to keep the law, launched on Saturday, has gathered over 95,000 signatures. A petition for the law’s repeal, backed by a range of activist groups, has around a third of those signatures.

Indian star Abhishek Bachchan on a victory for gay rights

By JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press

TORONTO (AP)—Bollywood star Abhishek Bachchan is cheering India’s decision to strike down a ban on consensual gay sex, calling it “a wonderful step in the right direction.”

India’s Supreme Court last week reversed a colonial-era law that made gay sex punishable by up to 10 years in prison, a landmark victory for gay rights that one judge said would “pave the way for a better future.”

Bachchan, at the Toronto Film Festival, agreed: “It shows the kind of progression that is happening in India, especially from the mindset of the youth,” he said Tuesday.

While Bachchan said some Indian films have dealt with the issue of homosexuality, Indian cinema is generally not political.

“Indian cinema, by and large, is very escapist by nature. You go in to a film, you want a laugh and a cry. You want to fall in love. You want to hate. You want to see some action,” he said. “I think the function of Indian cinema is to come in forget your worries for three hours.”

Bachchan’s latest film, “Manmarziyaan,” or “Husband Material,” is a quirky love triangle also starring Taapsee Pannu and Vicky Kaushal. It’s directed by Anurag Kashyap.

“Indian characters more accessible. But sometimes you have to learn to laugh at something outwardly to offend a particular community. But look—it’s `The Simpsons,’ OK? It’s something for everybody,” he said. “Let’s not do something outwardly to offend a particular community. But look—it’s `The Simpsons,’ OK? It’s not life changing. You have to learn to laugh at essential Indian cinema with its usual tropes, and a cinema that is also coming out of India, which is more accessible and understandable.”

“I liked the fact that it’s a marriage of two worlds—Anurag’s more contemporary world with a very Indian backbone to the story.”

Bachchan is happy that Indian cinema continues to grow outside the country and has made Indian characters more accessible. But sometimes the characters become negative stereotypes. One example, is Apu, the convenience store owner on Fox television series, “The Simpsons.” The character has come under fire as racist and stereotypical.

Bachchan, who attended college in America and who has long watched “The Simpsons,” thinks the backlash may be going too far.

“I don’t make too much of a deal of it. I think somewhere we’re getting a bit too highly sensitive about everything,” he said. “Let’s not do something outwardly to offend a particular community. But look—it’s `The Simpsons,’ OK? It’s not life changing. You have to learn to laugh at
Masters
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digitally and in two collective and one hardcover edition on Amazon. It’s not what one would call heavy reading—the 24-page comic will likely hold the attention of an 8-year-old boy or a 72-year-old Commander in Chief. Written and drawn by Joe Paradise, it chronicles Stormy’s “journey from scrappy opportunist to unlikely feminist icon.” The artist kinda made Stormy look like Pamela Anderson as “Stripperella” or “Barb Wire”, and shows her in such situations as spanking a sitting president. We’ll show some of the more choice illustrations on BillyMasters.com.

Adam Rippon is officially an American treasure. Last week, he announced (on Twitter, of course) the following: “Pretty cool to soon have something on display in the American History Museum. Now, I just need to convince someone that they need to be next to the ruby slippers.”

Rippon donated his Olympic costume and skates to the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History.

I’d say “Sesame Street” qualifies as an American treasure. And I’d place Bert and Ernie near the top of the list of indelible inhabitants. Everyone in a while, people wonder whether the “roommates” are gay or straight. Former “Sesame” author once in a while, people wonder whether the “roommates” are gay or straight. Former “Sesame” author. Ev-


can treasure. And I’d place

the Smithsonian Institution’s National Mu-

seum of American History.

To the Smithsonian Institution’s National Mu-

seum of American History.

The one film you have to see FIRST is

Bar-

make of “A Star Is Born”, many media outlets say

an ambivalent amphibian...Kermit.

With all the buzz about Bradley Cooper’s re-

make of “A Star Is Born”, many media outlets say

that the one film you have to see FIRST is Bar-

bra Streisand’s remake of “A Star Is Born”. The

1976 version has been available in the home vid-

eo market for years. However, Streisand recently

remastered it, added in some deleted scenes, and

spun it up for Netflix. Well, you didn’t expect

her to sit back and let Lady Gaga have a moment, did you?

After being MIA for five years, Richard Sim-

mons has announced that he’s making a come-

back—with his own channel on TalkShop-live

called “Richard Simmons Swatin’ Shop”. We’re

told it’ll be a cross between social media and

home shopping, with Simmons’ full support and

involvement. Well, not his “full involvement”.

While he is picking the items for sale, he has

no plans to appear on the channel—he’ll have

friends and business associates do the heavy lif-

ing. There are rumors of an occasional phone-in

segment, but I’ll believe that when I see/hear it.

When I heard that Cicely Tyson was receiving

an Honoray Oscar, I was sure it was for her stir-

ring performance at Aretha’s Funeral—but, of

course, that wasn’t a film (but it might as well

have been). This particular honor is for her body

of work on the silver screen. The presentation will

take place at the 10th Annual Governors Award

on November 18th—because, of course, they

don’t have time to give it out during the Oscars telecast.

Romania top court approves referendum on marriage definition

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP)—Romania’s top court has given a green light to a referendum

that could change the constitution to explicitly state that marriage is a union between a man and a woman.

The Constitutional Court decided Monday in a 7-2 vote that there is no legal impediment for the Oct. 7 referendum.

Senators approved the referendum last week, after 3 million Romanians signed a petition demanding a constitutional amendment redefining marriage, which is currently defined as a union between “spouses.”

Some lawmakers in this socially conservative Eastern European state argue that the constitution should be changed on religious grounds.

Groups advocating for equality for same-sex couples have condemned the referendum, which needs a turnout of 30 percent to be valid.

Romania doesn’t recognize same-sex marriage or offer legal protection to same-sex couples.

Those of you in Southern California will want to save the date of October 6th. That’s when the AC Gallery in Hollywood will host a “red carpet” life celebration of Tab Hunter, which will coincide with a series of life-size paintings of the actor by video director Vance Lorenzini. Hunter’s partner, Allan Glaser, came up with the idea of remembering Tab with this event, which will start at 6PM. The exhibition runs through November 28th.

When we’re saying goodbye to Tab (the actor, not the drink), it’s time to end yet another column. And what a long column it was. I barely have time to remind you to check out www.BillyMasters.com—the site that doesn’t need re-

Mastering. As always, send your questions to me at Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Ernie and Bert get married in a very special episode of “Sesame Street.” So, until next time, remember, one man’s filth is another man’s bible.
Fall 2018 LGBT Bereavement Groups (FREE): 3 Locations
For lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people of any age who are experiencing the loss of a parent, friend, partner/spouse, family member or other loved one.

Boston Group:
Thursday Evenings 6.00 pm to 7.30 pm
November 1 to Jan 3
Location: Jamaica Plain, MA
Registration: Call Bob Linscott 857.313.6578
Co-sponsored by: Ethos

MetroWest Group:
Thursday Evenings 6.00 pm to 7.30 pm
November 1 to Jan 3
Location: Marlborough, MA
Registration: Call Bob Linscott 857.313.6578
Co-Sponsored by BayPath and MetroWest Hospice

Cape Cod Group:
Wednesday Afternoons 3.00 pm to 4.30 pm
Nov 7 to Jan 16
Location: Barnstable, MA
Registration: Call Bob Linscott 857.313.6578
Co-Sponsored by Barnstable Council on Aging

About the LGBT Bereavement Program:
The LGBT Bereavement Groups are funded by the Mass Department of Public Health and facilitated by The LGBT Aging Project, a program of The Fenway Institute. All groups are free, run for 8 weeks and are open to people of all ages. Bereavement groups require pre-registration. For more information on the LGBT Bereavement Program contact Bob Linscott at BLinscott@fenwayhealth.org
Fall 2018 groups will run through the holiday season which can be a difficult time for many.

My Life in the Late Middle Ages
A humorous one-man show about a gay writer who is going deaf, can’t sleep, and is looking for love in an ageist world.

Judah Leblang’s
It’s Now or Never!

Thursday, October 18, 7:30 PM
Friday, October 19, 8:30 PM
Saturday, October 20, 7:30 PM

The Piano Craft Gallery
793 Tremont Street
(South End)
Boston MA 02118

Tickets $15 each at
www.judahleblang.com/tickets
or $18 suggested donation at the door

Questions? Media inquires? Call 617-466-9637