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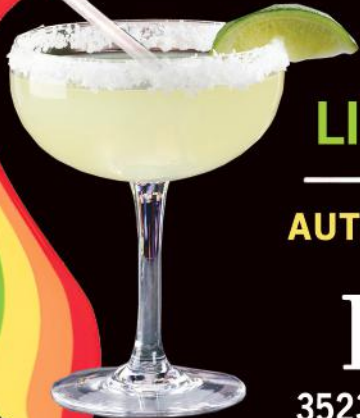
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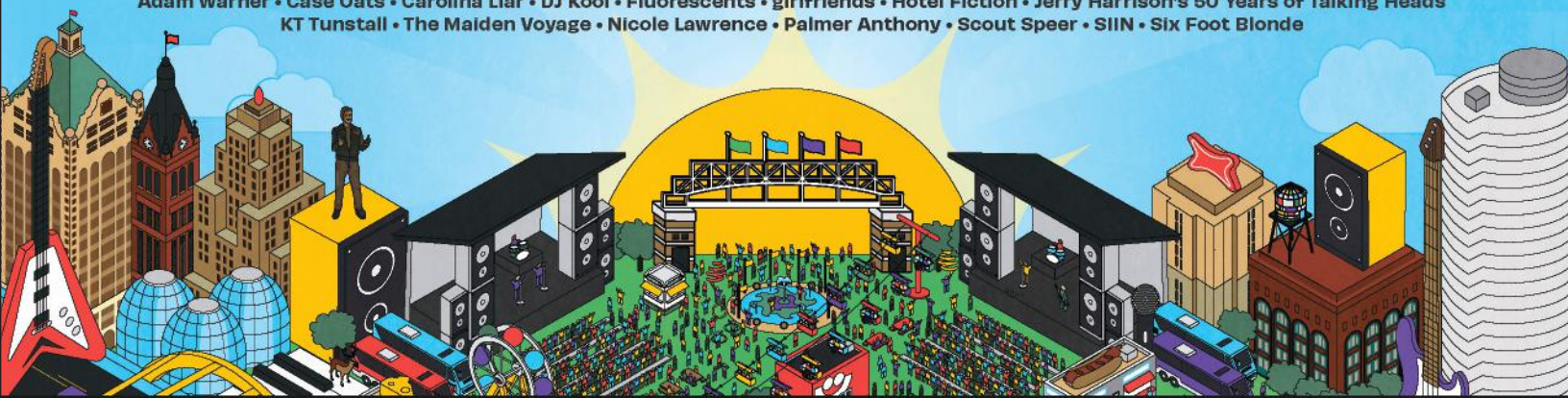
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INTERVIEW WITH ARNY GRANAT

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THE \$5,000 GAMBLE & THE ORIGINS OF JAM PRODUCTIONS

Q: Mike Macharello: I've heard stories about the early days of JAM Productions, and one that always comes up is the \$5,000 gamble you took in 1972 to book the band **War** at a **Lincoln Park** club. Looking back at this, did you realize then that you were building the foundation for what would become one of the largest independent promoter businesses in **North America**, or was it just a gamble at the time?

A: Arny Granat: Well, being in the business that I'm in, it's always a gamble. It's a gambling business, that's what I do for a living. To answer your question, I actually don't remember saying that about the **War** concert, and no, I didn't think of it one way or another. It was just a show we did. It had no particular deeper meaning, and it's nothing I can remember when I said, *"Wow, this is an epiphany I'm having here, and this is something I'm destined to do."*

Q: Did you do other promotions before, that led you to booking **War**?

A: I don't even remember when that show was.

Q: Supposedly it was your first one.

A: No, I don't believe so. But, you know, sex, drugs, and rock & roll "on steroids" for 50-plus years... you could be right, I'm just saying! I can tell you what I believe was our first show, or the origin of **JAM**, if you want.

Q: Yes, please what was it?



A: The origin of **JAM Productions** was around 1971 or 1972. Everybody always wants to know how we started. I was here in **Chicago** doing some odd jobs and working as a go-fer for a TV show. My father, **Al Granat**, and my partner **Jerry's** father, **Ralph Mickelson**, were gin-rummy buddies. They played cards every week in a group. **Ralph** was an attorney, and he asked my dad, *"You know, my son Jerry is at Ohio State. Do you think he and Arny would like to talk and maybe do something?"*

The next thing I knew, we were on a conference call. In those days, of course, they didn't have modern speakerphones, it was a big black box and you'd hear *"click, click... you there?... you there?... click, click."* We actually met on that conference call.

Q: Oh, really??

A: Yeah, we did not meet in person at first. Jerry was very much into music.

I loved rock and roll when I was in college, when I was on my own "magical mystery tour", but not like **Jerry**; he went to a lot of shows. We talked, met up, and decided to try doing something called "promoting."

Then we had to name the company, and we ended up with the name **JAM**. People always ask, "What does **JAM** stand for?" They think it stands for "Jerry and Arny's Money." No, because we didn't have any! It didn't stand for "Jewish American Mafia" either. It was just musical. We called it **JAM**, and that's how we started.

EARLY GIGS, VENUES, AND THE CHICAGO CLUB SCENE

A: I recall that for our first gigs, we were actually security guards at the **Aragon Ballroom**, and we ran the security there. Later, that morphed into a security company called **Safety Services**, which still exists today. It's run by a couple and a family who worked with us in those early days.

When it came to the early days of promoting... one of the first shows I recall doing, and Jerry may recall it differently, was **Shawn Phillips**, who most people today wouldn't know. That was at the Auditorium Theatre. We also did Todd Rundgren.

But our first big show was actually in **St. Paul, Minnesota**, at the **St. Paul Civic Center**. The headliner was **Savoy Brown**, and the special guest opening the show was **Fleetwood Mac**. That's how far back it goes! There was another artist, **Long John Baldry**, a seven-foot guy who had a hit record out at the time, and we sold that show out. So that was our first major show.

I believe our first shows in Chicago were at the **Auditorium Theatre**. We also booked shows at a place called **Alice's**, which was named after **Alice's Restaurant**.

Back in those days, it was a very cool club right off **Lincoln Avenue** where we did shows. We booked people like **John Kay** from **Steppenwolf**, and some of the great blues and jazz artists. After their own gigs, guys like **The Allman Brothers** would come by **Alice's** just to hang out and watch.

It was a happening and the place to hang, it was our origin, where we started.

We also did a lot of shows at the **Park West** venue in the early days when I started booking it. We did a lot of jazz, comedy, and, of course, heading into the late '70s, it was sort of the disco era too.

Q: Did you do any big disco shows?

A: We weren't big on disco, but we did book the act that later got caught lip-syncing... the big act? **Milli Vanilli**? (*Mike said*). Yeah. And we did **Divine** at the **Park West** in a show called "Neon Woman," for a week and a half. We did everything. I'd have to go back and look, but seriously, after a hundred thousand shows, including theater. I honestly don't remember, all I know is that I was there!

MERGERS, RADIO PIRATES, AND CREATING "RPM"

Q: What about going head-to-head with other promoters?

A: Wait a minute... let's go back, you're missing a little time period. **JAM** was actually non-existent for about three to four years. In the beginning, there were two local companies doing rock and roll shows: **JAM**, and a company called **Celebration**, run by a guy named **Bruce Kapp**. We were all young, and we didn't know what we were doing. We were fierce competitors, going after the new, big rock and roll bands of the era.

Instead of competing, one day we said, "Let's get together." So we formed a combined company called **Windy City Productions**. We moved our offices out to **Roselle, Illinois**. Most people don't know that, but we were there for about three or four years. Eventually, that partnership ended, it didn't work out, and we went back to being **JAM**.

Q: When did Live Nation come into the picture?

A: That's a lot further down the road. In those early days, **Frank Fried** was the original promoter in **Chicago** with **Triangle Productions** before we even started. Eventually, Frank went on to manage the **Rosemont Horizon** when it opened, and we put all of our big arena shows there. Prior to that, acts all started at places like the **Park West**, **Riviera Theatre**, the **Uptown Theatre**, and the **Aragon Ballroom**. That's where we grew up.

But there was also a lot of radio promotion going on back then. Radio in those days was everything. **WLS** was the main AM station, and WLS would only play maybe 10 to 12 songs a day, just the hits, repeatedly. Meanwhile, we had all this incredible new music coming out, like **Prince**, **Aerosmith**, **Sprinsteen**, groups like that and all these new rock bands. We had no place to get played on the radio. Then **The LOOP** came along, **WLUP**, and they played rock and roll.

But I actually started **WXRT** radio. A lot of people don't know that.



Q: Wait ...
... say that again!

A: I started **WXRT** radio. I don't remember the exact year, but we desperately needed a place to advertise our alternative rock shows.

So I went to the owner of **WXRT**, a guy named **Dan Lee**, whose family owned the station. At the time, it was a 24-hour Spanish station.

I made a deal with him that we would broker the airtime from midnight to 6:00 AM. So at 11:59 PM, they'd say "Buenas Noches," and at 12:01 AM, it was **Led Zeppelin!** I had to sell the airtime commercial blocks from midnight to 6:00 AM myself. But in those days, people really listened to the radio, and XRT fast became the hot station for alternative music. In the early days, they played all the new stuff that couldn't get played anywhere else. Eventually, the rock programming expanded down to 10:00 PM, and then it became a full-time rock station. Unfortunately, Jerry and I sold our shares and many years later the sold for a lot of money, that we got none of it.

Q: Were there other radio ventures?

A: Promoting alternative music on the radio was one thing, but as the years went by, heavy metal came into existence, and then came punk rock. Nobody would play heavy metal on the air. So, we went up to **WVXX** in **Highland Park**, and we brokered that station to play heavy metal.

We needed a name for the programming block. I was smoking a joint one night, reading about investments like gold and silver, and I woke up the next morning and went, "I got it! We'll call it *Real Precious Metal*, **RPM** for short, like a record." And that's what we called it: **RPM**. We played heavy metal music, and that's how we advertised our metal shows. The signal barely reached Chicago, but the heavy metal fans found it, of course.

>> **MORE FROM ARMY GRANAT >>**

PLAYING MONOPOLY WITH VENUES

Q: So were those the simpler days as far as promoting?

A: Before there was the internet, you had posters, street teams, and advertising in **The Reader**. **Chicago** has always been a great music town. The fans are amazing, they support the music, and we were lucky to have a massive population that loved going to live shows. Back in those days, the tickets were affordable.

Q: So how did you deal with difficult artist managers, and venue owners?

A: I wouldn't say they were difficult to deal with; you just have to be able to work your magic between everyone involved. We didn't have much of a problem. When we started producing shows at the **Aragon Ballroom**, the owners were **Willie Miranda** and **Jose Palomar**. They were very nice, and we worked there doing shows for 35 years.



For the other venues, acts usually fit into one size or another. There was no **Chicago Theatre** as a concert venue yet, and no **Rosemont Theatre** or **United Center** at that time. We eventually bought the **Uptown Theatre**, **Riviera Theater** and the **Vic Theatre**, we owned them, so we were talking to ourselves. That way, we didn't have to fight outside venue owners. We always bought the theaters so we didn't have to negotiate against ourselves.

When an act grew too big for the **Aragon Ballroom**, which held around 5,000 people, we initially had nowhere else to put them because we didn't own a larger building. There was the **International Amphitheatre**, but it was a terrible stockyard building. And there was **Chicago Stadium**, which was a tough old building before they built the **United Center**. We eventually made a deal and did some shows at the **Stadium**.

Then the **Rosemont Horizon** was built, we put all the bigger shows at the Horizon. That was the evolution of working with arenas, right up to building the **World Music Theater** in **Tinley Park**. It wasn't the cutthroat corporate competition that it is today.

GROUNDBREAKING CONCERTS: COMISKEY PARK & GRANT PARK

Q: The next subject is your reputation as an "Architect of the Chicago Scene" and breaking barriers, like bringing rock and roll back to Comiskey Park, and the historic Radiohead concert in Grant Park, which paved the way for modern festival culture. What was the biggest challenge you faced convincing the city of Chicago to allow those massive outdoor park concerts?

A: Well, you have to remember that back in the 1960s and '70s, music was a literal way of life. I don't know how old you are, but it genuinely was a lifestyle. It's not that today. Nowadays you can become a hit instantly on your phone through TikTok and social media. In those days, there were physical albums that people bought, and bands went on the road and toured all the cities. The radio stations heavily supported the culture; radio meant something. It was a whole different way of promoting.

As far as how we adjusted? Fucking simple: you just throw shit at the wall and see what sticks!

The way we figured it, we needed to own the venues so corporations couldn't come in and dictate to us. One of our main strategies, and my partner Jerry Mickelson was very good at this, that was buying and owning the venues across every tier. We had the Park West, which was under 1,000 seats (around 750-ish); the Vic, which was about 1,200; and the Riviera, which was 2,000 to 2,500. We could take all the "baby acts" in those days and develop them. We worked alongside the Metro, but back then, there weren't all these venues like Lincoln Hall, Salt Shed, and Thalia Hall. Owning the venues, then moving up to the Rosemont Horizon where we did most of the arena shows, and finally building the World Music Theater, we had the ladder covered from 700 seats to 30,000 seats. That was our game plan.

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>> INTERVIEW >> WITH ARNY GRANAT

Q: You can't really "own" the city, so the question was always how to get Chicago to agree to outdoor shows.

A: We had the leverage because we developed all the talent. We built these acts up from small clubs to the point where they became massive stadium acts like **Aerosmith**.

Over at **Comiskey Park**, **Bill Veeck** was the owner of the **White Sox**. He was a great promoter himself, and a great guy. I don't remember the exact origin of the deal, but we went in and made a deal to do rock shows at Comiskey. I just don't recall all of them. It was a fantastic value and a great time.

Note: We did not do Disco Demolition Night. That's something we had nothing to do with!

For larger venues, like **Grant Park**, **Soldier Field**, it was the same process as small shows, you just had to go in, make a deal with the venues, and City, provide all the financial guarantees, cross the T's, and dot the I's. Security is probably the most important thing to the City.

Because we owned our own security company, we were highly security-minded. Another note, over the years, if you look back, the press on **JAM Productions** was never really negative. Today is different, everybody has an opinion about **Live Nation**, mostly negative, the fans, the media, whatever. But JAM never had a bad rap. Because our tagline was always: "Brought to you by your friends at JAM." that we borrowed from the **Beatles**. We had the talent, so when we needed a venue for 40,000 to 50,000 people, one plus one equaled four.

Fans we built and promoted shows at **World Music Theater (WMT)** in **Tinley Park**. It was groundbreaking, for example, the first **Lollapalooza** festival was at **WMT** and they sold it out. 30,000 people, that was way before it became a permanent downtown City festival. After that, the festival scene literally exploded.

The following year, the organizers called me and said, "We want to do *Lollapalooza again at the World.*" I asked, "Who's on the bill?" They said, "We don't know yet." I said, "so you want me to put it in the papers *Lollapalooz Trust Me*," They said, "Yeah." So we put an ad in the paper that just said: **Lollapalooz** with no acts and it sold out with no lineup announced!

Eventually, a separate company bought the festival and brought it downtown as a massive weekend event, and we didn't participate in that. I wish we would have, but that's how it went.

THE UPTOWN THEATRE DILEMMA

Q: You've been a massive champion for the redevelopment of the historic **Uptown Theatre**. For our readers who see the exterior but don't know the stakes: what is the current status of the project, and do you think it'll happen anytime soon?

A: I would say I don't have the final answers, nor do I want to delve too deeply into it right now. Jerry is trying hard to support it; it's his dream to restore it. You'd really have to ask him. At this point, I'm just trying to get my money back out of it.

I hope it happens, but even if it opened tomorrow, the world has changed completely from when we bought it. There is so much competition now, the **Salt Shed** opened, you have the **Chicago**

Theatre, the **United Center** is building a new adjacent venue, and there are just tons of options out there.

WINNING 9 TONY AWARDS WITH "JAM THEATRICALS"

Q: Most people know you for promoting rock concerts, but you actually won nine Tony Awards. How did an independent promoter's mindset translate into the subscription driven world of Broadway?

A: Well, I saw the music industry changing before it actually changed. There wasn't a massive corporate **Live Nation** at the time, but a guy named **Bob Sillerman** of **SFX** bought up regional promoters, which turned into **Clear Channel**, which turned into the corporate giant **Live Nation**. Things were shifting financially due to the internet, technology, and consolidation.

Q: Was that when you decided to try your hand at **Broadway** theater?



A: Yeah. The theater thing started because of **Steve Traxler**, who worked at **JAM Productions**. Steve came to me one day and said, "I think we should start a theater department." I said, "What the fuck is that?"

Arny, this has truly been a compelling interview, and there's much more exciting parts of the story to be revealed, so I hope you and our readers will understand, that we'll pick up right where we left off, in our next issue of boiMAGazine. AND THANK YOU!

A: Yes, that's fine, I was going to suggest that! **TO BE CONTINUED!**



In CONCERT

SPONSORED BY: **SUMMERFEST**
MILWAUKEE

by Jorge Suarez

Band On The Run featuring Ron Starr at the Des Plaines Theater

When the Beatles came to an end, many wondered what the future would hold for Paul McCartney.

Instead of looking back, he chose to begin again. Alongside his wife Linda and guitarist Denny Laine, he formed Wings, a group that would go on to create some of the most memorable songs of the 1970s, including Band on the Run, Jet, Live and Let Die, and Silly Love Songs. It was proof that one incredible chapter could lead to another.



That same spirit was brought back to life on May 15th at the **Des Plaines Theatre**, where *Band On The Run* featuring **Ron Starr** celebrated the music and legacy of **Paul**

McCartney & Wings. Rather than focusing on just one period of McCartney's career, the show takes the audience on a journey through the **Beatles** years, the rise of **Wings**, and the timeless songs that have connected generations of music fans.

At the center of the production is Ron Starr, who steps into the role of Paul McCartney, handling bass, piano, acoustic and electric guitar, along with the lead vocals that drive the show. **Karen Hart** brings warmth and authenticity to the role of **Linda McCartney** on keyboards and vocals, while Pete Melody adds depth on second guitar and bass. **Jim Workman** delivers impressive lead guitar work and vocals, with **Michael Gallus** providing the solid

drumming that keeps the music moving. Completing the sound are the outstanding horn arrangements of **Chuck Sloka** on trombone, Mark Roller on trumpet, and **Matt Sherman** on saxophone, giving many of the classic **Wings** songs the richness and energy fans remember from the original recordings.

What impressed me most was how naturally the musicians worked together. The vocals, the instrumentation, and the attention to the smallest details never feel forced or overdone. It's obvious that this is a group of talented performers with a genuine love and respect for the music they are celebrating.

An equally memorable part of the evening is the visual presentation that unfolds behind the band. Large screens feature classic concert clips and personal moments from the lives of Paul, Linda, and the original members of Wings. Rather than serving as simple background effects, these images help tell the story behind the songs, giving the audience a chance to relive some of the most important moments in McCartney's career. Seeing those



vintage performances and candid memories while hearing the music played live creates an experience that is both entertaining and deeply nostalgic.

By the end of the show, there are moments when you almost forget you're watching a tribute band. The precision of the performances, the dedication of the musicians, and the thoughtful use of historic visuals come together to create something much larger than a concert. It's a heartfelt celebration of **Paul McCartney, Wings**, and a remarkable catalog of music that continues to inspire generation after generation.

Visit Out 'N' About Facebook Group for additional pics and videos, or go to boiMAG.com for direct link.



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Low / Magdalena Bay / Dry Cleaning / Karate
Iceage / yeule / Arooj Aftab / The Armed
Chubby & the Gang / Hyd
Jeff Parker & the New Breed

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FAMILY PRIDE FEST

On Sunday, June 28, from 10am-10pm, this Pride season, Chicago's Lakeview/Wrigleyville neighborhood will host a celebration designed to bring families, music lovers, and the community together through art, movement, food, and positivity.

Family Pride Fest will take place at **Byron's Hot Dogs**, 1017 West Irving Park Rd, Chicago, where Byron's large outdoor parking area will be transformed into an open-air concert and entertainment space featuring live performances, dancing, children's activities, and community programming.

Presented with support from Chicago Arts Center.org and Byron's Hot Dogs, the event embraces a uniquely Chicago spirit by combining Pride celebration with two of the city's most beloved traditions: Music and Neighborhood Food Culture!

Chicago is known around the world for house music, hot dogs, pizza, and street culture, and Family Pride Fest brings all of those elements together in a positive family environment centered around wellness, creativity, and community.

The event is free and open to the public. Guests will also have the opportunity to support the nonprofit arts initiative through optional donation ticket purchases available via QR code in promotional materials and event coverage.

Those who purchase donation tickets benefiting ChicagoArtsCenter.org will receive: "A Byron's Chicago-Style Hot Dog, Fries, and a Drink!"

A FAMILY-FRIENDLY VISION (All-Ages)

Family Pride Fest is being designed as a truly family-friendly and PG-centered celebration where children, parents, and guests of all ages can comfortably enjoy the day together.

The goal of Family Pride Fest is to create a safe and joyful space where children are not only welcomed, but celebrated as part of the community experience. Through music, dancing, art, food, and outdoor activities, the event hopes to encourage families to spend time together away from screens while enjoying a day built around positivity, pride, wellness, and togetherness.

PERFORMERS & ENTERTAINMENT

Headlining the event is **Screamin' Rachael**, internationally known as the "Queen of House" and serving as president of Trax Records, the legendary Chicago label that helped bring house music to audiences around the world.



Long recognized for her contributions to Chicago dance culture, independent artistry, and the continuing evolution of house music, **Screamin' Rachael** has remained a strong advocate for creativity, self-expression, and the advancement of women

within the entertainment industry. In addition to her music career, she also writes the "Uncensored" column for **boiMAGazine**, where she covers culture, music, nightlife, community, and the changing landscape of entertainment through her distinctive Chicago voice and perspective.

Irene Michaels brings her own dynamic presence to Family Pride Fest through her longtime involvement in entertainment, fashion, philanthropy. Known for her positivity, elegance, and community involvement, Michaels has become a recognizable and respected figure whose work often bridges entertainment with charitable and humanitarian causes.

The lineup also includes **Chicago's Hall of Fame DJ Mike Macharello**, widely known throughout Chicago nightlife and radio circles as "Mike At Night," bringing decades of club culture experience, community leadership, and classic dance-floor energy to Family Pride Fest.

Representing the next generation is **Jaysmore**, a hot rising young DJ, producer, and writer who has been instrumental in helping carry Chicago's underground music culture forward to younger audiences. With deep roots in Chicago house music and a passion for preserving its spirit while pushing it toward the future, Jaysmore continues introducing a new generation to the sound, soul, and energy of underground dance music through both his performances and original productions.

Additional surprise guest performers like "singer-songwriter" **XOCHI ONOHAN**, "Single Girl" artist **SEDEINA** (of Knight Action), "Yay-Crazy" artist **BUSTCYA**, "Red Dog Productions producer & artist" **DJ RED DOG**, and **JAMES BROWN-G2** will also appear throughout the day as Family Pride Fest transforms Byron's Hot Dogs parking-lot into day of celebration!

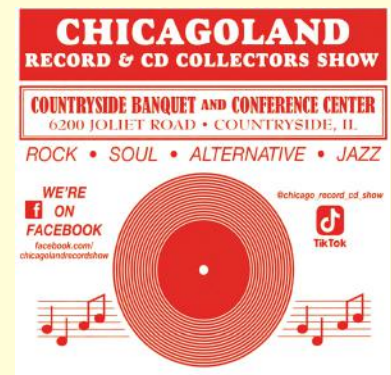
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RECORD AND CD COLECTORS SHOW FOR MUSIC & VINYL LOVERS

The Chicagoland Record & CD Collectors Show in Countryside has built a reputation as one of the Midwest's premier gatherings for music lovers, drawing dozens of dealers and collectors from across Illinois and neighboring states.



What I enjoyed most wasn't just the records themselves, it was the atmosphere. You see people from every generation flipping through crates, sharing stories about concerts they attended decades ago, comparing favorite pressings, and helping each other hunt down that one album that's been missing from a collection for years. It's a reminder that vinyl collecting has always been about more than music; it's about memories, friendships, and keeping a little piece of rock and roll history alive.

As I made my way from table to table, I noticed that everyone seemed to be on their own little journey. Some collectors were carefully checking album covers and labels, others were digging through bargain boxes hoping to uncover an unexpected gem, and more than a few conversations started with, "I remember when I bought this back in high school." That's the magic of a show like this. Complete strangers can strike up a conversation over a favorite band and walk away feeling like old friends. First up, I met **Robert Volansky**. Robert is the first guy you'd wanna meet. He's great at breaking the ice. Very knowledgeable and friendly. While thumbing thru his collection, I noticed a **Black Sabbath** "Master Of Reality" box set, on clear vinyl. I had to have it!

I also purchased latest LP release by **Alice Cooper**. Robert can also be found at the popular fair promoted by **John E. Streetz**. I'll get more into that in an upcoming issue.

For those not familiar with this event, per internet, many shows feature more than 75 dealers and well over 100 tables of music related collectibles, making it a destination for both serious collectors and casual fans. That's quite impressive and you can definitely spend hours, if not all day shopping. Next up, I ran into **Skyler Davis**. Skyler is owner of **Culture Shock Records** in **Rockford, Illinois**. I had previously visited Skyler at Culture Shock awhile back and I'll expand on the history of Culture Shock in upcoming issues. While \$5.00-10.00 per record seems to be the average going price these days, most of these dealers will give you a great discount. You're free to haggle! While sorting thru Skyler's collection, I found classic **Boomtown Rats**, **Spirit**, **Traffic**, **Blue Oyster Cult**, **Aresmith**, **Santana**, and others. Skyler specializes in various genres.

Finally, I ran into good friend **Merlin** and **Tim**. Merlin and Tim host a Facebook live show called "Vinyl On Demand". Typically it's a weekly live event where Merlin comes up with hard to find digs, and all vinyl is inspected and guaranteed. I was able to pick up a copy of **Alice Cooper's** greatest hits and a **David Bowie** Live LP. In the end, it's not really about finding the best bargain or walking out with the rarest record. It's about the conversations that happen across the tables, the memories that come rushing back when you spot an old album, and the new friendships that are made through a shared love of music. Events like this remind us that the songs may have been recorded decades ago, but the stories behind them are still being written.

If you didn't make it this time, don't worry. Be sure to stop by my **Out 'n' About Facebook Group** for expanded coverage, photos, videos, and a closer look at some of the people and treasures that made this year's show another memorable experience.

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COMMENTARY UNCENSORED

by: Screamin' Rachael
Recording Artist, Entrepreneur, Publisher, Music Mogul, House Music Icon,
sometimes Controversial, with a dash of Opinionism for good measure.

The opinions offered in this column are "uncensored" and are intended for "open dialog" and "entertainment purposes" only. Use of this column not intended to replace or be a substitute for any professional, financial, legal, advice or any other professional service. The opinions or views expressed in this column are those of the columnist, and not necessarily those of anyone else.

My summer is starting off with a huge bang! There are so many exciting projects and artistic adventures happening that it's hard to know where to begin.

If you love great Mexican food, be sure to visit Zentli in Evanston. We recently hosted a party there where I DJ'd and we're already planning another event for August.

The vibe is warm, creative, and wonderfully LGBTQ+ friendly.

The restaurant is also home to an incredible installation of **Michael Wesley White's** Equatoria designs. Michael is one of Chicago's truly legendary creatives, having created custom work for icons including **Chaka Khan, Bob Marley, Neil Armstrong**, and the **Jacksons**, among many others.

The restaurant has become something of a haven for artists. One of them is **Edwin Martinez**, who joined me on live trumpet for the **TRAX Records** house music classic "R U Hot Enough." It was an unforgettable collaboration.

While you're there, don't leave without trying



the house signature cocktail, the Tamarindo. It is absolutely delicious!

I also stopped by **Dr. Mo's** open house at **Wellness Home** in **Back of the Yards**. He hosted a fantastic event featuring delicious, healthy treats while giving everyone

a tour of his expansive facility, complete with an impressive gym and virtually every wellness treatment imaginable for both body and mind. I'm feeling better than I have in years. I've now lost more than 25 pounds, and I'm back to my original **Space Place** weight, bringing me full circle to my punk rock days. I even dug out an old photo of my band, **Screamin' Rachael and Remote**, from that era. My homegirl **Xochi** got to watch the recent movie "Move Ya Body" on the plane and saw me perform Insult to Injury in all my punk glory.

Here's the really exciting part... The hot pants are back! You'll definitely be seeing me wearing them again this summer.

>>> **MORE Uncensored** >>>

UNCENSORED

>>> *Continued* >>>



I simply love the French and they simply love TRAX! **Emmanuel Macron**, their president, is simply mad for us...

Speaking of punk, I recently caught the fabulous Chicago band **Pinksqueeze** at **Cobra Lounge**, where they opened for the legendary **San Francisco** punk act Avengers, fronted by **Penelope Houston**.

Chicago continues to remind me why it has always been my home. Whether it's house music, punk rock, incredible food, inspiring artists, or simply rediscovering yourself, this city never stops creating moments worth celebrating.

The women of **Pinksqueeze** loved my fashion sense, and I absolutely loved theirs. Their energy was infectious, and I found myself getting completely drawn into their music. One song in particular stood out to me: "*Stoner Butch Blues*." If you're curious, there's also a very cool music video for it on YouTube that's well worth checking out.

Until next time... keep dancing, keep creating, and I'll see you somewhere under the Chicago skyline.

One last teaser of info is that I will be reuniting with **Dr Leef** again. We met last year in upstate **New York** for a festival where he hosted the **Trax** stage at **Camp Wonkru**. This time we are going to Paris! He will be debuting his designs. Of course there will be exclusive runway music by **Trax Records**. And I his muse, as was **Isabella Blow** for **Alexander McQueen**, will be returning to my second country **France**.



- *Rachael Cain*

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SR. GOLDEN MOVES 9AM-10AM

WEIGHT TRAINING 5PM-6PM

WEDNESDAY

WEIGHT TRAINING 9AM-10AM

QI GONG 5PM-6PM

XCO LATIN DANCE 6PM-7PM

THURSDAY

SR. GOLDEN MOVES 9AM-10AM

YOGA 6PM-7PM

HIIT 7PM-8PM

FRIDAY

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WHAT FEAR CAN DO TO US

There are so many books that encourage us to use fear as an indicator. One of my favorites, *The Gift of Fear*, helps the reader understand that fear is, just that, a gift. When seen in the best light, fear is a godsend of thought-filled behavior that guides safe decision-making. Fear is part of the evolution of man, a survival instinct driving attention and reducing emotion beyond primitive action. As an educator, I taught my students to use fear as a clue. I told them that fear would always let them know that change had to come: change was a must and they needed to move out, away, and forward from its cause. Some of my students, however, needed lots of time to get to that pinnacle because their fear was the foundation of their past. Abuse, loss, failure, profound hunger, and families; truly, entire neighborhoods, were mired in addiction and violence, all of this the core of their development.

So, over time, what can living in fear, with fear, or in expectation of fear, do to us?. The feeling of a living, breathing threat constant and ruthless in its advance can guide us and our health to live in the past, or at the very least to live in an uncertain and chaotic future.

We have all heard of fight or flight as it relates to fear. Your past, in fact, can dictate which element you use most often. Our fight response means that we confront fear in a direct manner-head on, but, perhaps, in not the most positive way. I'm talking primitive striking out in a highly self-protective manner with physical interaction or words that aim to threaten, hurt, or, you guessed it; instill fear. Some of this may be mimicking old modeled

behavior or a safety response; long ago learned and sadly misused. Flight behavior means avoidance. This can mean becoming passive; living victimized, or communicating emotions ineffectively. Some of us can't seem to fight or fly. Some of us are paralyzed and fighting or fleeing is simply not an option. The paralysis is real and to make a decision about how to manage what is happening seems impossible. Paralysis during times when you know action of some kind is necessary to resolution is damaging to self-esteem. It can create depression and lead to anxiety that just never seems to leave. Whether fight, flight, or paralytic responses, fear steals your joy; steals your best self.

Fear can cause us to miss opportunities to grow. We stop learning about ourselves and ways to communicate and find resolution. In essence, fear causes us to max-out on our emotional skill base. When we max out, well, here we go again, we strike out with our most primitive and unskilled self: harsh, threatening words or physical altercations. Fear unresolved or left unattended can become so much more than you would want. Fear is a thief of self-esteem, relationships, and opportunities. It is a life living in uncertainty.

Mistrust is a byproduct of fear. Relationships are often sabotaged while waiting for the worst to happen. Whether it is personal or work-oriented, communication can be impacted. Lies, inconsistencies, and self-protecting arguments and disagreements may drive the direction and trajectory of relationship and employment outcomes. Self-trust may be minimal and advancing in the workplace may be the base of one's lack of belief in one's potential and doesn't go very far. The cycle of fear and its consequences are usually not positive.

What can fear do to us? Don't wait to find it.

Move toward support. Whether counseling, faith-based support, or disclosing to friends or family find your way through it.

- Dr. Charla Waxman

SHOW UP

Why Presence Matters More Than Perfection For Pride 2026!



By Todd Evans

I've been working with LGBTQ media since 1994, and our company has been working with LGBTQ media since 1979.

Over the years as acceptance increased and more people joined the movement for Equality our professionals started to raise the goal posts of just which companies could or should come along and celebrate. This seems all well and good until you start to realize that so few could make these goals.

What started as a check to make sure those hawking beer were not taking that money and working against our equal rights which is good and proper, turned into a check list of perceived musts rather than a check list of best practices.

I still hear all the time, don't just show up at Pride but advertise all year long! Which of course is a best practice, but with tight budget and general marketing to do along with other segment marketing it becomes

problematic and can often discourage a business from doing anything.

Right now, we are in a time where not only is our Transgender community being singled out and attacked, but also anything that can be remotely tied to DEI (*which unfortunately has trickled down to include so many things that have nothing to do with corporate policy*), like companies advertising in LGBTQ media.

With every attack, it has only united our community and of course our media is now even more important than it was coming into this crisis of ignorance. Still, I have always believed every challenge comes with an opportunity.

Pride 2026 is the opportunity for many brands to just show up to stand with the LGBTQ community. These companies don't need to make grand statements, nor have every policy checked off by one of our best practice organizations, they can just show up and stand with us.

Nothing more, nothing less, sell their product and reap the rewards of being present. Of course, this still means they can't be working against us but in truth, most don't, they just want good customers for their services and products.

By the time this publishes we will be in the thick of Pride as the deadlines for the monthlies will have closed but today many local LGBTQ titles are weekly and of course they all have their websites and digital extensions which means even a last minute decision means you can still make the party! If not ready, then the best plans are thought out well in advance.

Todd Evans, President and CEO of Rivendell Media. *Serving as the national advertising representative for over 200 gay, lesbian and HIV/AIDS newspapers, magazines and entertainment guides, their websites and standalone digital properties.*

Todd has worked on almost every major LGBT media campaign, and that experience along with his knowledge of the media provide unique qualifications on what has worked, and what is necessary to reach and speak to these audiences.

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MARILYN MONROE

CENTENNIAL

By Nate Daniels

The word “icon” gets thrown around a lot these days. But few people have embodied that term like Marilyn Monroe. Her duality made her alluring. She was the glamorous movie star and the girl next door.

She was a seductress and an innocent. Below the surface, Monroe was a complex woman, intellectually curious, ambitious and tormented by her own insecurities.

The bona fide blonde bombshell rose to superstardom during her lifetime. And in the years since her untimely death, **Marilyn Monroe** continues to be a household name. She’s been mythologized in countless biographies, documentaries and biopics. Often imitated but never rivaled, Monroe continues to be a source of fascination for us all. She even inspired the **Marilyn Munster** character role in the *Munsters* TV series.

Monroe was born **Norma Jeane Mortenson** on June 1st, 1926, in **Los Angeles, California**. Her mother **Gladys**, who worked as a film cutter in **Hollywood**, named her daughter after movie star **Norma Talmadge**. Monroe had a troubled childhood. She married young, and when that relationship ended, she decided to make a fresh start. In her autobiography *“My Story,”* co-written with Ben Hecht, she reflected on this transitional period: “This is the end of my story of Norma Jeane. Jim and I were divorced. And I moved into a room in Hollywood to live by myself. I was nineteen, and I wanted to find out who I was.”

In Hollywood, she took acting, dancing and singing lessons and spent hours in front of the mirror reading from scripts.

Auditions became a way of life for the budding actress. She eventually signed with **20th Century-Fox** and, at the behest of studio executive **Ben Lyon**, changed her name to **Marilyn Monroe**. She made her film debut in the delinquent teen drama **Dangerous Years** (1947). Several uncredited performances in **Fox Productions** followed, with some of her scenes ending up on the cutting room floor.

Monroe was on the precipice of major stardom when she landed the starring role in director **Henry Hathaway’s** film noir **Niagara** (1953). The executives at Fox realized they had a hot commodity on their hands and the role of **Rose Loomis**, the film’s sultry femme fatale, was elevated from supporting player to leading lady. *Niagara* marked Monroe’s first film in color. Once she renegotiated her contract with Fox, she insisted that all of her pictures moving forward be in color. This was a strategic business move, ensuring that she would only be cast in major productions.

Billed as “the world’s most fabulous gold-digging blonde,” Monroe’s co-starring role in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953) cemented her status as a superstar.

>>> **MORE MARILYN** >>>



Directed by **Howard Hawks** and adapted from **Anita Loos'** novel and stage adaptation, **Jane Russell** and Monroe star as a pair of showgirls on a cruise heading to **Paris**. Russell and Monroe play opposites to great effect, blonde and brunette, naive and cynical, and have wonderful onscreen chemistry. The movie is best known for Monroe's musical sequence "*Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend*," where Monroe dons a pink dress with matching opera gloves, a hat tip to **Rita Hayworth's** famous "*Put the Blame on Mame*" outfit from **Gilda** (1946). It's a landmark performance and has been imitated by many, including **Madonna, Nicole Kidman** and **Ryan Gosling**.

The next move for Monroe was a starring role in Fox's "*How to Marry a Millionaire*" (1953). Monroe, **Betty Grable** and **Lauren Bacall** play three eligible bachelorettes who set out to marry wealthy men but find true love instead. It became the fourth-highest grossing film of 1953. Despite her success, Monroe still suffered from what we refer to now as "imposter syndrome." About working with Monroe, Bacall wrote, "*Marilyn was frightened, insecure, trusted only her coach and was always late... And yet I couldn't dislike Marilyn. She had no meanness in her... There was something sad about her, wanting to reach out, afraid to trust, uncomfortable.*"

When we think of Marilyn Monroe, there are three iconic looks that come to mind, the **Bob Mackie** designed "*Happy Birthday, Mr. President*" dress in 1962, the "*Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend*" pink dress and the white flowy dress in **The Seven Year Itch** (1955), both designed by **William**



Travilla. The image of Monroe playfully pushing down her skirt as the wind from a subway grate blows it up has become evocative of her unique brand of innocence and sexuality. In **Billy Wilder's** movie, we only see a glimpse of her legs. However, the full-length publicity photos shot in front of a thousand spectators are what most remember.

Monroe laid everything bare in what would be her last completed film. Based on an **Arthur Miller** story and directed by **John Huston**, *The Misfits* (1962) stars Monroe as a divorcee who falls for a free-spirited cowboy, played by **Clark Gable**. The film became known for being the swan song for both Monroe and Gable and for its stellar cast of players, including **Montgomery Clift, Thelma Ritter** and **Eli Wallach**. On her review of the film, critic **Pauline Kael** wrote, "*Monroe has never worked her vulnerability so fulsomely before...*" Unfortunately, after **The Misfits** had wrapped, everything seemed to go downhill from there. It was clear that she was battling her own demons. Her next project, "*Something's Got to Give*" (1962) was never completed.

Marilyn Monroe passed away that same year on August 4th, 1962, at the age of 36. Her career and life continue to fascinate audiences today, and her face has become embedded in popular culture, exemplified in **Andy Warhol's** "*Marilyn Diptych*," making her one of the most recognizable talents of her generation.

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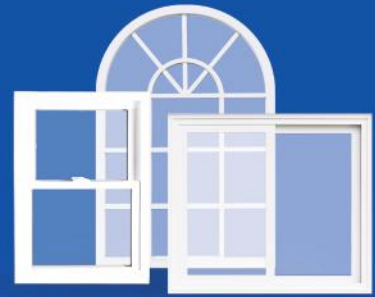
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