

'One Chicago' preparing for Jay Halstead's departure

BEHIND THE SCREENS WITH JOSHUA MALONI

"One Chicago" – the triumvirate of "Chicago Med," "Chicago Fire" and "Chicago P.D." – has become the cornerstone of NBC's scripted programming, with each show among the network's most-watched series. At the foundation of that universe is the Halstead brothers – Dr. Will (Nick Gehlfuss) and Det. Jay (Jesse Lee Soffer).

The two had a rocky beginning, quarreling over their parents and paths, but ultimately became the heart of their respective teams (though not always the best decision-makers).

Prior to the start of the 2021 season, Gehlfuss told BTS "It's a real privilege" to be able to cultivate a relationship that stretches two shows and nearly a decade of storylines.

Soffer said, "It doesn't exist anywhere else in the industry. ... Where else is that happening on TV? I don't know. ... It's pretty fantastic. And, honest to god, some of the best work I think I've

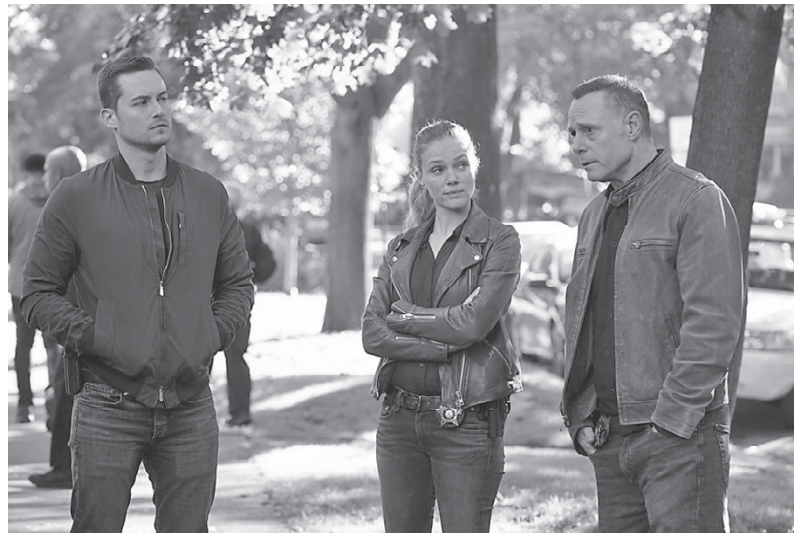
ever done has been on 'Chicago Med' – in the storyline with our father and everything."

That relationship will change this fall, when Jay leaves "Chicago P.D."

Late last month, Soffer told Variety he was exiting the show after nine-plus seasons and nearly 200 episodes. He said, in part, "To create this hour drama week after week has been a labor of love by everyone who touches the show. I will always be proud of my time as Det. Jay Halstead."

Showrunner Gwen Sigan told TVLine the younger Halstead's parting will be directly tied into the ongoing storyline, and will be "impactful."

For the intelligence unit, the timing couldn't be worse. Sgt. Hank Voight (Jason Beghe) recently lost a criminal informant he treated like a daughter, and in the season premiere he was spiraling out of control. Jay has tried to guide Voight back on the rails – without taking on self-destructive (read: illegal) habits. Losing Jay has the potential to drive Voight



"Chicago P.D." stars, from left, Jesse Lee Soffer as Det. Jay Halstead, Tracy Spiridakos as Det. Hailey Upton and Jason Beghe as Sgt. Hank Voight. (NBC photo by Lori Allen)

completely off track.

At the recent "One Chicago" press junket, Beghe was asked how Voight can overcome yet another deep, personal loss. He said, "That's what he has to do.

"And yeah, he bounces back, but sometimes, you know, it's a Super Bowl. You know, it doesn't

bounce where you want it to bounce. But it does bounce, and where it bounces is the question.

"But he will do his best, as always. It's just there's more stuff working against him. So that makes it interesting. You know, there's no game without an obstacle."

Jay's bowing out also will pose problems for Det. Hailey Upton (Tracy Spiridakos), whom he married last season. How (if) they will uncouple remains to be seen.

Storylines notwithstanding, Gehlfuss said, "I'm gonna miss Jesse quite a bit. But, thankfully, because of these jobs, we've created a relationship that we'll carry outside of it. And you know, he may come back. He's not dead.

"But I think for Will, there's going to be a void. Will and Jay's parents are no longer living. So, in a way, all Will had left from his immediate family is Jay. And so, there's going to be a void. He'll be extremely lonely. ...

"We're gonna miss Jesse Soffer in the 'One Chicago' universe. He's done a fantastic job. And I'll never forget how he welcomed me in. He's a good guy."

"Chicago Med" airs at 8 p.m. Wednesdays on NBC, followed by "Chicago Fire" at 9 p.m. and "Chicago P.D." at 10 p.m.

Artpark presents 'En Plein Air' Oct. 8

On Saturday, Oct. 8, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Artpark & Company presents "En Plein Air," an event organized in collaboration with the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center and Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University. Join artists from the "Niagara Painters Group" and others working on site at Artpark for an afternoon of outdoor painting during peak fall foliage season.

A press release stated, "Since the 19th century, artists including the impressionists have sought to paint the light and nature. The invention of transportable tubes for paint and more light-weight easels made it possible for artists to paint 'en plein air' – French for 'in the open air.'"

Participants from the "Niagara Painters Group" include Kelly

Lang Buckley, Karen Foegen, Roy Fink, Donna Hale, Jeanette Piktorna, Kath Schifano, Joan Langley Shaw, Carol Case Siracuse and Liz Spector, among others. This group organizes plein air painting sessions across the region and educates viewers about the process and techniques of painting outdoors. The "Niagara Painters Group" was started in 2013 at the NACC.

Organizers said, "Bring your own art supplies and get creative in our beautiful New York state setting. Fall-themed food and beverages from local businesses will be available both for sampling and for purchase. Offerings from Village Bake Shoppe, Southern Tier, Hamburg, Community Beer Works, Resurgence and Hartman's Distilling, among others. Try your luck at a special raffle with fall Artpark merchandise for sale. Explore Artpark. And more. This is a free, non-



ticketed event. Everyone is welcome.

"Artists have been drawing inspiration from Niagara Falls for centuries. Please also stop by the Castellani Art Museum to

see the 'Niagara in Summer and Winter' exhibition, featuring artworks inspired by the river. Admission is free."

For more information, visit www.artpark.net.

IN THE NEWS

Seneca Resorts & Casinos presents 'A Boy Band Christmas!'

Seneca Resorts & Casinos is doubling down on the holiday spirit with a special weekend of entertainment in December.

"A Boy Band Christmas," featuring members of 98 Degrees, All-4-One, O-Town and Ryan Cabrera, will perform in the Seneca Niagara Event Center at Seneca Niagara Resort & Casino on Friday, Dec. 9 (8 p.m.), and in the Seneca Allegany Event Center at Seneca Allegany Resort & Casino on Saturday, Dec. 10 (8 p.m.). Tickets for both shows are now on sale.

A press release noted, "A Boy Band Christmas" is a one-of-a-kind performance. The shows will feature Jeff Timmons, Drew Lachey and Justin Jeffre from 98 Degrees; Jamie Jones of All-4-One; Erik-Michael Estrada of O-Town; and Ryan Cabrera, coming together to rock the holiday season with their groups' greatest holiday classics and unforgettable hit songs. Each group and performer has played to sold-out crowds of screaming fans on the biggest stages in the world. Now, they are joining forces to make the 2022 holiday season extra special with a show

that will be at the top of everyone's wish list."

Tickets start at \$35.

The Bear's Den Showroom will welcome "Merry Christmas Darling: Carpenters' Christmas."

Again, the press release noted this show "does more than celebrate the timeless music of The Carpenters, it brings the music to life. Michelle Berting Brett and a band featuring a 'who's who' of Nashville musicians will fill two incredible nights with the holiday classics and biggest hits of Karen and Richard Carpenter. "The Carpenters sold over 100 million records in just more than a decade, powered by Karen's incomparable voice and Richard's arranging and composition skills. Their string of hit records, includes '(They Long to Be) Close to You,' 'We've Only Just Begun,' 'Rainy Days and Mondays,' 'Superstar,' 'Top of the World,' and, of course, 'Merry Christmas Darling.'"

Tickets start at \$45.

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