Almost extraordinary is still superb

Extraordinary: Celebrating 10 Years of Musical Theater,
American Repertory Theatre, Loeb Drama Center, Cambridge, through November 30. 617-547-8300 or americanrepertorytheater.org

By Jules Becker

Over the years, American Repertory Theatre has won well-deserved acclaim for inspired revivals of such diverse masterworks as Harold Pinter’s "The Homecoming," and Jean Racine’s "Britannicus" and envelope-pushing plays like Marsha Norman’s "night, Mother" and "Fingersmith."

For the last decade, through the impressive efforts of artistic director Diane Paulus, musicals have become the company’s stand out focus (notwithstanding stellar re-examinations of Tennessee Williams’ "The Glass Menagerie" and "The Night of the see EXTRAORDINARY, page 7

Griffin to leave HRC

By JULIE PACE
AP Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON (AP)—Chad Griffin, the influential LGBTQ activist who helped turn the Human Rights Campaign into a powerful political force, announced Thursday that he is stepping down as the organization’s president.

Griffin’s announcement follows a midterm election in which the group invested heavily in Democratic campaigns. The capstone for the organization came this week, when Rep. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., won a close Senate race, becoming the first openly bisexual person elected to the Senate.

Griffin has spent seven years at the helm of HRC, steering the organization through the landmark Supreme Court ruling in favor of gay marriage see GRIFFIN, page 2

Transgender Day of Remembrance

Submitted by Boston Pride

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) was observed on Tuesday, November 20. TDOR memorializes trans individuals who have died because of transphobia and acts of violence against the trans community. TDOR was inspired by the vigil held for Rita Hester, a trans woman from Allston, MA, who was murdered in 1998, exactly 20 years ago on November 20.

Boston's transgender community remembers local victims Chanelle Pickett, Debra Foster, Monique Thomas, Georgette Hart, Diane Carter, Denise Pugliesi, Monique Rogers, Lisa Daniels, Rita Hester, CJ Garber, Christa Leigh Steele-Knudsen, and too many more.

In 2018, 22 transgender individuals have already been fatally shot or killed by other violent means. We remember them all and #saytheirnames: Christa Leigh Steele-Knudsen, Vickie Gutierrez, Celine Walker, Tonya Harvey, Zakaria Fry, Phylicia Mitchell, Amla Tyre Berryman, Sasha Wall, Karla Patricia Flores-Pavón, Nino Fortson, Gigi Pierce, Antash’a English, Diamond Stephens, Cathalina Christina James, Keisha Wells, Sasha Garden, Vontasha Bell, Dejanay Stanton, Shantee Tucker, Londonn Moore, Nikki Enriquez, and Ciara Minaj Carter Frazier.

Thanksgiving: The original hate crime

by Rev. Irene Monroe
contributing writer

Thanksgiving is an excellent time to give a closer look at the rising escalation of hate crimes in America—its origin and its legacy.

America’s origin of hate crimes can be traced with the treatment of Native Americans and how America celebrates Thanksgiving. For many Native Americans, Thanksgiving is not a cause of celebration, but rather a National Day of Mourning.

The Pilgrims, who sought refuge here in America from religious persecution in their homeland, were right in their dogged pursuit of religious liberty. But their actual practice of religious see MONROE, page 3

"Broadway's Disastrous 'King Kong' is a $35 million crime against puppets."

—Rex Reed’s headline for his review of "King Kong: The Musical". I haven’t read any further, so don’t ruin it for me. But do you think he likes it?

find Billy Masters on page 6!
Wake Me Up When It’s Over
by Judah Leblang | www.JudahLeblang.com
contributing writer

I’ve always had a love-hate relationship with the holidays, at least during my adult years. Being single, without a traditional family or husband, I often feel adrift, on the outside looking in. And since I don’t celebrate Christmas—and Chanukah is a minor holiday, primarily for children—I don’t seem to fit anywhere during the dark days of December.

During my 20s and 30s, I would sink into my annual depression by Thanksgiving. After all, everyone else seemed to be having so much fun, while I just tried to distract myself, focusing on work, the gym, and watching lame TV shows. But over time, I learned to make peace with the Christmas season. In some ways I was lucky; I could avoid the December retail madness, and had few family obligations. And having my staff job at a local college meant that I got almost two weeks off every December, during which I could read, write, and get together with friends who were on vacation like me.

Two years ago, I left my day job, and now I naturally spend more time alone. I planned to use that time to write, to create, and to do the many activities I had put off while I was caught up in the day-to-day grind of a full-time job. In truth, I was more productive and more efficient when I wrote and created around my work schedule; the work provided a structure I needed.

I realize that I’m fortunate to be semi-retired in my early 60s, especially when I love the part-time work I’m doing, teaching memoir writing to adults and helping them tell their stories. But my classes go on hiatus in December, and this year I’m dreading my downtime. In late August, my younger brother died after a year-long battle with a rare form of liver cancer. Though almost three months have passed since that day, and his death was not unexpected, I feel particularly raw this holiday season. I’ve been coping with the loss by teaching, through my twice-weekly singing gigs with a choir, and (to be honest) heavy doses of Netflix.

Now, my work is drying up as the Christmas season kicks into high gear, and my impulse is to hibernate, to use the cold weather and darkness as an excuse to isolate myself. Yet I know isolation will only lead back to the depression and loneliness that marked the holidays when I was a young man, and I don’t want to repeat that pattern, to ‘go there’.

My only alternative is to reach out, and to resist my introvert’s tendency to stay alone, since (at least in the short term) it takes less energy than getting out and asking for what I need or want. That means talking to my friends, both new and old, and ‘fessing up to them that I need help. My male pride or ego tells me that asking for what I need is a weakness; I should just ‘suck it up’ and muddle through. But my life experience, the hard-won knowledge that comes with getting older, tells me something else—that I can’t, and don’t really want to manage the holidays totally on my own.

Now, every few days, I pull out my daily planner and fill something in—a concert, dinner with a friend—as I find my own way of getting through this holiday season, and of saying goodbye to 2018.

I won’t be sorry to see it end.

Judah Leblang is a writer, teacher and storyteller in Boston. He will be reading from his upcoming memoir, “Echoes of Jerry,” along with two other local writers at Outpost 186 in Inman Square, Cambridge, December 5 at 8 pm. More info at http://bit.ly/2019stories

Griffin

Far-right video game spreads hate
By Mark Segal

If you want to know what the far right that supports President Trump thinks of you, they want you dead. You think I’m kidding. Well, ask, “Who would promote such a game?” Those far-right websites that Donald Trump loves to support and quote. And as of this writing, the far-right websites that Donald Trump loves to support and quote. And as of this writing, the far-right websites that Donald Trump loves to support and quote. It really wasn’t enough for him for elected officials and candidates to respect the LGBTQ community. “History will show that Chad was a leader in the moment he was needed to lead,” Harris said in an interview.

Griffin hasn’t said what he plans to do next. He is expected to stay at HRC until the organization names a new president; that process could take several months. A prolific fundraiser with deep political ties, Griffin probably will become one of the most sought after advisers for Democrats preparing to undertake White House campaigns. “Every person in the Democratic Party who is thinking of running for president is going to call Chad,” said Dan Pfeiffer, a White House adviser to President Barack Obama and longtime friend of Griffin.

Harris, who is considering a 2020 presidential campaign, demurred when asked if she would hire Griffin, saying only that she hadn’t made a decision on entering the race. During Griffin’s tenure, HRC invested heavily in campaign work across the country, including a $26 million effort to send staff to all 50 states during the midterms. The organization said it registered more than 32,000 new voters since the 2016 election. Griffin’s supporters credited him with plunging HRC more deeply into the political arena and pushing Democratic politicians in particular to do more than just pay lip service to gay rights issues.

“It really wasn’t enough for him for elected officials and candidates to respect the LGBTQ community,” said Kristina Schake, Griffin’s former business partner. “He wanted them to fear them—to fear the power of their vote.”

Griffin, 45, got his start in politics working in President Bill Clinton’s White House press office. Before joining HRC, he was co-founder of the American Foundation for Equal Rights, an organization that challenged the California law banning same-sex marriage. That effort was a precursor to the Supreme Court’s verdict on gay marriage nationwide.

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Case reveals shame, trauma of male sex trafficking victims

By DAVE COLLINS
Associated Press

TOLLAND, Conn. (AP)—Like many victims of a Connecticut sex trafficking ring that preyed on troubled young men and teenage boys for more than 20 years, Samuel Marino never told his family or police about being coerced into sexual relations with much older men.

Marino ended up carjacking vehicles from two different women in 2009 and leading police on a chase that left him dead at just 26 years old. In a handwritten note found years later in a raid on one of the suspected sex trafficking ring leader’s homes, Marino wrote he was angry, ashamed and disgusted at how he was taken advantage of.

“He couldn’t deal with the torture and the shame of being prostituted and also of being an addict,” said his mother, Linda Marino, who found out about the sex trafficking only after the arrests were announced two years ago. “I’m sure he felt hopelessness and despair. The pain of not being able to help my son Sam when he was going through this is insurmountable.”

Police said they identified at least 15 victims of the Connecticut trafficking ring but believe there could be dozens more. The operation appeared to date to the 1990s and was discovered only after a state probation officer reported it to authorities in January 2016. Police said one of the victims had told the probation officer about being trafficked, officials said. Two men have pleaded guilty to trafficking-related charges and a third is expected to go on trial early next year.

The case has illuminated what victims and advocates call the underreported scourge of male sex trafficking. While both male and female trafficking victims suffer trauma and other psychological scars, data suggest men and boys are less likely to come forward and when they do they are more likely to have difficulties finding counseling and other services, victims and advocates say.

The suspects targeted teenage boys and young men who were developmentally disabled, mentally ill and addicted to drugs, police said. One of the defendants, Robert King, found some of his victims at drug rehab centers. He would allegedly give them drugs, including heroin and cocaine, and take them to other men for sex acts so they could earn money to pay him back for the drugs, according to arrest warrants.

King, 53, of Danbury, pleaded guilty in August to conspiracy to commit human trafficking and is expected to be sentenced to 4 1/2 years in prison after cooperating in the trial of another defendant, wealthy Glastonbury businessman Bruce Berner, whose lawyers said he is not guilty of the charges. A third defendant, William Tre- fizer, 74, of Westport, pleaded guilty in February to patronizing a trafficked person and was sentenced to a year in prison.

The trafficking ring left behind a trail of devastation. The victims suffer a variety of psychological ailments including post-traumatic stress disorder and repeated flashbacks, according to lawsuits filed by several victims. And their families continue coping with the trauma.

TRAVEL

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lodging information
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parking private bath-rooms
free parking
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TRAVEL

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508.487.0094

WATERSHIRE INN
www.watershireinn.com
Sedgwick County's new GOP chairman says he's gay

WICHITA, Kan. (AP)—The chairman of the Republican organization in Kansas' second-largest county says he decided to come out as gay after a back-channel campaign against him.

Dalton Glasscock is a 24-year-old former congressional aide to U.S. Rep. Ron Estes who was recently elected chairman of the Sedgwick County Republicans. Glasscock told The Wichita Eagle Thursday that he decided to come out after those opposing him circulated texts and emails to precinct committee members identifying him as “homosexual.”

Glasscock says his decision is worth it if it inspires even one other young person to be honest about their sexual orientation.

Glasscock says he looks forward to bringing new energy and unity to the part.


Judge dismisses lawsuits by victims in nightclub massacre

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—A federal judge is dismissing two lawsuits brought by survivors and victims' families of a deadly nightclub massacre in Florida.

The lawsuits alleged that the city of Orlando, police officers and an off-duty police officer working security at the gay nightclub didn’t do enough to stop the shooter and protect patrons.

The 2016 massacre at the Pulse nightclub left 49 people dead and 53 others injured.

In dismissing the lawsuits Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Paul Byron said the off-duty officer’s actions didn’t rise to the level of egregious behavior and that he has qualified immunity. The judge also said the allegations against the city failed to make a “plausible claim.”

An attorney for some of the plaintiffs said in a statement they are exploring whether to appeal the judge’s decision.

Acting AG faced criticism for case against gay Iowa Democrat

BY RYAN J. FOLEY
Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP)—In 2007, Matt McCoy was a rising star in the Democratic Party, Iowa’s first openly gay senator and a leading champion for the party’s causes.

But then, his allies say, McCoy’s promising career was stalled by a politically motivated federal prosecution brought by a Republican U.S. attorney, Matthew G. Whitaker, who on Wednesday became the nation’s top law enforcement official after President Donald Trump named him acting attorney general.

The case against McCoy fell apart in court amid allegations of political bias and prosecutorial misconduct. A jury quickly acquitted McCoy of the criminal charge, deciding that he had not attempted to extort money from a former business partner.

In an interview Thursday, McCoy said he was shocked by Whitaker’s decision to lead the Justice Department. He said his case should serve as a warning that Whitaker “will serve our country well.”

Mc McCoy faced prosecution when Whitaker was a George W. Bush appointee serving as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Iowa based in Des Moines. Democrats have alleged that it was one of several prosecutions of local officials brought during the Bush years that were tainted by political considerations—an allegation that Whitaker has denied.

Whitaker announced at a news conference in March 2007 that a grand jury had charged McCoy with attempted extortion by an elected official, an offense that carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. He alleged that McCoy demanded and accepted $2,000 in payments from a businessman seeking to obtain a waiver to sell home security products for the elderly to Iowa’s Medicaid program, threatening to block state business if he wasn’t paid.

Whitaker’s office and the FBI spent months building a case against McCoy after Thomas Vasquez, a salesman with a history of financial, domestic and substance abuse problems, alleged that McCoy was trying to shake him down. Vasquez later agreed to be a paid informant, recording several conversations with McCoy and making what prosecutors called “bribe payments” to McCoy with money supplied by the FBI.

McCoy argued the indictment was based on out-of-context snippets of 12 hours of recorded conversations, and that his actions had an innocent explanation that his legal team shared with Whitaker early on.

In addition to being a senator, McCoy operated a consulting business. He said Vasquez, an acquaintance he met through Alcoholics Anonymous, had asked him to help market the security products as a consultant and he agreed. They signed a contract in which McCoy would be paid $100 for each unit sold. Vasquez went to the FBI after their relationship soured. McCoy said that he later accepted payments from Vasquez because he believed that he was following through with their deal.

His lawyers argued that Whitaker’s office committed prosecutorial misconduct by not playing for the grand jury parts of the recordings that were exculpatory—such as declining one payment from Vasquez and directing him to write checks to his company. Whitaker’s office denied any wrongdoing. But it did acknowledge that one of its prosecutors made a mistake in withholding information that showed the FBI repeatedly paid Vasquez cash for his cooperation—information that came out weeks before trial and stunned the defense. Vasquez, who had filed for bankruptcy in 2001, testified at a pretrial hearing that he likely used some of the FBI money to buy drugs.

A federal judge declined to dismiss the case, ruling that any problems with the prosecution didn’t rise to the high bar needed to grant that remedy.

After a nine-day trial, jurors returned their acquittal within two hours—including a long lunch break. McCoy’s supporters cheered outside the courthouse. But by then, McCoy had exhausted all of his liquid assets paying buy drugs.

One of his former attorneys, Marc Beltrame, recalled that some jurors felt so bad for McCoy’s ordeal that they had emotional scars.”

The city's law department declined comment because they are exploring whether to appeal the judge's decision, saying: “All of the evidence was heard by the jury in open court and they have rendered their decision.”

McCoy said that he continues to suffer from the reputational damage and is still paying off the $100,000 in legal fees he incurred fighting the charge. When he was considering a run for Congress last year in a seat a Democrat captured in Tuesday's election, a national publication brought his indictment back up in what he called a damaging story. He opted not to run for Congress and campaigned for the Polk County Board of Supervisors instead, ousting its longtime chairman in the Democratic primary earlier this year.

McCoy said he believes Whitaker pursued him in part because of his openly gay lifestyle. He noted that Whitaker was a keynote speaker while he was U.S. attorney at an event for the Christian Coalition, which opposes gay rights.

“Tempted extortion by an elected official, an offense that any problems with the prosecution didn’t rise to the level of egregious behavior and that he has qualified immunity. The judge also said the allegations against the city failed to make a ‘plausible claim.’”

An attorney for some of the plaintiffs said in a statement they are exploring whether to appeal the judge’s decision.

Episcopal bishop confirms support for gay marriages

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP)—An Episcopal bishop in central New York says her diocese will continue to support same-sex marriages despite her counterpart in Albany issuing a pastoral directive against it.

The Rev. DeDe Duncan-Probe tells Syracuse.com the Rev. William Love in Albany “may have wounded people” when he said Saturday that the church has been “hijacked by the ‘Gay Rights Agenda.’”

Love’s opposition comes three weeks before a resolution goes into effect setting new rules for same-sex marriages in Episcopal churches nationwide.

The rules give bishops with objections to same-sex marriages the option to have other clergy perform services.

Duncan-Probe says it’s too soon to tell if the Syracuse clergy would preside over same-sex marriages in Albany.

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said Monday he is reviewing how the church will proceed.

Judge lets suit targeting Chicago law on breasts to proceed

CHICAGO (AP)—A federal judge has given a green light to a transgender performance artist’s lawsuit challenging a Chicago ordinance prohibiting women but not men from exposing their breasts in certain public venues.

The Chicago Daily Law Bulletin reports the ruling rejects a city request to toss the suit. To prevail, Bea Sullivan-Knoff must still prove at a trial that the ordinance violates her constitutional rights and Illinois law.

Last week’s ruling says one legitimate question is whether the ordinance is too vague. Sullivan-Knoff argues it doesn’t indicate how police are supposed decide when transgender individuals have female breasts or when someone identifying as male no longer has female breasts. She says the ordinance limits her options about where to perform.

The city’s law department declined comment because the litigation is ongoing.
## Thanksgiving Week Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>12pm–8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>10am–10pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues &amp; Wed</td>
<td>10am–11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri &amp; Sat</td>
<td>10am–11pm</td>
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## Liquor

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jack Daniels</td>
<td>1.75L</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnnie Walker Black</td>
<td>1.75L</td>
<td>$59.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dewar’s White Label</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanqueray Gin</td>
<td>1.75L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smirnoff 80° &amp; Fl</td>
<td>1.75L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bacardi Light &amp; Dark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captain Morgan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolut 80° &amp; Fl</td>
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<td>$22.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bombay Sapphire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paton Silver</td>
<td>750ML</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Beam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ketel One</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remy Martin VSOP</td>
<td>750ML</td>
<td>$36.99</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Larceny Bourbon</td>
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<td>Salignac VS</td>
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## Cordials & Liqueurs

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<tr>
<td>Baileys Irish Cream</td>
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<td>Old New England Egg Nog</td>
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<td>Hennessy</td>
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<td>$13.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahlua Coffee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aperol Orange Liquor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romana Sambuca</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frangelico</td>
<td>750ML</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Marnier</td>
<td>750ML</td>
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## Wine & Sparkling

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</thead>
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<td>$16.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relax Riesling</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark West P. Noir/Grigio</td>
<td>750ML</td>
<td>$7.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kris Pinot Grigio</td>
<td>750ML</td>
<td>$8.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apothic (Excludes Inferno)</td>
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<td>$7.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louis Martini Sonoma Cab</td>
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<td>Bogle Phantom Red</td>
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<td>Josh Cabernet</td>
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<td>Kim Crawford Sonoma Cab</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kendall Jackson VTRS Chard</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyster Bay Sauv Blanc</td>
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<td>Bota All 3L Box</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellow Tail All 1.5L</td>
<td>750ML</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barefoot All 1.5L</td>
<td>750ML</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stella Rosa Moscato D’Asti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruffino Prosecco</td>
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<td>La Marca Prosecco</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luc Belair All Sparkling</td>
<td>750ML</td>
<td>$23.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moet Imperial</td>
<td>750ML</td>
<td>$37.99</td>
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## Beer

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sam Adams All 12PK Btls</td>
<td></td>
<td>$12.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Moon All 12PK Btls</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpoon All 12PK Btls</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stella Artois 12PK Btls</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corona Reg &amp; Lt 24PK Btls</td>
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<td>$24.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heineken Reg &amp; Lt 24 Loose PK Btls</td>
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<td>$24.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coors Light 30PK Cans</td>
<td></td>
<td>$22.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bud &amp; Bud Light 30PK Cans</td>
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<td>$22.99</td>
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</table>

### Notes
- **MEIOMI PINOT NOIR 750ML...$16.99**
- **RELAX RIESLING 750ML...$7.99**
- **MARK WEST P. NOIR/GRIGIO 750ML...$7.99**
- **KRIS PINOT GRIGIO 750ML...$8.99**
- **APOTHIC (EXCLUDES INFERNO) 750ML...$7.99**
- **LOUIS MARTINI SONOMA CAB 750ML...$12.99**
- **BOGLE PHANTOM RED 750ML...$12.99**
- **JOSH CABERNET 750ML...$10.99**
- **KIM CRAWFORD SAUV BLANC 750ML...$11.99**
- **KENDALL JACKSON VTRS CHARD 750ML...$10.99**
- **OYSTER BAY SAUV BLANC 750ML...$9.99**
- **BOTA ALL 3L BOX...$15.99**
- **YELLOW TAIL ALL 1.5L...$9.99**
- **BAREFOOT ALL 1.5L...$9.99**
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**Notes:** Not responsible for typographical errors. We reserve the right to limit quantities.
Usually I wait till the end of my Thanksgiving column to give thanks. But you know what? I’m thankful right off the bat. I’m thankful to be alive (more on that later), and I’m thankful you’re reading this column. And, well... that’s it. Typically I’m a greedy bitch, but that just about covers it.

Last week, I was pretty much everywhere. From Los Angeles to Boston to NYC to New Hope, PA, and back. I’ll spare you the drama, the white-out conditions, the frigid temperatures, and the detour to Secaucus (oh, the humanity). On Broadway, I caught one of the last performances of “Bernhardt/Hamlet”. The play by Theresa Rebeck (who, among other things, wrote the first season of “Smash”) has good material, and an even better cast. There’s a terrific story there, but it gets sidetracked into women’s lib chatter. You see, the legendary actress Sarah Bernhardt may well have been for women’s lib. After all, she believed women could do whatever men could...and better. But she didn’t go around fighting for all women—she just did what she wanted. This is one of the reasons she wanted to play “Hamlet”. Thank goodness for Janet McTeer, who is brilliant as the divine Sarah. She makes something out of almost everything—except for the opening of the second act where she was felled by a mysterious malady which led to her being assisted off the stage. House lights came on, and an announcement was made that the show would resume momentarily. Within five minutes, the lights dimmed, and McTeer entered, picking up where she left off—but not before saying, “You weren’t going to get off that easily”. It’s a flawed play about a fascinating moment in theatrical history starring a true legend.

The next day, I saw another legendary lady in another play about “Hamlet”. The play was Paul Rudnick’s “I Hate Hamlet”, and the actress was the incandescent Elizabeth Ashley. There are few people I would risk life and limb to see in a blizzard. But Miss Ashley tops that list. Whenever she hits the stage, it crackles with excitement. And when a mishap occurs—such as awkwardly sitting on a sofa—she reacts as she would in real life. “My dear, your chase is quite low,” she ad-libbed in a German accent she claimed was right out of “Hogan’s Heroes”! The Bucks County Playhouse has assembled a great cast for this play about a TV actor tackling Shakespeare (the run ends on December 1st). When I was in college, I understudied the role of Andrew—played here by the adorable Ben Fankhauser. Ben is terrific. I would have been awful! Even as a youngster, I knew THE role was the ghost of John Barrymore. Tom Hewitt devours this scene-stealing role, and yet he never crosses the line into farce. And playing this part has one enormous perk—he gets to seduce Elizabeth Ashley! “Am I a lucky guy or what? I can check that off my list,” he told me afterwards with a huge grin. The play is as spirited as ever, and the cast is top-notch. The set is quite stunning, and the whole production makes me eager to return to the Bucks County Playhouse. But next time, I’ll wait till the thaw.

Everyone is talking about former first lady Michelle Obama’s biography, which seems to be the book Mr. Obama would have written if he were free to say whatever he’d like. But you know, US presidents used to maintain a certain level of decorum and discretion. Be that as it may, Mrs. Obama can say whatever she’d like—within reason. One section stood out for me. On the day the Supreme Court legalized gay marriage, LGBT folks were celebrating in front of the White House. Michelle wanted to share the historic day with her daughter, Malia. She tried to sneak out of the White House (as if) to join the festivities—not considering she wasn’t wearing any makeup...or shoes! She whipped herself together, and went out incognito with Malia. “We just took it in. I held her tight, and my feeling was, we are moving forward. Change is happening.”

Jussie Smollett is enjoying having a fiancé on “Empire”. But it almost turned out quite differently. “There was talk about Jamal having a white boyfriend and I said, ‘Fuck no!’ Not for any reason except we have a responsibility and we have such a beautiful opportunity to show two black men in a relationship together, in a healthy relationship. But it was important and that wasn’t anything against white men. It was just a thing of...this is what I wished I had seen as a kid because if I had seen certain things as an adolescent, I would have had a much different understanding of who I am in an earlier space.” I’m still confused—would he date a white guy or not?

Then there’s Jaden Smith, who is going somewhere Daddy never went. At a recent show, he said, “I just want to say Tyler, The Creator is the best friend in the whole world and I love him so fucking much. And I want to tell you guys something—Tyler doesn’t want to say, but Tyler is my motherfucking boyfriend, and he’s been my motherfucking boyfriend my whole fucking life. Tyler, The Creator is my fucking boyfriend. It’s true!” Or is it? Tyler, The Creator (a name I’m fairly confident doesn’t appear on a birth certificate) can be seen shaking his head onstage. Then Jaden Tweeted, “I told everyone you can’t deny it now”. Tyler responded with a post of his own (and don’t get mad at me—I’m just quoting him): “hahaha you a crazy n’** man.” Part of me believes this. Part of me doesn’t. Part of me doesn’t have a clue who Tyler, The Creator is. And part of me thinks this is a bunch of straight guys laughing about being gay...which brings us back to Will.

It wouldn’t be the first gay rumors about Tyler, The Creator (and let’s hope I don’t ever have to type those three words again). Last year, he wrote a song extolling the virtues of Timothée Chalamet. In “Okra” (get ready to sing along), he rapped: “Tell Tim Chalamet to come and get at me, skin glisten’, clear of acne.” Now, there’s a talent. I bet even Cole Porter wouldn’t know what to rhyme with acne—let alone Clearasil! Still, it’s nice to see Tyler doesn’t have a type.

This segue writes itself—from Jaden Smith to RuPaul. The drag diva just made history by guest-starring on “The Simpsons”. In last weekend’s episode, she sported quite a few fetching frocks, and even got Homer in drag. But Ru wasn’t the only drag queen there.
Extraordinary

Continued from page 1

Iguana). At the busy native New Yorker—currently with an off-Broadway staging of the Emily Mann play "Gloria: A Life" (Gloria Steinem)—tellingly observes in her latest playbill welcome, the Cambridge theater is now centering on musicals as the form for expanding the boundaries of theater.

Not surprisingly, Paulus is closing out 2018 with an A.R.T. retrospective entitled "Extraordinary: Celebrating 10 Years of Musical Theater."

To make that celebration 'extraordinary,' she has brought together seven highly talented singer-actors who gave strong performances at the Loeb or Oberon during the last decade with a five-piece band guided by Lance Horner, who served as musical director for the company’s stagings of "Cabaret" and "Prometheus Bound."

Each performance will feature a topflight New York performer—Tony Award-winning Patina Miller, who was electrifyingly good as Leading Player in "Pippin," for example. For a show that is not a typical musical revue, writer Dick Scanlan has created what Paulus describes as "a script in conversation."

If the septet do not bear headshots and audition a la the dancers in "A Chorus Line," they do similarly recall respective formative experiences leading to a life in theater. That conversation waxes cutesy at times as performers speak of a new child and show-offish when someone brags about Tony nominations.

There was even a surprising quip about the musically rich though book-weak show "Rags" given that its gifted composer Stephen Schwartz of "Pippin" and "Wicked" fame was known to be in the audience. Still, individual reminiscences often proved insightful.

Most of all, there is the music. There are strong numbers from performers reprising numbers from their respective A.R.T. musicals. Standouts include Matthew James Thomas’ impassioned delivery of "Corner of the Sky" from "Pippin" and Bryonha Marie Parham’s lush rendition of "Summertime" from "The Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess." Brandon Michael Nase, recently seen in the A.R.T. production of "The Black Clown," makes a stylish Sporting Life on "There’s a Boat Dat’s Leavin’ Soon for New York," also from "Porgy and Bess." (A note regarding the playbill: Paulus would do well to include a list of specific numbers and their respective shows since many theatergoers may likely be unfamiliar with some of the less well-known though worthy musicals like "The Blue Flower").

Material that resonates importantly today figures prominently. Look for a strong ensemble with all seven performers—including Melody A. Betts, Kathryn Gallagher, Terrance Mann and MJ Rodriguez—for the equality-demanding Guthrie anthem "This Land Was Made for You and Me" from the tribute show "Woody Sez." Another strong rallying cry involves a collaboration between "Prometheus Bound" "You Oughta Know" from the Alanis Morissette musical "Jagged Little Pill" receives a strong #MeToo-endorsing ensemble delivery. If there is a surprisingly understated theme, it is the very strong anti-hate statement of "Cabaret," a landmark musical after all that could do with more stage time in this show.

Does "Extraordinary" truly live up to its grand title? Frankly, less biographical material would enable the very capable ensemble to sing more numbers and allow for more of Abbey O'Brien’s lively choreography. At the very least—given the largely standing ovation reception opening night—"Extraordinary" is an audience happening. At its many high point moments, though, it serves soaring witness to Paulus’ high-stepping first decade at A.R.T.
Iowa 4-H head fired after push to drop discrimination rule

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Government documents and emails show that Iowa’s top 4-H leader was fired earlier this year after a proposed policy discouraging discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender was withdrawn.

The Des Moines Register reports that it reviewed more than 500 pages of communication that show Iowa 4-H director Johns-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas was fired after he fought pressure to drop the policy.

Just days after Iowa officials posted a draft of the policy in April, an official with the federal department that administers 4-H, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, sent an email urging that the policy be dropped.

Iowa 4-H officials were also pressured to drop the policy by Christian conservative leaders and one group threatened to file a lawsuit.

Chaisson-Cardenas resisted because he was adamant that 4-H should be for all kids.

Chaisson-Cardenas was disciplined after the criticism for the way the policy was handled and later fired in August. He maintains that he followed proper procedure.

Information from: The Des Moines Register, http://www.desmoinesregister.com

Archbishop calls out school for urging staff to support drag

DENVER (AP)—The Catholic archbishop of Denver called out a local Jesuit-Catholic university’s provost for encouraging faculty to attend a student drag show.

The Denver Post reports Regis University Provost Janet Houser urged teachers to attend the show as a way of supporting LGBTQ students. Houser also suggested they avoid language that reinforces the gender binary—including saying “ladies and gentlemen.”

Houser also warned teachers not to take attendance using the official roster, since this might involve accidentally using “a student’s ‘dead name’—a legal name that they no longer go by—which can be very upsetting for transgender students to hear.”

Archbishop Samuel Aquila says Regis leaders never discussed those initiatives with him, and that “this guidance is not in conformity with the Catholic faith, despite the attempts made to justify it as rooted in Jesuit values.”


Second Indianapolis Catholic high school counselor alleges bias

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—A second guidance counselor at an Indiana Catholic high school says she’s discriminated against because she’s gay.

Lynn Starkey filed a discrimination charge Friday with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against Roncalli High School.

Her attorney, Kathleen DeLaney, said Starkey is gay and entered a civil union with her spouse in 2015. DeLaney says Starkey acknowledged the relationship when asked by the principal.

Roncalli placed guidance counselor Shelly Fitzgerald on administrative leave in August because she’s in a same-sex marriage. DeLaney says that has increased Starkey’s workload.

A telephone message seeking comment was left for Roncalli President Joseph Hollowell.

Indianapolis Archbishop Charles Thompson has said teachers and guidance counselors are ministers of the faith who must lead by word and example and whose obligations are clearly spelled out in contracts.

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One man, known only as “Victim (hash)1,” in arrest warrants, suffers from severe mental health disorders and isn’t capable of living independently. He was searching dumpsters for returnable bottles when he met King, he told police.

Another young man, described only as “Victim (hash)2” in arrest warrants, has severe psychological disorders. He told police he was paid $50 to $80 for sexual encounters with older men. He said King threatened to kill him if he told anyone about the trafficking ring, which left him traumatised. He told a health care provider he was embarrassed and worried that people may think he was homosexual when he was not, an arrest warrant said.

It is not uncommon for male victims to worry about their masculinity and sexual orientation being questioned, said Robert Lung, a Colorado state judge and member of the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking. While all victims of trafficking and sexual assault are often hesitant to come forward due to fear and other issues, Lung said there are fewer services, including counseling, available to men because most providers focus on treating women.

“The perception by society is boys and men are not victims,” said Lung, who, like other members of the advisory council, is a sex trafficking survivor. “I can count on one hand the number of organizations that are specific to boys and men in the country. And that’s a pretty big problem.”

He cited a 2010 study by John Marshall Law School professor Samuel Jones that found only two of the 222 institutions and professional organizations that received federal government funding for anti-trafficking efforts were committed to fighting the trafficking of men and boys.

The Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, appointed by President Trump in March, is expected to make numerous recommendations in a report due early next year. Lung hopes one of them includes providing incentives to providers to treat more male trafficking victims.

Accurate data on the sex trafficking of men and boys is lacking and estimates on the number and gender of victims varies widely, advocates said.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline, run by government-funded Polaris, says 8,524 human trafficking cases were reported in the U.S. last year, including both sex and labor trafficking. Of those, 1,124 cases, or 13 percent, involved male victims. Other studies and research have said the percentage of male victims is much higher, more than half in some reports including a 2008 study of the sexual exploitation of children in New York City by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. A report last year estimated that 4.8 million adults and children worldwide were sex trafficking victims in 2016. But the report, by the International Labour Organization, the Walk Free Foundation and the International Organization for Migration, said women and girls accounted for 99 percent of all victims.

A 2016 study funded by the U.S. Department of Justice that interviewed nearly 1,000 youths involved in the sex trade found 36 percent were male. About 53 percent of those victims were heterosexual, 36 percent were bisexual and 9 percent were gay, according to the study by the Center for Court Innovation and the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Some reports indicate gay and transgender men and boys are more at risk for becoming sex trafficking victims. Advocates, however, say victims’ sexual orientation is irrelevant.

Samuel Marino, the Connecticut victim who died in a car crash, revealed his feelings in a typo-filled note police say they found in 2016 in King’s Danbury trailer home while executing a search warrant. The note references King.

“I felt so angry at Bob at myself,” he wrote. “Guilty ashamed and disgusted. What happened was an act of survival. I was...taken...to the study by the Center for Court Innovation and the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Some reports indicate gay and transgender men and boys are more at risk for becoming sex trafficking victims. Advocates, however, say victims’ sexual orientation is irrelevant.

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Denmark, citing human rights, withholds some aid to Tanzania

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA
Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP)—Denmark is cutting about $10 million in aid to the government of Tanzania over what it called "negative developments" in human rights in the East African country.

Ulla Tornaes, Denmark’s minister for development cooperation, said on Twitter she is "deeply concerned" by developments such as a Tanzanian official’s "completely unacceptable homophobic statements."

Tanzania is increasingly under the spotlight over its human rights record. Denmark is one of the largest donors to Tanzania, whose government depends substantially on foreign benefactors to run many of its programs.

Most recently the commissioner for the country’s commercial capital, Dar es Salaam, urged Tanzanians to 'report' suspected homosexuals, comments widely criticized by rights groups and disavowed by Tanzania’s federal government.

Although the government distanced itself from the commissioner’s statement, there are fears of a crackdown against gays in a country where authorities are known to break up events organized by people believed to be homosexuals. Ten men were arrested in Zanzibar earlier this month for allegedly attending a gay marriage.

The European Union said earlier this month it is conducting a broad review of its relations with Tanzania in the aftermath of the Dar es Salaam official’s anti-gay comments.

Human Rights Watch says Tanzania’s government under President John Magufuli "has restricted basic rights through repressive laws and decrees" targeting journalists, activists and perceived opponents.

Magufuli, a former public works minister who was voted into the presidency in 2015, has appeared to personally drive his government’s controversial policies on everything from fighting corruption to birth control, pleading many of his people but also alarming some who see an authoritarian streak.

He has feuded with big companies accused of tax fraud, leading to concerns about flight of foreign capital, and the recent suspension of family planning commercials on TV and radio followed Magufuli’s remarks about "lazy" people who use contraceptives.

At least three newspapers have been banned over stories critical of the president.

The World Bank, a major development partner, is reportedly canceling a planned $300 million loan to Tanzania over a long-standing ban on pregnant students that Magufuli’s government has refused to lift.

"The World Bank supports policies that encourage girls’ education and make it possible for young women to stay in school until they reach their full potential,” the World Bank said in an e-mailed statement. "Working with other partners, the World Bank will continue to advocate for girls’ access to education through our dialogue with the Tanzanian government.”

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Raja, winner of season three of “RuPaul’s Drag Race”, also appeared in the same episode. Is it just me, or does that make it just a little less special?

I hate to rush the holidays, but on December 7th, VH1 will air “RuPaul’s Drag Race Holi-slay Spectacular”. Unlike those celebrity-laden holiday specials of yore, this is a competition show pitting eight former contestants against each other for the title of “Drag Race Xmas Queen”. The gals include Shangela, Jasmine Masters (no relation), Eureka O’Hara, Kim Chi, Latrice Royale, Trixie Mattel, Sonique, and Mayhem Miller. The special features a healthy product tie-in by having everyone lip-sync to tracks from RuPaul’s new holiday CD, “Christmas Party”.

Didya know our Acting Attorney General has a secret about his private parts? Back in 2014, Matthew Whitaker was on the advisory board of World Patent Marketing Company, which developed a toilet for well-endowed men! Their research showed that well-hung guys’ penises dangle into the water when they sit on a toilet. “The average male genitalia is between 5” and 6”. However, this invention is designed for those of us who measure longer than that. I estimate that a 12” distance is adequate enough for most well-endowed men. An ‘extra long’ (XL) version can always be created if needed.” This product would be right up Barbara Corcoran’s alley on “Shark Tank”. The company was shut down after it allegedly bilked “thousands of consumers out of millions of dollars”. Think about this toilet next time you hear someone say Dump Trump.

Our “Ask Billy” question comes from Victor in Detroit. “I just read that Michael C. Hall says he’s bisexual. Didn’t you write about this years ago?”

Apparently I knew before Miley did. In an interview with “The Daily Beast”, he said that appearing in “Cabaret” made him aware of it. “I think there’s a spectrum. I am on it. If there was a percentage, I would say I was not all the way heterosexual. I think playing the Emcee required me to fling a bunch of doors wide open because that character I imagined as pansexual. Yeah, like I made out with Michael Stuhlbarg every single night doing the show. I think I have always leaned into any fluidity in terms of my sexuality.” He added, “I’ve never had an intimate relationship with a man.” Now, I don’t want to call Michael C. Hall a liar, but I think he’s a big fat liar...just my humble opinion.

As a bonus, we’ll give you a nude nobody asked for. You all watch “Will & Grace”. And you all know Jack’s biological son, Elliot. In the film “In a Relationship”, actor Michael Angarano appears naked and shows off his assets—if you’re into that kinda thing. Check him out on BillyMasters.com.

When our cornucopia runneth over, it’s time to end yet another column. In addition to thanking our readers, I want to thank the publications, proofers, lawyers, webmasters, and everyone at www.BillyMasters.com—the site that celebrates giving each and every day. In fact, I’ll give you whatever you want—if I can. Send your requests to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I brave my bountiful butt in another blizzard! So, until next time, remember, one man’s filth is another man’s bible.
MAKE YOUR MOMENT WHERE THE MOVEMENT WAS MADE