

news notes: carolinas

compiled by Lainey Millen & Matt Comer

Charlotte

Affinity group plans soiree

CHARLOTTE — Blumenthal Performing Arts Center's Out on the Town LGBT affinity group will host a pre-show party for "Pippin" on May 21, 6 p.m., at Blue Restaurant and Bar, 206 N. College.

"Pippin" tells the story of a young prince on a death-defying journey to find meaning in his existence. It will be held in the Belk Theatre, 130 N. Tryon St.

OOTT members receive 40 percent discount on tickets in price zone 20. Call 704-372-1000 and request the "save 40" offer. Tickets need to be purchased by May 13 for the May 21 performance to receive this opportunity.

RSVP to bcarter@ncbpac.org to secure a spot for the party.

The OOTT group has no dues or officers and offers its members a place to enjoy camaraderie at free pre- and post-performance mixers and connection with other theatre goers. Email outonthetown@ncbpac.org with name, email address and address to receive information and get on the email alerts.

info: blumenthalarts.org.

— L.M.

Youth org gala set

CHARLOTTE — Time Out Youth Center, will hold its Platinum Gala, "Art of Expression," on June 5, 6:30 p.m., at The Mint Museum-Uptown, 500 S. Tryon St.

The evening will be hosted by Ben Thompson, anchor and reporter for WCNC-TV. Keynote speaker is Molly Barker, founder of Girls on the Run.

Enjoy food, cocktails, art auction and more will help to fill out the program. Two complimentary beverages are provided for each guest.

Only those who are 21-years-old and above will be permitted to attend. Chaperoned youth speakers will also be in attendance.

A private showing of fashion designer Roy Halston Frowick and pop artist Andy Warhol exhibits will help to fill out the evening's program.

The Gala will also feature a silent auction where artwork from LGBT artists will be up for bidding. Attendees will be able to relax with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres.

Tickets are \$75 before May 15 and \$100 afterward. They are available at eventbrite.com/e/platinum-gala-tickets-15163523507.

info: timeoutyouth.org.

— L.M.

Theatre group mounts comedy

CHARLOTTE — Queen City Theatre Company will bring the comedic "Buyer and Cellar" to the stage from May 14-16 and 19-23, 8 p.m., at Duke Energy Theatre at Spirit Square, 345 N. College St.

"Buyer and Cellar" is a fictional account of one man's experience working in the basement shops of Barbra Streisand's home. Alex More, a struggling actor, takes a job in the cellar of Streisand's Malibu home. One day she ventures downstairs and the two bond for a short time.

Oddly, Streisand actually does have a shopping mall in her basement residence.

Tickets are \$22 and are available online.

info: blumenthalarts.org.queencitytheatre.org.

— L.M.

Fundraiser a success

CONCORD — PFLAG Concord/Kannapolis held its Social Connection fundraiser on April 24 at Carms's Café, 42 South Union St.

Forty six people attended the event at which \$1,890 was raised after expenses.

In other news, the organization's president, Joan Gale, signed a four-year commitment for its group to be on the Teen Advisory Council with Cabarrus Health Alliance. It's mission is to improve health outcomes for Cabarrus County adolescents. PFLAG's objective is to assure that LGBT youth are represented in the planning and implementation of programs.

Gale has been closely tied to the county's school system.

"Gale has counseled students in Cabarrus County schools for more than 20 years and taught for more than a decade before that. Her experience working with youth has given her perspective on the coming out process in young people. Several students have come out to her in her role as school counselor," a *Charlotte Observer* article reported. It added that all but two high schools in the district have Gay-Straight Alliance groups and some middle schools offer similar programs.

info: ckpflag@gmail.com.

— L.M.

Triad

Prom slated

WINSTON-SALEM — An alternative prom, "A Love Story," will be held on May 15, 8 p.m., at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Winston-Salem, 4055 Robinhood Rd..

UUFWS, PFLAG and Interfaith Voice serve as sponsors.

High school students (9th-12th grades) from Winston-Salem/Forsyth County are welcome to attend the prom.

Refreshments will be served and a photographer will be available to capture participants' memories. Casual through dressy attire is encouraged. Organizers want attendees to be comfortable.

Students may bring guests. Admission is \$5 at the door.

Volunteers are being sought to help with chaperoning, setup and cleanup. Email dre@uufws.org to learn more.

info: 336-259-3688. uufws.org.

— L.M.

Film series screening approaches

WINSTON-SALEM — OUT at the Movies will screen "Matt Shepard Is a Friend of Mine" on May 18, 8 p.m., in cooperation with Aperture Cinema, 311 W. Fourth St.

On Oct. 7, 1998, University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard was brutally beaten, tied to a fence and left to die because he was gay. Years later, Michele Josue, a close friend of Shepard's, revisits the case with never-before-seen photos, rare video footage, as Matt's all-too-brief life is remembered through the vivid testimonies of those whose lives he touched, from the friends and family who knew him best to the bartender who saw him on the night of the attack. New revelations emerge in one of the most notorious hate crimes in U.S. history, leading to a multi-layered biographical and sociological portrait. In the end, the notion of forgiveness — embodied in the final act of Shepard's parents — takes on heroic proportions, the theatre shared.

Immediately after the showing, there will be a panel discussion with Suzanne Reynolds and Shannon Gilreath of the Wake Forest School of Law and Mary Dalton, professor of communication, film studies and women's and gender studies at Wake Forest University.

Ticket price is \$9.50/regular, \$7.50/seniors, \$8.25/students with college ID and military and students and are available online.

info: outatthemovies.org.aperturecinema.com.

— L.M.

Minister tenders resignation

WINSTON-SALEM — On April 26, Rev. Ron LaRocque notified his congregation at Metropolitan Community Church Winston-Salem, 4105 Patsy Dr., that he would be leaving

the ministry and his "pastoral responsibilities" at the church. His last date will be June 14.

He shared in an email message to congregants and others that the decision "was not made hastily or easily."

It is the result of a long process of discernment about where God is leading me and this church. The decision was a difficult one. I ... love MCCWS and the people who make up the church. I want only the best for you."

He added that he was fully committed to his duties until his last day as pastor. LaRocque even offered to be available to congregants individually via email at pastor@mccws.org through the process. He expressed his gratitude to the church and said that his time there was transformative.

Vice Moderator Merri Byrd shared in an email that members and friends of MCCWS might serve as guest speakers in the interim. The board of directors and transition team, along with Rev. Tony Freeman, director of church life and health for the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, will ensure a "healthy separation agreement" for all involved.

info: mccws.org.

— L.M.

Triangle

Theatre brings 'Hedwig' benefit

RALEIGH — Raleigh Little Theatre, 301 Pogue St., will present a midnight performance on May 16 of "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" at its Gaddy-Goodwin Teaching Theatre.

The special presentation benefits the LGBT Center of Raleigh, 324 S. Harrington St., and is held in partnership with the theatre.

Tickets are \$32.79 and include one drink.

info: raleighlittletheatre.org. lgbtcenterofraleigh.com.

— L.M.

Guild hosts Shepard

RALEIGH — The Raleigh Business and Professional Network will hold its monthly meeting on May 13, 6:30 p.m., at Coquette Brasserie, 4351 The Circle at North Hills St..

Guest speaker will be Ellen Shepard who is an award-winning filmmaker, screenwriter and assistant professor at St. Augustine University. Her new film, "Sitting at God's Table," debuts this month. It is a full-length documentary featuring local religious leaders who tackle with candor, respect and personal insight the most controversial subjects of the day.

Reservations are available online for the meeting at raleighnetwork.org/meeting-schedule-reservations.html.

A free screening of the film will take place on May 16, 10 a.m., at Full Frame Theatre, 318 Blackwell St., in Durham, N.C. Seating is limited. RSVP to sittingatgodstable@gmail.com to reserve a seat. A Q&A with Shepard follows.

info: raleighnetwork.org.

— L.M.

'Tootsie' fundraiser around corner

RALEIGH — The Alliance of AIDS Services - Carolina will celebrate the efforts of its organization and the Crape Myrtle Festival by having

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The Power of One fetes leaders in June

PowerHouse Project event to award Charlotte City Council member, bar owner and pastor



Charlotte City Councilmember Al Austin will be among three award winners at the June 13 event.

R&B crooner KEON, Carolinas PRIDE Theatre Ensemble, Visual Art exhibit by Sarah Stephens Fial, songwriter Star Willson Mufuka Dance Works, gospel quartet The Exaltations and others.

info: powerhousecharlotte.org.

CHARLOTTE — Powerhouse Project returns with its Power of One Community Awards & Gala event on June 13, 5 p.m., at Fairfield Inn & Suites Charlotte Uptown, 201 S. McDowell St., honoring African-American, same-gender-loving men making an impact in the greater Charlotte community.

This year, honorees include Charlotte City Councilmember Al Austin, Nickel Bar owner Milton Howard and the Rev. Clifford Matthews, Jr., pastor of St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church.

Austin is the second openly gay man to sit on Charlotte City Council, where he took a leading role in attempting to pass LGBT inclusive non-discrimination ordinances earlier this year. Austin, a Democrat, was elected to represent District 2 in 2013.

Organizers request cocktail attire for the event, which is free to attend with a complimentary buffet. RSVPs are not required, but those attending in large groups can email Jermaine Nakia Lee at glee.php@gmail.com to reserve space.

Entertainment at the event will feature Illumination Chorale Ensemble, Johnson C. Smith University's D.O.P.E.,

— M.C.