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Vol. 1835 FREE

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INSIDE: The Ninth Annual BTL Wilde Awards p.25

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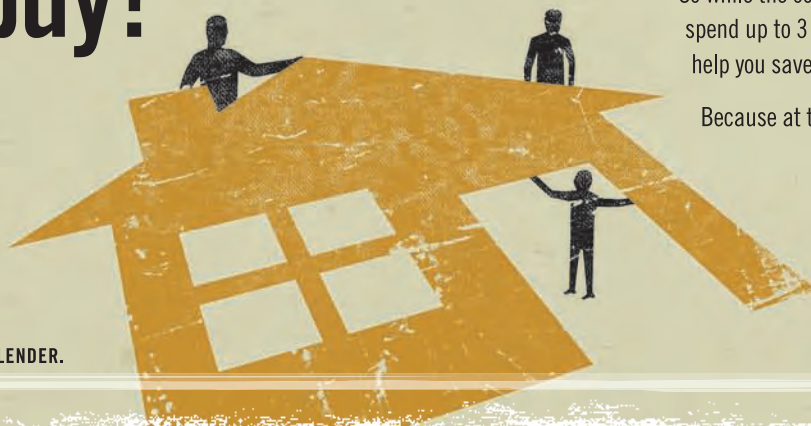
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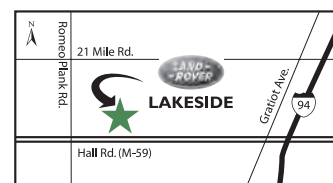
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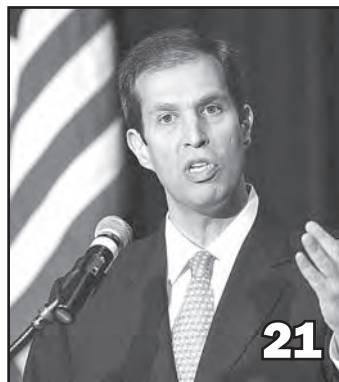
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News

11 Between Ourselves

Crystal Proxmire

12 LGBT Caucus proves influential at state Democratic Convention

Candidates vie for endorsements from gay liberal group

13 Speak Out

Making value-smart purchases

14 Trans health fair draws locals, travelers to community center

Inaugural event at Affirmations offers information, counseling and more

16 Michigan Supreme Court shifts left

Party-supported Granholm replacement pick has short, but noteworthy, resume of gay support

16 GOP sec. of state candidate takes hard right turn

Once endorsed by LGBT rights group, Ruth Johnson now courting anti-gay vote

17 Seventeen charged in medical marijuana raids

Ferndale clinic remains open after client files, equipment taken

17 Covey to leave Michigan AIDS Coalition

Ferndale mayor, AIDS advocacy pioneer hopes to continue work in political field

20 Proposition 8: What matters now?

A news analysis on the federal court case

21 Ken Melhman comes out

Former RNC chairman reveals behind-the-scenes contributions to marriage equality fight

21 Transgender woman pleased with hospital's response

Center's staff to receive mandatory LGBT training after anti-trans remarks draw criticism

22 International News Briefs

2,000 attend Kathmandu Pride parade

Opinions

18 BTL Editorial

There's no place like home

18 The Gay Moralist

Complicity and redemption

19 S/he said

Xenophobia, homophobia and Glenn Beck

19 Parting Glances

DQ4J in Gatorade (Pt.2 of 3)

20 Creep of the Week

Charlie Crist

The Wilde Awards

26 Nominations 2010

28 Program

Life

33 Pay(ton) It Forward

For two decades, hometown hero Barbara Payton never let anything in the way of her career – not even cancer

34 Crazy Sexy Cool

NYC nightlife queen fiercifies the Arts, Beats & Eats crowd

36 BTL's Best of the Beats

Our picks for music must-sees

37 Tastes, sights, sounds – gays?

On eve of the festival's first year in queer-central Royal Oak, residents rap on Arts, Beats & Eats going LGBT

37 Mingling with Macy Gray

Singer talks life, death and sex

44 Happenings

MDSL hosts a weekend at the ball park

Rear View

48 Dear Jody

49 Horoscopes

50 Puzzle

51 Classifieds

52 Cocktail Chatter

53 Scene Check

54 Deep Inside Hollywood

Cover story

Photos: Andrew Potter **33**



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Crystal Proxmire is a freelance writer for Between The Lines. But what many readers may not know is that she also runs a website dedicated to her hometown, Ferndale. The 31-year-old resident covers city politics, crime, news and more on Ferndale 115.

1 Why did you decide to start Ferndale 115?

When I was 6 years old, my siblings and I were kidnapped and taken across the country for several months. When the FBI brought us back to town, a local news channel did a story against my dad's wishes. They made several mistakes, including calling my brother a daughter. From then on my dad was very critical of the media. In high school I was misquoted in the local paper as saying that the AP tests were "a brain drain." Then, when I was 21, my dad shot himself in the parking lot of the Madison Heights Police Department and the local papers refused to cover it.

All those things, along with the over-commercialization of national media, made me want to start my own paper to do the kind of job that I always envisioned a good reporter doing. I got involved in online news groups and figured out that this was going to be the future news source. I started an online paper in Muskegon first, where I was living after college, but it was just too soon for that area. Ferndale is my home, and I think the best place for this kind of experiment.

2 What do you love most about living in Ferndale?

I grew up here, but I left to get my degree from Grand Valley State and lived on the west side of the state for a while. When I left, Ferndale was becoming a ghost town, but when I came back it seemed new and vibrant again. The LGBT community in particular gave me a place where anyone – even nerdy reporter chicks – can fit in.

In Ferndale, there are over 400 nonprofit groups, as well as many festivals and chances to be involved. Plus lots of stories. It helps that it is walkable.

3 What does your website provide to the community that is unique?

The 115's motto is to "inform, inspire and unite." That's why we're different – because it's not about what I can write to satisfy advertisers; it's about what people really need to know if they want to be informed, inspired and connected to their neighbors. I live here. I share info from a variety of groups. I don't endorse candidates and I don't sell out. I also don't let people post anonymous comments. Those get nasty on other sites and they are often used to spread lies, rumors and misinformation.

In addition to that, we have the most comprehensive list of community events and the most news about Ferndale.



There are many issues that the world needs more understanding and communication about, but there is also the issue of simply getting people to be aware – not just of the big issues, but about each other. Getting to know their neighbors, getting to understand their local government ...

4 How do you hope to further contribute to your community in the future?

My goal is to make the paper successful enough that I can teach others to be reporters and step back to focus on writing novels and nonfiction. I've written a book about FTMs, and I am really interested in gender issues (having been raised by a single male has given me an interesting perspective on this), but also there are other issues that I think I could make a difference in.

There are many issues that the world needs more understanding and communication about, but there is also the issue of simply getting people to be aware – not just of the big issues, but about each other. Getting to know their neighbors, getting to understand their local government and learning how to look at issues with a critical – yet open – mind. I think there's a lot to do.

5 What is your ultimate hope for Ferndale 115?

Financial sustainability so that I can further reach my paper's goals. I'm only covering about 25 percent of what I could be if I had things like staff, transportation and a good salesperson. Somewhere out there is a person who shares my passion for communication, and also likes money enough to do a good job of advertising sales.

But even above that, I'd like to change the media model and figure out how to make The Ferndale 115 News a truly reader-supported paper, instead of advertising-based.

I also want to get readers more involved with writing. For the first year or so I wouldn't accept stories unless I could pay the author. I thought that was fair. Yet now I realize that a lot of the rewards of writing are not financial, so I am now open to submissions and I hope a lot more people will feel safe sharing their views of the community.

Get your dose of Ferndale news at www.Ferndale115.com.

Who do you want to see featured here? Between Ourselves is a weekly feature that highlights members of Michigan's LGBT and allied community. To recommend someone for Between Ourselves, e-mail Jessica at jessica@pridesource.com

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Convention nominations

A comprehensive list of Dem and GOP party picks from the Aug. 28-29 conventions

Democrats

Lieutenant governor: Brenda Lawrence, 55, of Southfield. Credentials: Mayor of Southfield

Attorney general: David Leyton, 56, of Flint Township. Credentials: Genesee County prosecutor

Secretary of state: Jocelyn Benson, 32, of Detroit. Credentials: Wayne State University law professor

Supreme court nominees: Alton Davis, 63, of Grayling. Credentials: Supreme Court justice, former Appeals Court judge

Denise Langford Morris of West Bloomfield
Credentials: Oakland County Circuit Court judge, former Oakland County assistance prosecutor

Republicans

Lieutenant governor: Brian Calley, 33, of Portland. Credentials: Banker and state representative

Attorney general: Bill Schuette, 56, of Midland
Credentials: Former state Court of Appeals judge, congressman, state senator and state Agriculture Department director

Secretary of state: Ruth Johnson, 55, of Holly
Credentials: Oakland County clerk, former state representative and former Oakland County commissioner

Supreme court nominees: Mary Beth Kelly, 48, of Grosse Ile. Credentials: Wayne County Circuit Court judge

Robert Young, 58, of Grosse Pointe
Credentials: Supreme Court justice

LGBT Caucus proves influential at state Democratic Convention

Candidates vie for endorsements from gay liberal group

BY JAN STEVENSON

DETROIT – “Michigan does not need a CEO – a Chief Executive Outsourcer,” intoned Democratic gubernatorial candidate Virg Bernero at the Michigan Democratic Convention’s opening press conference Aug. 28 at Cobo Hall. Bernero’s feisty style was echoed by his running mate, Southfield Mayor Brenda Lawrence, who said to the packed room of reporters and supporters, “We will lead with Main Street in mind, not Wall Street.”

The LGBT and Allied Democratic Caucus, which met right after the opening, “is the bridge between the LGBT community and the Democratic Party,” said Phil Volk, caucus chair. “Our goal is to get the average voter aware of the facts: that we have no employment protections in most of the state, that bullying goes on without a check and that LGBT seniors are abused.”

After introducing the caucus board and committee chairs, a steady stream of candidates and surrogates addressed the caucus to ask for support and an endorsement.

Jocelyn Benson, candidate for secretary of state, said she is honored that the LGBT Caucus was the first one to endorse her. “Driver’s licenses should include accurate information, which includes the correct gender,” said Benson. “I will fight for transgendered Michigianians to have their licenses reflect their gender as they understand it.” She will face Republican nominee Ruth Johnson, who has publicly stated her opposition to changing the gender on driver’s licenses for transgender citizens.

The most moving speech came from a 16-year-old, closeted bisexual girl from Livonia who spoke on behalf of Liz Bauer, who is up for reelection to the State School Board. “I’m not out to my family or my friends at school, but Liz Bauer knows me,”

Jocelyn Benson (pictured right), candidate for secretary of state, said she is honored that the LGBT Caucus was the first one to endorse her. “Driver’s licenses should include accurate information, which includes the correct gender. I will fight for transgendered Michigianians to have their licenses reflect their gender as they understand it.”

the girl said. “I can talk to her. Please support her.”

John Austin, the vice president of the State Board of Education, was passionate in his support of Liz Bauer and fellow candidate Lupe Ramos-Montigny. “The LGBT caucus is the most influential caucus of the party,” said Austin. “You are the most reliable, and your issues – bullying, educational reform and tolerance, are the ones that Michigan schools need to focus on the most.”

Both Bauer and Ramos-Montigny are endorsed by the caucus.

Natalie Mosher, the only congressional candidate that attended the caucus, gave a powerful speech. “I support the Murphy amendment to repeal ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.’ I support repeal of the poorly named Defense of Marriage Act, and I support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act,” she said. Mosher is seeking to unseat incumbent Republican Thaddeus McCotter in the 11th Congressional



District.

The only candidate for the Michigan Senate who attended the caucus was Pam Jackson, who is running in the 15th District against incumbent Republican Nancy Cassis. She described herself as a feisty, stealth candidate.

The only openly gay candidate to speak was Gary Post, who is running for the state House in the 47th District in Livingston County. “Is anyone willing to go to Hell with me?” he joked, referring to the town of Hell, Mich., which is in his district. Post has a long record of political activism in Michigan and later in North Carolina. He returned to Michigan five years ago and was recruited by local party leaders to run.

Three other candidates for the Michigan House spoke: Lisa Brown of the 39th District, Scott Dianda from the 110th and Harry Yanez from the 10th.

University of Michigan Regent Paul Brown, who is up for reelection this year, spoke about how the universities need to lead on discrimination issues, especially those effecting the LGBT community.

The daughter of Alton Thomas Davis, Brianne Davis, brought some levity into the room with a funny story about what it’s like to live in a small northern town where everyone knows her father, the judge. Davis was appointed by Gov. Jennifer Granholm to the Michigan Supreme Court two days prior to the convention, and will therefore run in November as an incumbent. “My father is fair and hard working, and he understands the issues that effect the LGBT community,” Brianne Davis said. “In a specific case that affected children of a same-sex couple, he found that both parents had parental rights and obligations. He will stand up for all of us.”

The Republican convention, held the same day in East Lansing, did not include a LGBT caucus.



Democratic nominee for governor Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero introduces his pick for lieutenant governor, Southfield Mayor Brenda Lawrence. BTL photos by Jan Stevenson.

Making value-smart purchases



Earlier this year, the Supreme Court ruled in the Citizens United case that corporations have a First Amendment right to spend as much money

as they want on political campaigns. The high court's decision was celebrated by big business interests, but sharply criticized by public interest groups and others who recognized the negative impact it would have on democratic participation in the United States. This decision was a sharp deviation from prior Supreme Court decisions on campaign finance issues, which had put limits on corporate spending in campaigns. The high court opened the floodgates for wealthy business interests to spend unlimited amounts of money to elect their favored candidates and influence the decisions of high-level governmental officials.

Those who celebrated the Citizens United decision claimed that it would strengthen American democracy and would have a positive impact on our campaigns. Just a few weeks ago, we saw how wrong these people were.

Target Corporation decided to take advantage of the Citizens United decision by contributing \$150,000 to Minnesota Forward, a conservative organization that has endorsed a homophobic candidate for Minnesota governor, Tom Emmer.

The Target donation is particularly insulting to our community because Target stores have earned a reputation as a great place for LGBT people to work, with inclusive non-discrimination and domestic partner employment policies in place. Target Corporation has sponsored gay pride events in the Minneapolis area, and Target stores are a popular shopping destination for many members of the LGBT community (affectionately called "Tar-zhay" by some customers). The Human Rights Campaign has given Target a 100-percent score in its last several Corporate Equality Indexes.

In response to Target's contribution, a number of LGBT and progressive organizations have called for a boycott of Target stores. A question arises, of course, as to

whether a boycott is necessary. Target still maintains strong policies of inclusiveness and did offer an apology to those who might have been offended by the company's decision to contribute money to Minnesota Forward. In the weeks since this issue arose, the company has taken pains to emphasize its support for the LGBT community.

On the other hand, we should expect more from a supposed ally of our community. LGBT customers spend a lot of money at Target stores, and certainly the company owes those customers respect in how it uses its financial resources.

In addition to highlighting the negative consequences of Citizens United, this incident also points to the necessity of consumers making socially conscious purchasing decisions in the marketplace. All of us should be aware of who we're giving our money to when we shop for groceries,

Sometimes, our purchasing options may seem limited – particularly when it comes to price. In a tough economy, we are always looking for a bargain. It is important that people balance the financial bargain with the ethical and moral values that guide our lives.

go out to eat, buy consumer electronics, or purchase a car. We have many choices, and should make every effort to ensure that our purchases reflect our values.

Sometimes, our options may seem limited – particularly when it comes to price. In a tough economy, we are always looking for a bargain. It is important that people balance the financial bargain with the ethical and moral values that guide our lives.

Some of us choose to boycott certain stores to protest the policies of a corporation, knowing full well that our individual decision to stay away from a store will not have a dramatic impact on that company's bottom-line. But it's about our own values

HRC's Corporate Equality Index: www.hrc.org/issues/cei.htm

Text of the DISCLOSE act: <http://tinyurl.com/342j3gn>

Contact Sens. Levin Stabenow to voice support for the DISCLOSE Act:

Sen. Levin: <http://levin.senate.gov/contact/>

Sen. Stabenow: <http://stabenow.senate.gov/email.cfm>



and what we believe is important.

People make individual choices as to where they shop, and a boycott may not be feasible for various reasons. In the case of Target, the company's positive stance toward the LGBT community makes it different than companies which have low ratings on the Corporate Equality Index. Of course, many would rightly argue that Target's positive record is exactly why that company should be held to a higher standard.

Ultimately, all consumers – and voters – need to educate themselves on these issues. It is important that we remind the businesses that we patronize that we expect them to value our dignity, and we must let them know when they disappoint us. We should also put pressure on the Senate to pass the DISCLOSE act, legislation already passed in the House that would increase corporate transparency in the aftermath of the Citizens United decision. Our voices need to be heard, especially when the other side has so much money to spend. American democracy depends on our participation and continued vigilance.

Eric Rader teaches political science at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn. His courses focus on American government and state and local government. From 2003-2004, Rader served as an assistant policy advisor in the office of Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm, focusing primarily on education and civil rights policy, including LGBT issues. He currently lives in Ferndale and is proud to be part of Michigan's LGBT community.

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BTL starts preparation for 2010 Election Guide

BTL is currently compiling and reviewing research from across the political spectrum as it prepares its semi-annual voter guide. You can

follow developing stories online at our web site www.pridesource.com. Just follow links under Voter Guide on the home page. If you wish to

receive a printed version of the guide email your address to editor@pridesource.com.

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Find out more about the study and check your eligibility at <https://www.sph.umich.edu/sexlab/yms/yms.html>

IRB Number: HUM00034684

Trans health fair draws locals, travelers to community center

Inaugural event at Affirmations offers information, counseling and more

CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

FERNDALE – AIDS prevention, art therapy, anti-aging, hair removal, gender reassignment surgery, support groups, free health care and counseling were just some of the services presented Aug. 28 at Michigan's first-ever Transgender Health Fair, held at Affirmations LGBT community center in Ferndale.

Transgender Michigan and Affirmations teamed up to organize the event, which brought in locals interested in gathering information and resources, as well as attendees from Indiana and Ohio, who commented that there has never been a trans health fair in their home states either.

The event connected FTMs, MTFs, allies and people considering transition with service providers.

"A lot of transgender people are afraid to go to the doctor of hospital because there are a lot of horror stories," said Transgender Michigan founder Rachel Crandall, who coordinated the event. "We hear from people all over the world, but even in my personal experience I know a transperson who went to a doctor for an exam and was sexually molested. Another friend told their doctor they wanted to start taking hormones, and the doctor's response was 'I'll give you 30 seconds to get out of my office before I call the police.' These stories really happen and they get spread around.

"But today is not about that," Crandall continued. "Today we let patients know there are trans-friendly service providers out there, and also to let doctors and businesses know there



AmeriCorps employee Alex Krasicky will be running Transgender Michigan's new Ferndale office. Photos by Crystal Proxmire



are a lot of friendly transpeople out there."

One popular booth at the event was for the FernCare free clinic, which opened Aug. 7 at a temporary location in Ferndale's Kulick Community Center. The clinic sees patients ages 19-64 without health insurance twice a month for non-OB/GYN-related medical issues.

"One of the first things we considered was that if we were going to open in Ferndale, we'd better make sure that our volunteer doctors and nurses knew how to address the concerns of the transgender population," said Board President Ann Heler. "We found out that trans issues are not even taught in medical school. Not five minutes is spent introducing these doctors and nurses to a segment of the population that has their own health issues, and needs basic health care just like the rest of us."

FernCare recruited local doctor Neal Wilson, M.D., to be on-call during clinic hours to answer patient or physician questions about transgender health issues. The nonprofit organization also had Michelle Fox, founder of Transgender Detroit, come to speak to the doctors and nurses about the transgender experience. "We are so grateful to be in this place, and to have people like Michelle and Dr. Wilson to give us the guidance we need so that every patient can feel comfortable coming to the clinic," added Heler.

Other services catered specifically to the mind, body and spirit of transgender individuals. Licensed esthetician Heather Engbarth of the Be Well Medical Center in Berkley provided samples of beauty crèmes and information about hair removal, botox and other services offered at the center. Electrology expert Tracy Lynn is an MTF who does permanent hair removal, wigs and other beauty treatments designed to make the transwoman feel pampered and beautiful. Her electrology treatments are permanent, whereas laser hair removal is only effective for about a year.

Alfreda R. Rooks, administrative director of Comprehensive Gender Services at the Univer-

sity of Michigan hospital, was on hand to answer questions about surgery, counseling and other issues of concern. "Insurance is a big issue," Rooks said. "They consider chest surgery to be for cosmetic purposes and not medical ones. In FTMs in particular there is a disparity in coverage, and it's really hurtful to them to look in the mirror and see a part of the body they don't feel reflects who they are. Doctors are getting more accustomed to male-to-female surgeries because they've been around longer."

U of M offers basic medical care for transgender patients as well as mental health counseling, surgery, workplace support and therapy groups. They have also just added a transgender support group, which is held on the third Tuesday of each month at 2025 Traverwood Drive, Suite A1 in Ann Arbor. For more information go to www.med.umich.edu/transgender.

In addition to the successful health fair, Transgender Michigan is celebrating the opening of their first office in the Community Pride Building in Ferndale, which is also the home of Michigan AIDS Coalition.

Alex Krasicky, who will be managing the Transgender Michigan office through a position with AmeriCorps, says she's excited about her career path. "There are so many misconceptions out there about transpeople," she said. "Because of the Internet, things are changing quickly. It used to be that the average age for transitioning was in the 50s. Now there are more and more young people who make the decision early in life, before they have all the family and legal issues to deal with. I'm glad I can be a part of this time of change, and maybe make a difference in the lives of other transgender people."

For updates on Transgender Michigan's news and upcoming events, visit www.transgendermichigan.org.

Ron T. Williamson DDS



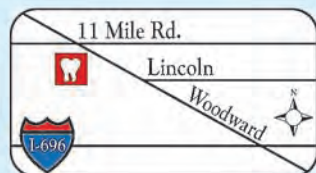
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Michigan Supreme Court shifts left

Party-supported Granholm replacement pick has short, but noteworthy, resume of gay support

BY JESSICA CARRERAS

Associated Press contributed to this report

LANSING — In one dramatic day, the deeply divided Michigan Supreme Court shifted in favor of Democrats as Republican-turned-Independent Justice Elizabeth Weaver stepped down and was replaced by Gov. Jennifer Granholm appointee Alton Thomas Davis. It's a good sign for LGBT activists and other liberals looking to shift the high court left in November's elections.

Gov. Granholm named Appeals Court Judge and Grayling resident Davis to the state's highest court Aug. 26, and Davis took the oath of office just before noon. His appointment doesn't require legislative approval.

During a news conference with Weaver and Davis, Granholm told Weaver that "the next justice must share your compassion for those in need, your commitment to justice and your fierce independence. I can't think of anyone who better meets those criteria than Judge Alton Tom Davis." She called Davis "the most experienced jurist that I have ever appointed to the bench — all courts."

Davis was nominated for a full eight-year term at last weekend's Democratic state convention in Detroit, but plans to run as a nonpartisan candidate. The other candidate endorsed by Democrats is Oakland County Circuit Judge Denise Langford Morris. The Republican-endorsed candidates vying for the two open seats

are incumbent Justice Robert Young and Wayne County Circuit Judge Mary Beth Kelly.

Weaver's resignation didn't shock many, given recent clashes with both political parties.

She has twice been nominated by Republicans for the Supreme Court, but has clashed with the court's GOP justices frequently over the years. After a third Democrat, Diane Hathaway, won Chief Justice Cliff Taylor's seat in 2008, Weaver has often sided with the Democrats in 4-3 decisions, infuriating Republicans. She had planned to run for re-election as an independent until deciding to step down.

Weaver has such a prickly relationship with her fellow Republicans that they filed a misconduct grievance against her earlier this year. Davis said he agrees with Weaver's assertion that there has been too much personal animosity on the court.

"I do not think that has any part of professional legal work, and ought not be there, and I'm not going to participate in it," he said. "It's distracting, it is detracting and it's not to be encouraged."

The rancor continued with Michigan GOP spokeswoman Jennifer Hoff saying in a statement after Granholm's announcement that "Michigan residents deserve a qualified judge, not a politician in a robe."

Asked about the comments, Davis said, "It's a good reason to have a nonpartisan system so that those kinds of wild attributions for political purposes aren't necessary or encouraged."

The 63-year-old Grayling resident was ap-

pointed by Granholm to the Court of Appeals in 2005 after being a circuit court judge for Otsego, Crawford and Kalkaska counties for 21 years. Davis taught English before attending the Detroit College of Law. Upon graduation, he worked in private practice and was the part-time Crawford County prosecutor before winning the circuit court seat in 1984.

Politicos on both sides are scrambling to review Davis' record to gauge where he will stand on key issues — one of them being LGBT rights.

During his time on the circuit court, Davis did show a glimmer of gay support, albeit in an unpublished decision. The February 2009 ruling authored by Davis concerned the custody rights of a lesbian couple who parented three children together under Illinois' second-parent adoption laws, but had since moved to Michigan and dissolved their relationship.

Davis, along with Judge Stephen L. Borrello, wrote in their opinion: "'Parent' is defined as 'the natural or adoptive parent of a child.' It is apparent that the trial court ignored this definition and construed the word 'parents' in the (Michigan) Child Custody Act as requiring male and female adoptive parents. ... The only relevant consideration in this matter is each individual party's established relationship as an adoptive parent with the children, not their relationship with each other."

Though it doesn't make Davis a transparent win for progressives, ACLU of Michigan LGBT Project Staff Attorney Jay Kaplan says it's a good indicator. "It's hard to say, but hopefully (Davis)

will turn out to be a progressive justice," Kaplan said. "It's hopeful that with his appointment, that might mean that there's a 4-3 majority of progressive justices on civil rights issues, but we just don't know how things will play out."

And before they can, Davis has to be elected to a full eight-year term.

Davis will appear on the Nov. 2 ballot with the title "Justice of the Supreme Court" under his name. Republican Justice Young also will have the incumbent designation.

It's a distinction, says Kaplan, that could give Davis an edge in winning one of the two open seats in a less closely-followed race where voters tend to select those already on the court. "What will be next to his name is the term 'incumbent,' meaning people would recognize him already as a justice," Kaplan said. "It could be very helpful."

But the fight isn't over yet on either side. The Supreme Court race in recent years has drawn millions of dollars in ads run by candidates and third parties, and Davis said he knows he'll have to raise money for his race. He just doesn't know how much.

Judges cannot run for re-election once they're 70, so if Davis wins, he'll only be able to serve one term.

The ACLU of Michigan will be holding an educational forum on the Michigan Supreme Court justices in the near future. Check www.aclumich.org for updates.

GOP sec. of state candidate takes hard right turn

Once endorsed by LGBT rights group, Johnson now courting anti-gay vote

BY TODD A. HEYWOOD

Republican candidate for Secretary of State Ruth Johnson has issued a statement denying support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and disavowing her 2002 endorsement by the Triangle Foundation's Political Action Committee.

In a move meant to match the political stance of opponent Rep. Paul Scott of Genesee County, Johnson also issued a statement saying, "I do not support allowing people to change their gender on their license as a result of surgery or lifestyle."

Scott entered the race in February with a great deal of attention on his announcement that he would not allow transgender residents to change their gender markers on their state ID cards. The practice of changing one's gender is currently allowed under Secretary of State policy with a letter from a doctor stating that the person in question has undergone some type of medical procedure to treat their gender dysphoria.

Anti-gay forces are celebrating Johnson's voiced position on the issue.

"In an era of identity theft and national security concerns, we're glad that Ruth Johnson has now joined Rep. Paul Scott in expressly stating her opposition to the Secretary of State policy

of allowing men to falsely identify themselves as female on their state-issued driver's license, and vice versa," said Campaign for Michigan Families chairman Gary Glenn. Glenn also leads the anti-gay American Family Association of Michigan.

"The people of Michigan should at minimum be able to trust their state government to tell the truth, not enable certain individuals' psychological and emotional delusions by officially and legally identifying them as something they biologically are not. We urge all candidates for secretary of state to let voters know where they stand on this honesty-in-government issue."

The move to make transgender people a political football in the GOP secretary of state race is not sitting well with advocates for the LGBT community.

"It's unfortunate that the conversation has come back to the issue of denying fairness to transgender residents in the state of Michigan," said Alicia Skillman, executive director of Equality Michigan. "We need to move forward, not take giant steps backward regarding trans equality. To refer to transgender individuals changing the sex on their driver's licenses as 'dishonest' is insulting and downright oppressive. Michigan needs to catch up to states that value difference. Michigan needs to keep the conversation moving

toward fairness and equality for every person in the state."

Julie Nemecek, who made national headlines in 2007 when she was fired from the conservative Christian Spring Arbor University for being transgender, also condemned the move.

"To not allow a transgender person to change their gender marker on a driver's license is to ignore the advice of the AMA (American Medical Association), APA (American Psychological Association), WPATH (World Professional Association for Transgender Health) and other health care organizations that understand this medical condition," Nemecek said. "The U.S. State Department allows changes on a passport even without surgery."

In 2002, Johnson received the endorsement of Triangle Pride PAC, a pro-gay rights organization in Detroit. Officials from Equality Michigan, which formed when the Triangle Foundation and Michigan Equality merged earlier this year, have been unable to locate the survey Johnson would have filled out in 2002 to earn her endorsement from Triangle PAC.

Sean Kosofsky, who was director of policy at Triangle Foundation and a leader in the Triangle PAC in 2002, said he does not recall specifically why Johnson was endorsed in the August 2002 primary, but did say, "Folks had high hopes

she would be a moderate."

A press release from July 30, 2002, announcing the endorsements which included Johnson, said the endorsements were made "based on several criteria including responses to questionnaires, their record on GLBT issues and viability as a candidate. Each candidate was surveyed on issues ranging from hate crimes, civil rights, parenting, family, youth and military issues and HIV/AIDS policy."

On the other hand, a survey filled out by Johnson and released by Gary Glenn and his Campaign for Michigan Families shows Johnson has no support for LGBT issues.

In that survey, not only does Johnson say she would oppose allowing transgender people to change their gender markers on state-issued licenses, but that she opposes adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the state's civil rights law to prevent discrimination, opposes hate crimes legislation which includes the LGBT community and opposes allowing same-sex couples to adopt children. On top of that, Johnson says she would fight to keep the state's constitutional amendment which prohibits marriage equality for same sex couples.

This article ran in full on www.MichiganMessenger.com.

17 charged in medical marijuana raids

Ferndale clinic remains open after client files, equipment taken

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

"We aren't going anywhere," the silver-haired matriarch of Clinical Relief states, less than 24 hours after being forced face-down on the floor and handcuffed by drug-enforcement officers with ski masks and guns.

Barbara Agro, 70, of Lake Orion was working the reception desk of Clinical Relief at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 25 when Oakland County Narcotics agents raided the medical marijuana facility, confiscating all of the clinic's medicinal supply, confidential patient records, some computers, telephone equipment and the modem for the security cameras. They even took the press clippings and thank-you letters and cards that were tacked up on the bulletin board in the waiting room.

Three employees were arrested on-site and face charges relating to alleged illegal drug sales, along with 14 others from both Clinical Relief and Waterford-based business Everybody's Cafe, where a compassion club meets. Arraignments were held Aug. 27 in two area courts.

There were also raids on homes associated with the businesses, including Clinical Relief proprietor Nick Agro's home in Royal Oak and his mother, Barbara Agro's home in Lake Orion. Police say people at the facilities were selling marijuana outside the scope of what the law permits for medicinal marijuana patients, including selling to patients without medical marijuana cards.

Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard says the cases illustrate of abuses of Michigan's medical marijuana law. Defendants and their attorneys say those arrested were legally distributing medical marijuana.

Barbara Agro and another employee who had been present during the raid returned to work Aug. 26, referring patients to other legally certified suppliers and setting up doctor-referral appointments for their clinic. The clinic's doctor was not in the building at the time of the raid and was expected to begin seeing patients again this week.

"They took all of our records, so for now it's like starting from day one," Agro said. "They took everything but the furniture. But we'll bounce back.

"What we are most worried about is our patients who need medicine that they can't get," she continued. "We give them referrals, but I know some people will be too afraid to go. They're terrified that they'll get raided now that the police have their information. Our patients aren't criminals. Many have



Barbara Agro shows that empty file folders are the only remains of records at Clinical Relief after the Aug. 25 police raid. Photo by Crystal A. Proxmire

"Our patients aren't criminals. Many have never broken the law in their life, and this is a medicine that they need, and want to get from a medical doctor. They'd rather have elderly cancer patients and people in wheelchairs go try to buy drugs off the street? I know there are people leaving here today without hope, because they won't have the medicine that they need to get through day to day."

-Barbara Agro, whose son Nick Agro, a co-owner of Clinical Relief in Ferndale, was arrested last week on illegal drug sale charges

never broken the law in their life, and this is a medicine that they need, and want to get from a medical doctor. They'd rather have elderly cancer patients and people in wheelchairs go try to buy drugs off the street? I know there are people leaving here today without hope, because they won't have the medicine that they need to get through day to day."

In addition to the employees, Agro says three sick patients were handcuffed and forced to lie face-down on the ground with guns to their heads. Another woman who had only been on premises for a consultation "was scared out of her mind and crying" as police "cornered her coming down the stairs," said the other employee, who asked to remain anonymous. They and their belongings were searched, and they were

ultimately released.

"They never took their masks off," Agro said of the raiders. "They took the modem for the security camera so we can't prove what they did and what they took. They never gave a warrant and they never gave us a receipt for what they took.

"Our lawyers are all over this."

As an afterthought, Agro added "I think that's what they want. They want to find a clean place like us and try and use us to create new law; see what can they get away with on a place that is being run in a clinical, legitimate way. We're one of the first and they're looking for a test."

"Just in time for it to go to court before the November elections," added a patient, who was one of many that stopped in just to see if everything was OK after hearing news of the raids. Police confiscated the phone system, so patients who heard about the raid had been unable to call for more information. The clinic typically serves between 50-80 patients a day. Many have been stopping by in person to show support and to get referrals.

Clinical Relief opened three months ago, shortly before the city of Ferndale enacted a temporary moratorium on medical marijuana facilities. On the evening of Aug. 23, the City Council repealed the moratorium and set in place zoning ordinances for new businesses. The ordinances require a special use permit, and limit the areas of the city where such facilities can open.

Hilton Road is not included in the permissible zoning areas, however Clinical Relief is allowed to remain open because they are "grandfathered in," i.e. they opened before the restrictions were put in place.

"This is where we want to be. Not up on Woodward where we'd be mixed in with head shops and cafes or other 'pothead' type places," Agro said. "This is a medical clinic and we take it very seriously."

She said that customers go up to 84 years of age and include doctors, professors, lawyers and teachers. Many are cancer patients. Some are terminally ill. Many are wheelchair-bound. "If you could see what I see, you'd understand why we do what we do," she added. "It's not like people think."

Covey to leave Michigan AIDS Coalition

Ferndale mayor, AIDS advocacy pioneer hopes to continue work in political field

BY JESSICA CARRERAS

After over 22 years in the field of HIV/AIDS work, Michigan AIDS Coalition Chief Operating Officer Craig Covey has announced that he is resigning from the nonprofit organization. His last official day was Aug. 31.

Covey said that for his next career move, he plans to amp up his work in politics, as well as dive deeper into other efforts, such as environmental issues. In the



Craig Covey

Aug. 3 primaries, he beat two Democratic competitors for a chance to be on the ballot for a set on the Oakland County Commission. Though Covey faces a Republican nominee in the Nov. 2 general election, the heavily liberal district all but guarantees him a spot as a commissioner. However, as with the rest of Covey's career, that won't be the only job on his plate as he looks to help out with the gubernatorial election, environmental work

and the efforts of local Democratic parties.

Covey began work in HIV/AIDS in Ohio in the 1980s, eventually founding the Michigan AIDS Prevention Project in 1988. Concurrently, he worked at the Michigan Department of Community Health as a consultant and prevention specialist until 2002, and was also elected to the Ferndale City Council and eventually, as mayor of the city in 2006. He was reelected to that post in 2008.

In early 2009, Covey helped engineer the merger between MAPP and the Michigan AIDS Fund to create the Michigan AIDS Coalition, which then elected Helen Hicks as its CEO. Covey stayed on as COO, but knew that his time for departure was drawing near.

"I think for all people there's a time when you can say you've given your best and it's time to move on," Covey said. "I gave it my best shot all along and have had an absolutely wonderful career in the work. It really wasn't a plan. But I sort of jumped in with both feet when I started losing friends."

Indeed, Covey has been a mainstay of Michigan's HIV/AIDS advocacy and fundraising scene for many years, holding events, doing speaking engagements and spreading messages of safe sex. The latter, which allowed him to educate many teens and young adults, was the most rewarding, said Covey.

"I got to speak to and work with literally tens of thousands of young people in terms of prevention and education," he said. "I can't tell you how many condoms I put on bananas and cucumbers.

I look back at that and realize that not only did I get to do good work, but I actually had fun."

And the fun, so to speak, will continue. Covey plans to stay on at MAC on a volunteer basis, helping out with such fundraising events as the Ferndale Blues Festival and the annual Pub Crawl.

Covey's only regret, now that he is departing? "After 22 years, we might see the light at the end of the tunnel, but we didn't finish the job and the epidemic," he laments. "But it's so much bigger than anybody."



"MARK MY WORDS — IN FOUR YEARS, DOZENS OF TEA PARTY REPUBLICAN LEADERS WILL START COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT MOSLEMS WITH FEDERALLY FUNDED HEALTH CARE."

BTL EDITORIAL

There's no place like home

It's no secret that the LGBT and arts communities are intrinsically linked. From the studios of Hollywood to the community theaters of Michigan, from renowned artists throughout history to local up-and-coming art galleries, gay and lesbian men and women have always been tied to the arts, promoting them, supporting them financially and always, being a part of the creation of art in every form.

These connections between LGBT people and the artistic communities are visible in many ways — some quite subtle and others, well, flamboyantly obvious. Both sides come to play in this week's issue of *Between The Lines*, where we celebrate both new, still-growing connections between arts and LGBTs and older, steadfast ones.

Now in its ninth year, the Wilde Awards showcases the LGBT community's undeniable commitment to theater arts. The annual ceremony, held this year on Sept. 1 at Detroit's Gem and Century Theatre, celebrates the past season's best shows and bestowing honors upon Michigan's best and brightest actors, directors, writers and other contributors to the theater scene. It is, among other purposes, our community's way of showing support for local theater because theater has always supported our causes.

But there are other supportive events happening in the near future, too. Though it may not be as obviously connected to the gay world as the Wilde Awards, the Arts, Beats & Eats festival, held Sept. 3-6 in downtown Royal Oak, is forging a new connection to the LGBT community that has never before been truly tapped.

Much of this new partnership is due, honestly, to location. Plop a well-known event into a new city in the heart of southeast Michigan's gay community and, lo and behold, local LGBT residents will adopt it as their own. Such is the case with Arts, Beats & Eats, which probably has more gay contributors this year than most local theater performances.

Gay-owned restaurant Pronto!, HIV/AIDS nonprofit Steppin' Out, Five15 Media Mojo &

Gay-owned restaurant Pronto!, HIV/AIDS nonprofit Steppin' Out, Five15 Media Mojo & More, Affirmations — even Between The Lines — are all getting involved in ABE for the first time. And the LGBT attendance? It remains to be seen, but it's safe to say that this will likely be the gayest Arts, Beats & Eats ever.

More, Affirmations — even *Between The Lines* — are all getting involved in ABE for the first time. From raising money to hosting performances to our own unprecedented coverage of the annual event, the gay community is all over this festival. And the LGBT attendance? It remains to be seen, but it's safe to say that this will likely be the gayest Arts, Beats & Eats ever.

And why not? Festival organizers sure do embrace the idea.

"I know you probably don't care," ABE executive producer Jon Witz excitedly spilled to BTL last week, "but my brother is gay, and my wife's brother is gay, too!"

And that's what it's really all about: the connections. Whether they're the ones we're born into or the ones we choose, it's important to note when allies and LGBT people decide that they can work together on the same endeavors.

So Mr. Witz, we *do* care, because those welcomed connections and sense of worth are what makes the arts such a wonderful place for so many LGBT people to call home, whether it's obvious to us or not.

THE GAY MORALIST



BY JOHN CORVINO

In some circles, Ken Mehlman's coming out as gay (<http://bit.ly/cYRKv8>) this week was about as shocking as Rosie O'Donnell's coming out in 2002, or Ricky Martin's coming out earlier this year. Others were quite surprised. Still others asked, "Who's Ken Mehlman?"

Answer: Ken Mehlman is, according to the Atlantic piece that broke the story, "the most powerful Republican in history to identify as gay." He's the former chair of the Republican National Committee, and he was George W. Bush's campaign manager in 2004.

Which means that Mehlman, 43, has spent a good chunk of his adult life contributing to a party and to campaigns that engaged in explicit gay-baiting. Recall that during the November 2004 presidential election, anti-gay marriage amendments passed in 11 states — part of Karl Rove's strategy to draw out conservative evangelical voters.

Does Mehlman regret his role in all that?

Sort of, it seems. The Atlantic piece claims that Mehlman tried to scale back the marriage-equality attacks in "private discussions" with senior Republicans, and that he acknowledges that his coming out sooner might have mitigated some of his party's homophobia.

But the quotations from Mehlman suggest that he doesn't fully grasp his complicity. From the Atlantic piece:

"What I do regret, and think a lot about, is that one of the things I talked a lot about in politics was how I tried to expand the party into neighborhoods where the message wasn't always heard. I didn't do this in the gay community at all."

He said that he "really wished" he had come to terms with his sexual orientation earlier, "so I could have worked against (the Federal Marriage Amendment)" and "reached out to the gay community in the way I reached out to African Americans."

Here, Mehlman sounds at least as concerned (or more) about his failure to educate gays about Republican values as he does about his failure to educate Republicans (including himself) about gays.

In the interview, Mehlman also claims that former President Bush is "no homophobe," which is true if by homophobe you mean someone viscerally uncomfortable with gay people. I lived in Austin when Bush was Texas governor, and I knew people who knew him well. Gays were part of the Bushes' social circle for years.

But homophobia doesn't always come with open disgust, any more than racism always comes with hoods and pitchforks. Publicly, Bush, Rove and Mehlman treated homosexuality as unspeakable at best, and at worst a threat to family and civilization. In doing so, they perpetuated the notion that gayness is a dirty little secret, something shameful and unholy.

Such homophobia is far more insidious — its damage far more pervasive — than any "God Hates

Complicity and redemption

The Republican party's gay-baiting in 2004 didn't just lead to a wave of discriminatory amendments — it also drove countless LGBT youth into the shaming closet that Ken Mehlman is now gratefully escaping. That's what I want to see front and center on his regret list.

Fags" rally. As someone who has experienced the closet first-hand, Mehlman ought now to understand that.

The reason that LGBT people are angry at Mehlman is that he was a key player in an organization that fostered and exploited such homophobia. The Republican party's gay-baiting in 2004 didn't just lead to a wave of discriminatory amendments — it also drove countless LGBT youth into the shaming closet that Mehlman is now gratefully escaping.

That's what I want to see front and center on his regret list.

Which doesn't mean I'm going to join the pile-on of those who say that there's absolutely nothing that Mehlman could ever do to redeem himself. Quite the contrary.

Mehlman can't change his past; no one can.

But if we want people to make better choices in the future, we hardly encourage their reform by telling them that they're beyond redemption — as various bloggers have suggested regarding Mehlman.

Mehlman could easily have spent his life, as do many closeted Republicans (and Democrats and Independents), covertly seeking romance with people who either don't know or don't care about his past. He has plenty of money; he could have afforded a nice closet.

By coming out in *The Atlantic* he has rejected that path. Good for him.

Instead, he wants to devote his energy to the fight for marriage rights. He has become actively involved in the American Foundation for Equal Rights, which is working to overturn California's Prop. 8. His professional history puts him in a unique position to reach out to Republicans and others traditionally opposed to marriage equality.

If he continues these efforts — if he uses his strategic know-how to win political battles for equality, if he goes behind "enemy lines" to fight the homophobia that his party so deftly exploited, if he works to dismantle the crippling shame of the closet — then he should be congratulated, not shunned.

It won't erase his past. But it's a start at a much better future. I wish him well.

John Corvino, Ph.D. is an author, speaker and philosophy professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. To learn more about John or see clips from his DVD, visit www.johncorvino.com.

S/he said

Xenophobia, homophobia and Beck

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL

"If you think xenophobia only applies to foreign nationals, think again. Xenophobia literally means 'having abnormal fear or hatred of the strange or foreign.' I'd hate to break the news, but many people view us in the Pink community strange or foreign or both. ... Those who are not completely heterosexual and cisgender face possible identity based crimes along with foreign nationals."

-Cobus Fourie, South African LGBTIQ rights activist, in his blog titled "We're ALL African," linking the persecution of foreign nationals with LGBT issues, <http://cobusfourie.blogspot.com>, Aug. 1.



Suzanne Goldberg

"Research indicates younger people are beginning to see sexual orientation as benign variation, so that the differences between gay and nongay couples are simply not so interesting. Once that happens, societies have less interest in distinguishing between relationships of gay and nongay couples."

- Suzanne Goldberg, law professor, Columbia University's Center for Gender and Sexuality Law, in a report titled "Shifting attitudes take gay rights fight across globe," <http://edition.cnn.com>, Aug. 19.

"I broke up Al and Tipper Gore. And Sandra Bullock and Jesse James. No, I am not a 50-something masseuse or a tattoo model with a thing for Nazi outfits. I'm just a gay man who's about to celebrate his second wedding anniversary. Apparently, my marriage is a menace. ... Yes, I am responsible for the sorry state marriage is in. The Gores' 'shocking' split was no surprise to me. Blame me for breaking America's sweetest heart. ... Jenny and Mark 'Appalachian Trail' Sanford, Mel and Robyn Gibson – I put them all asunder. I'm here. I'm a home wrecker. Get used to it."

- Jose Fidelino, in his column titled "Confessions of a Gay Weapon of Marital Destruction," www.time.com, Aug. 8.

"(The) coworker is not a homophobe, although he may still have some issues to work through. And many of the party-goers were not homophobes either. One of the couple's we were speaking to made it clear their dedication to gay rights. But no one spoke up against the vocal homophobe at the party. Maybe they were all just as shocked by what this person was saying, or maybe they just did not know what to say, or maybe they thought it best not to rock the boat too much. Passive acceptance of bigoted views is almost as bad as having and expressing those views."

- Dickie; in his blog titled "Surprising Homophobia," about he and his husband being invited to a co-worker's party and dealing with a homophobic guest, www.imjustgaying.com, Aug. 24.



"Will the gays come and get us? Honestly, I think we have bigger fish to fry. You can argue about abortion or gay marriage or whatever all you want. The country is burning down."

- Fox News TV show host Glenn Beck, in response to a question about whether same-sex marriage is a threat to society, quoted from an article titled "The new battle: What it means to be American," www.politico.com, Aug. 20.



Mark Segal

"Calling all Muslims terrorists is a hate campaign. We, as gay people, should know this trick. Think of all the rights denied us using hate – hate based in lies. Look through issues of any local LGBT newspaper and you'll see stories about communities that tried to keep an LGBT center or business out of its neighborhood. The rationale being used to try and deny the (Ground Zero) cultural center is the same one that has been used against LGBT establishments."

- Mark Segal, publisher, Philadelphia Gay News, in his column titled "Mosque issue is an LGBT issue," Philadelphia Gay News www.epgn.com, Aug. 26.



Parting Glances

Then & Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

"I'm convinced that if more ministers, politicians – 'American Idol' judges especially – the world would be a better place."

DQ4J in Gatorade (Pt.2 of 3)

GATORADE, Ariz. – Heaven works in mysterious ways its wonders to perform. Perhaps that's why I'm here on BTL assignment covering the first annual meeting of Drag Queens for Jesus.

Staff drew straws for the coveted weekend assignment, and I must assume that the infinite powers that be wanted me here to report on what – and for whatever reason of cosmic miss-givings – is deemed a moment of LGBT historic import – for America's spiritual well being.

I was flown in, expenses free, by Rainbow Three Ways Airlines, and hadn't been in this thriving conservative community of 832 when several townsfolk – none of whom is an admitted, known, or suspected crossdresser (or seemingly literate, for that matter) asked, "Are you the nationally known Parting Glances weekly columnist?"

"You're better looking in person," said one, a comment with which I had to wholeheartedly agree. God knows that astute observation alone was worth the 10-hour flight down here. As another saying goes – with slight variation – a columnist is without honor only in his own city.

(Just kidding. My PG readers send me cards, gifts, pocket money, hunky phone numbers every week. God also knows I really appreciate the fiduciary adulation. It sure beats 10 cents a spell-checked word anytime.)

As to the Gatoraders who had correctly tagged me, I suspect that Rainbow flight attendant Chance Ankleman put them up to it. I fancy he's got a thing for me (either that or he's got a tic) because he keeps winking at me every time he looks my way – which is disconcertingly often.

Tonight's the highlight of the DQ4J confab: a Passion Play With Off Broadway Line Dance Routines, as recreated through the eyes of The Three Wisemen, history's first on-record drag queens (incorrectly translated from ancient aramaic as kings).

The Three Queens are to be sung by Mrs. Golda, Frankensena & Mirthola, award winning Gospel drag, Jewish-convert trio from Eclair County, Mont. Choreography is by Blanche 'Swaddling Babe' Beaucoup, who holds the Guinness Book of Records for having seen "Chorus Line" 450 times and "Annie," 310.

"I've paid my apprentice Equity dues," she says. "And I've got the every theater ticket stub and calluses to prove it."

Here's more poolside interview with DQ4J first Lady-Love Mary Magdalena Bi-Faith: "I'm convinced that if more ministers, politicians – 'American Idol' judges especially – got in drag, even if they just did a bit of creative eyeliner – say, like Adam Lambert – the world would be a better place. And fabulous!"

"International relations would be greatly improved if patriarchal, macho-male leaders allowed others to see a softer, femme side. It's true that some of the more liberal PMs do crossdress at home – but frankly wearing a burka is not what I consider crossdressing."

"You've got to go public. What better place, say, than CNN? And – maybe I'm a tad off-base here – but I'm looking forward to the swear-in day when a member of the Supreme Court starts – and, admittedly, it's a small, judicious step for mankind – wearing a string of real – not faux – pearls with traditional, no-frills, basic black robe."

"It's my next Facebook project. I could use your help, Charlita PeeGee, soliciting your fans to sign up. By the way, stud muffinette, those gams of yours are Land O'Goshen just gor-gee-oh-so! You up to a little first-time drag? We need another walk-on for our Passion Play with musical flagellation. You just hafta shave them, look pretty, carry a rainbow whippette, do a dance step or two, and get on your knees for the BIG have-a-blessed-day."

"How about a loin cloth with sequins? And maybe a little TLC spank-spank for Jesus in the wings?"

Charles@pridesource.com. Facebook, too. Sign up.

Charlie Crist

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Look, I don't know if Florida Gov. Charlie Crist is gay. And while it really should be a non-issue because being gay is not this scandalous thing that makes a person unfit for public office like some loonies on the far right believe, the fact is: it matters. It's an issue because Crist is making it an issue by reiterating his support for a constitutional ban on same-sex couples getting married.



Charlie Crist

Granted, this isn't the first time Crist has said he supports such a thing. Apparently he mentioned it at some point while running for governor and governors don't really have much power when it comes to the United States Constitution. But now he's running for Senate as an Independent. The United States Senate.

On Aug. 29 during an interview on CNN, Ed Henry brought up the issue of same-sex marriage and pointed out that Marco Rubio, one of Crist's opponents in the Senate race, supports a constitutional ban.

Call me crazy, but "it's just how I feel" is a pretty flimsy argument for amending the Constitution to keep gay people from marrying each other. Hell, it's a flimsy reason to amend it for anything.

"The former Republican Party Chairman Ken Mehlman came out and said he's gay and he called on conservatives to kind of move to the political center and be more tolerant on this issue," Henry said. "Now that you're trying to occupy the political center, are you still in favor of a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage?"

"I feel the same way, yes, because I feel that marriage is a sacred institution, if you will," Crist responded. "But I do believe in tolerance. I'm a live-and-let-live kind of guy, and while I feel that way about marriage, I think if partners want to have the opportunity to live together, I don't have a problem with that."

So he's a "live-and-let-live kind of guy" who believes in "tolerance," eh? And while marriage is "sacred," thereby rendering homos unfit for such an institution, he doesn't mind partners living together. So long as their relationship isn't in any way recognized or protected and the law treats them as legal strangers then Crist doesn't "have a problem with that." Oh, how very magnanimous of him.

"I think that's where most of America is," Crist continues. "So I think that, you know, you have to speak from the heart about these issues. They are very personal. They have a significant impact on an awful lot of people and the less the government is telling people what to do, the better off we're all going to be."

Since telling the government to stay out of people's personal lives and writing discrimination into the constitution seem to be contradictory, Henry accuses Crist of trying to have it both ways (no pun intended, I'm sure).

But Crist doesn't budge. "Well, everything is in a matter of degree, Ed, and when it comes to the institution of marriage, I believe that it is between a man and a woman; it's just how I feel," he says.

Call me crazy, but "it's just how I feel" is a pretty flimsy argument for amending the Constitution to keep gay people from marrying each other. Hell, it's a flimsy reason to amend it for anything.

By itself, Crist's unabashed support of writing discrimination into one of our nation's founding documents is alarming to say the least. But it's even more alarming if he is, indeed, gay. And he is widely rumored and believed to be just that.

Yes, he's married. To a lady. Since 2008. Which, of course, proves that he's not gay because of how getting opposite-sex married automatically makes you not gay. So who knows? Maybe all of the gay rumors are wrong. Either way, Crist is still a creep.

Proposition 8: What matters now?

A news analysis on the federal court case

BY REX WOCKNER

Various legal documents will be filed and then the federal Proposition 8 case will be argued in the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals the week of Dec. 6. And there's little chance California's statewide and local LGBT activists will talk about much else between now and then.

So what's the Prop. 8 chitchat here on the Left Coast? There are several issues:

1 The governor and attorney general and everyone else who was sued in the federal Prop. 8 case have refused to defend Prop. 8 in court. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jerry Brown say Prop. 8 is unconstitutional, that gay and lesbian couples should be able to marry right now and that there should not have been a stay issued pending appeal.

Because of their refusals, Prop. 8's only defenders are the defendant-intervenor from Protect Marriage, the folks who brought up Prop. 8 in the first place. But in what has emerged as a central question in the case, the defendant-intervenors may not have legal "standing" to function as defendants at the appellate level. Nobody sued these folks in this case, and these folks have nothing to do with defending the state constitution, of which Prop. 8 is a part. That's Brown and Schwarzenegger's job.

The Ninth Circuit has ordered these Prop. 8 proponents to prove they even had standing to file an appeal. There is at least a 50-percent chance they'll be kicked out of the case.

2 Imperial County — a poor, dusty home to about 167,000 people located in the desert between San Diego County and the Arizona border — wants to enter the case as a real defendant. Represented by a Christian legal group, they hope to ensure that the ruling that struck down Prop. 8 really can be appealed. The Ninth Circuit will make that call as well.

Many observers think it's a long shot, but, of course, courts are often unpredictable and the Ninth Circuit might really want to find a way for Prop. 8 proponents to have their appeal of U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker's Aug. 4 ruling that Prop. 8 violates the U.S. Constitution up, down and sideways.

3 If the Protect Marriage folks are allowed to function as defendants, they may attempt to sidestep Walker's 80-some conclusions from the trial and start from scratch, arguing that gays

are hard to define and nobody knows what makes you gay, that morality and religion provide a legally acceptable "rational basis" for governments to discriminate against gays in some ways, that marriage is obviously primarily about making babies the old-fashioned way, and what have you.

It will be up to the Ninth Circuit to decide how much weight Walker's comprehensive findings on All Things Gay carry in an appeal. Legally speaking, those are evidentiary facts.

There's something else that can be brought into a courtroom: legislative facts.

he's gay, does that increase the validity of his extensive findings on All Things Gay — i.e., he knows what he's talking about — or could it mean he was biased in the case from the get-go? Does it matter if he's gay? Should it matter? Would a straight judge be better-positioned to restrict marriage to straight people? We likely haven't heard the last of the Walker/gay meme.

5 The masterminds of the Prop. 8 federal case, famed lawyers Ted Olson and David Boies, always have indicated they wanted to take the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. Others have suggested that should the U.S. Supreme



For the sake of simplicity, a legislative fact is something of such general knowledge that it need not be proven, or cannot be proven even though everyone knows it's true. "Love is real" might be an example of a legislative fact.

The Prop. 8 proponents could head down this road in an attempt to restrict marriage to opposite-sex couples, arguing, among other things, that "marriage is between a man and a woman — period." Of course, in the Bible, marriage is sometimes between a man and several women. And starting in 2001 with the Netherlands, 12 countries have decided that marriage also is between a man and a man, and a woman and a woman. One of those countries is the U.S. Same-sex marriage is legal in Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont and Washington, D.C.

"Marriage is for procreation" could be another attempted legislative fact, despite the fact that millions of married straight people never have procreated.

4 The mainstream media have outed Judge Walker as gay, though they have presented no evidence and Walker hasn't said anything about his sexual orientation one way or the other. If

Court rule in a particular way in the case, same-sex marriage would become legal in all 50 states.

What if no one is found to have standing to appeal the Prop. 8 case to the Ninth Circuit? The case would end there, Walker's ruling would take effect, Prop. 8 would be stricken from the state constitution, and one more U.S. state would have gay marriage: California.

Is that an acceptable ending to this super-high-profile case with superstar attorneys who had grander designs? Most California gay leaders say, "Yes, we'll take it."

Some, however, would certainly see it as a limp ending to a provocative case that was opposed, then grudgingly embraced, by the national gay legal establishment — a case that raised gay hopes high that we could end this whole same-sex-marriage thing in one fell swoop. On the other hand, the case's stopping before it starts at the Ninth Circuit would be a "safe" resolution of the matter. With each appeal, there's always the chance we could lose it all, California included.

The first court filing in the appeal is due Sept. 17.

Ken Mehlman comes out

Former RNC chairman reveals behind-the-scenes contributions to marriage equality fight

BY REX WOCKNER

Ken Mehlman, George W. Bush's 2004 campaign chief and the former chairman of the Republican National Committee, came out as gay Aug. 25 in an interview with *The Atlantic*.

He is the most powerful Republican in history to openly identify as gay, and previously had denied being gay in published reports.

"It's taken me 43 years to get comfortable with this part of my life," Mehlman said. "Everybody has their own path to travel, their own journey, and for me, over the past few months, I've told my family, friends, former colleagues and current colleagues, and they've been wonderful and supportive. The process has been something that's made me a happier and better person. It's something I wish I had done years ago."

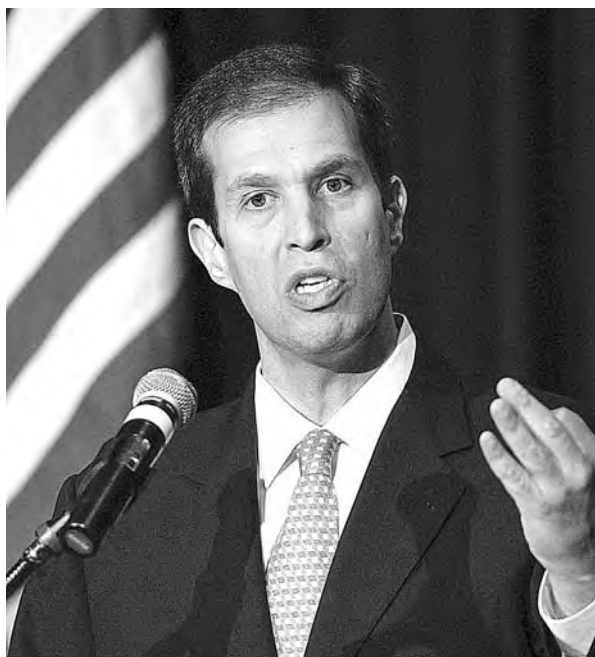
Mehlman's leadership positions in the GOP came during the party's most anti-gay period. He was George W. Bush's political director during Bush's first term as president, served as Bush-Cheney campaign manager in the homophobic 2004 campaign and chaired the RNC from 2005 to 2007.

"His tenure as RNC chairman and his time at the center of the Bush political machine coincided with the Republican Party's attempts to exploit anti-gay prejudices and cement the allegiance of social conservatives," *The Atlantic* said.

Raw Story noted, "Some believe Bush's support for anti-gay marriage measures carried him to victory (in 2004), particularly in Ohio, which had a gay marriage measure on the ballot."

The *Atlantic* reported that Mehlman has been making amends behind the scenes on exactly that issue, revealing that he is significantly involved in California's Proposition 8 federal lawsuit masterminded by the American Foundation for Equal Rights and superstar attorneys Ted Olson and David Boies.

AFER's Chad Griffin said Mehlman's



contributions to the group have been "tremendous." And later this month, Mehlman is chairing a major AFER fundraiser that already has raised \$1 million, Griffin told the *Towleroad* blog.

"When we achieve ... equality, he will be one of the people to thank for it," Griffin stated.

But as praiseworthy as such moves may be, some of Mehlman's homosexual brothers are demanding more.

Blogger Mike Rogers, who leaked the story of Mehlman's coming out just before *The Atlantic* released it, wrote: "Ken Mehlman is horribly homophobic and no matter how orchestrated his coming out is, our community should hold him accountable for his past. ... I want to hear from Ken that he is sorry for being the architect of the 2004 Bush reelection campaign. ... I want to hear from Ken that he is sorry for the pressing of two Federal Marriage Amendments as political tools. ... And those state marriage amendments. I want to hear him apologize for every one of those, too."

Blogger Joe. My. God. picked up Rogers' post and called Mehlman a "repulsive ... homophobic scumbag asshat."

Equality California Executive Director Geoff Kors commented: "I'm glad he finally came out and glad he's raising money and working to undo the tremendous damage he did to LGBT people. He needs to acknowledge the damage he caused and apologize for the lives he's ruined, raise millions of dollars to overturn every one of the state constitutional amendments (banning same-sex marriage that) he helped pass and spend the rest of his life working to achieve equality and justice for the community he is part of that he used for selfish political purposes."

Kors said Mehlman also should urge George W. Bush to join his wife, Laura, in supporting legalization of same-sex marriage.

Scott Long leaves Human Rights Watch

BY REX WOCKNER

Scott Long resigned Aug. 23 as director of Human Rights Watch's LGBT Rights Program.

In a note to friends, Long wrote: "In mid-July I suffered a pulmonary embolism of a fairly unpleasant sort. While running to catch a bus on a New York street, I saw a blinding effusion of white light, amid which several spangled and bell-bottomed figures vaguely resembling ABBA beckoned me to an eternal disco complete with spinning ball. Yanked back from their blandishments by a superior fashion sense, I spent a couple of weeks in intensive care. I had plenty of time lying in a bendable bed with an IV dripping, to compose, like Woody Allen, lists of the things that make life worth living: the last movement of Bruckner's Third Symphony; 'Sit Down, I Think I Love You' as covered by the Staccatos, with that harpsichord and those violins; the closing pages of 'Lolita'; W. H. Auden as sung by Cleo Laine. Somewhere in the middle of the lists, I realized that working for Human Rights Watch wasn't on them."

Long said he likely will pursue a fellowship at Harvard University, from which he received his Ph.D., and write a book "about what's moral and what's immoral about 'international solidarity,' and what's worked and what hasn't in campaigns for sexual rights."

"Scott's exemplary dedication and diligence has been an inspiration to us all," said Hadi Ghaemi, executive director of the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran and a member of HRW's LGBT Advisory Committee. "His articulate and relentless defense of LGBT rights everywhere is unparalleled, and his tremendous efforts on this front have been a guiding voice for justice and equality."

In addition to amassing a long list of accomplishments during his eight-year tenure at HRW, Long occasionally sparked controversy. In June, HRW issued an apology to British gay leader Peter Tatchell for what HRW Executive Director Kenneth Roth called Long's "inappropriate and disparaging comments" about Tatchell in recent years.

Calls for census count of LGBTs

BY REX WOCKNER

The California Assembly passed a resolution Aug. 23 urging Congress and President Barack Obama to require that the next census count LGBT Americans.

Introduced by Sen. Christine Kehoe, D-San Diego, the measure passed 49-25. It previously passed the Senate 22-9.

"All segments of our nation's diverse population need to be counted by the U.S. Census," said Equality California Executive Director Geoff Kors. "By ensuring that the LGBT community is counted, our state and federal government will have the necessary information to address the needs of our community."

Kehoe said: "LGBT families and households are disproportionately underserved and more likely to live in poverty. We call on the U.S. Congress and the president to ensure that every person living in the U.S. is counted and has access to culturally competent health and human services."

Transgender woman pleased with hospital's response

Center's staff to receive mandatory LGBT training after anti-trans remarks draw criticism

MUNCIE, Ind. (AP) – A transgender woman said she was satisfied with changes promised by a hospital after she complained of being ridiculed by medical staff and denied treatment in its emergency room in July.

Ball Memorial Hospital announced Aug. 24 that all employees would receive mandatory lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender awareness training starting this month and that it was updating its non-discrimination policies to include language specific to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Erin Vaught, a transsexual who has transitioned from male to female, complained that she was referred to as a "he-she" and "it" by hospital staffers after she arrived at the emergency room coughing up blood on July 18.

Vaught said that during face-to-face meetings with Ball Memorial President Michael Haley and others at the hospital, she felt that they "would do the right thing."

"I'm happy with the outcome," Vaught told Muncie newspaper *The Star Press*. "I think that we reached a positive resolution."

The hospital said it would work with the advocacy groups Indiana Transgender Rights Advocacy Alliance and Indiana Equality in deciding on its response to Vaught's complaints.

"Simply put, we failed to live up to our brand promise of care in regards to Erin and we apologize to her for that," Haley said in a hospital statement. "In the last month, I have heard from many team members who share my disappointment with Erin's experience

at BMH."

Vaught said last month that when she, her wife and son went to the hospital's emergency room coughing up blood, she was entered into the computer system as male despite an ID that stated she was female. Vaught said she was kept waiting for two hours without any treatment before seeing a doctor who said she couldn't treat her because of her transgender condition.

Her treatment prompted complaints from the advocacy groups and others.

Vaught said she and her family would return to Ball Memorial in the future.

"My goal from the outset was to try to make sure that my experience wasn't repeated," she said.

Australian election seen as good for gay marriage

Australian marriage equality advocates welcomed the Aug. 21 federal election results, saying the nation is “a huge step closer” to allowing same-sex marriages.

Australian Marriage Equality spokesperson Alex Greenwich said that with the balance of power now held by independents in the House of Representatives and by the Greens in the Senate, chances for reform have increased dramatically.

“If a major party can be persuaded by the Greens and/or independents to have a conscience vote, it’s game on,” Greenwich said. “The 2010 election campaign saw the issue of marriage equality move to the center of the political stage, and now the result has seen achieving marriage equality move into the realms of real possibility.”

Greenwich said the overall national swing from Labor to the Greens “is partly because Labor betrayed its own principles by opposing marriage equality while the Greens have been the only party representing the 60 percent of

Australians who support marriage equality.”

He said his group’s heavy leafleting in gay neighborhoods also cost Labor votes and gained votes for the Greens.

“The swing against Labor and to the Greens is particularly pronounced in the ... inner-city seats of Grayndler, Sydney and Melbourne where we distributed 75,000 leaflets highlighting Labor’s anti-equality stance,” Greenwich said.

Gays, Catholics clash in Guadalajara

Gays and Catholics clashed outside the Roman Catholic cathedral in Guadalajara, Mexico, on Aug. 21 and 22 after Cardinal Juan Sandoval Íñiguez called gays “faggots” (“maricones”) and accused Mexico City Mayor Marcelo Ebrard of bribing the Mexican Supreme Court to uphold Mexico City’s recent legalization of same-sex marriage and adoption.

Hundreds of LGBT people staged protests and hundreds of Catholics formed what one local report called “a human shield” to protect the church.

“Honestly, I was worried that they would

damage the building, throwing things at it or matters of that sort,” said cathedral defender Emilio González Guzmán, son of Jalisco Gov. Emilio González.

The Supreme Court also ruled that same-sex marriages and adoptions by married gay couples that take place in Mexico City must be recognized in all 31 of Mexico’s states.

2,000 at Kathmandu Pride parade

Some 2,000 people turned out for the first large-scale gay pride parade in Kathmandu, Nepal, Aug. 25. Openly gay Member of Parliament Sunil Babu Pant led the procession, riding an elephant.

British Ambassador John Tucknott joined the march and U.S. Ambassador Scott DeLisi sent a message of solidarity. Tucknott told The Times of India, “It is about saying yes to embracing diversity.”

In an e-mail interview, Pant said: “This festival is to be established as an international one, which it did from this year on. We had foreigners from 15 countries, including India, Japan, U.S., UK, Denmark, France, Norway and Australia, and we expect more international participants from next year on.”



Kathmandu’s pride parade. Photo courtesy of MP Sunil Babu Pant



Grand Rapids gay bowlers complete, place in Cologne Gay Games

Several gay bowlers from the Grand Rapids area – (pictured here, left to right) Tim Lowing, Jeremy Brown, Earl Haney, Gene Artman, Rick Wright and Jim Lahnala – competed in this year’s Gay Games, held in August in Cologne, Germany. Both Haney and Artman won bronze medals in the team event, Division B, while Brown won the bronze in singles bowling, Division A.

Artman, who also competed in the 2006 Gay Games in Chicago, said the event was an important global representation of Michigan gay athletes.

“It’s important that we represent our state, and while our group was small compared to, say Team San Francisco, we hope that we have laid a positive foundation that will hopefully encourage not only participation in future Gay Games, but see an increase in gay sporting events in Michigan itself,” Artman said. “We know there are many gay athletes in the state, but very few gay sporting organizations for them to join. It is our hope that perhaps that will change for the better over the next few years.”

- BTL staff

has been with his partner, Alwin Ulrich, since 1969 and they registered their relationship under Germany’s national same-sex-partnership law in 2001.

Because the couple are not married, Römer receives a smaller pension from the city, his attorneys said.

Moscow activists file Euro court case

Moscow Pride organizers filed suit against Russia in the European Court of Human Rights on Aug. 23 alleging violations of their right to freedom of assembly as guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights.

A year ago, gay activists were denied permission to stage pickets against Moscow Northern District Prefect Oleg Mitvol after he waged a campaign, ultimately successful, to close down the city’s oldest gay bar, Body and Soul. Russian courts upheld the bans.

“Such places, which lead to the moral degradation of citizens and become the source of troubles, should be closed,” Mitvol said at the time.

Leading gay activist Nikolai Alekseev said he has “no doubt” Moscow Pride will win the case.

“As soon as the Strasbourg court gives a decision on the ban of the Moscow gay prides in 2006, 2007 and 2008, we will have a new basis for the improvement of the right of all citizens to freedom of assembly in Russia,” he said.

To date, Alekseev and associates have filed 18 lawsuits with the Euro court complaining of discrimination based on sexual orientation. All of the cases remain to be decided.

Thousands march in Dublin for same-sex marriage

Several thousand people marched in Dublin, Ireland, Aug. 22 demanding legalization of same-sex marriage and denouncing the nation’s new same-sex-partnership law for conferring a second-class status.

The march, from City Hall to the Justice Department, was organized by the LGBT activist group Noise.

Organizers said the gay community cannot be pacified with a separate system because that does not create equality.

EU lawsuit seeks equal employment benefits

A case before the European Court of Justice seeks spousal employment benefits for same-sex couples in the 27 nations of the European Union.

The case, Jürgen Römer vs. City of Hamburg, argues that an EU anti-discrimination directive requires that employers treat straight and gay couples identically regardless of whether a particular nation allows same-sex marriage or registered same-sex partnerships.

Römer, a retired Hamburg city employee,



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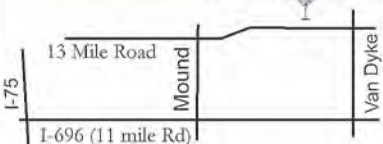
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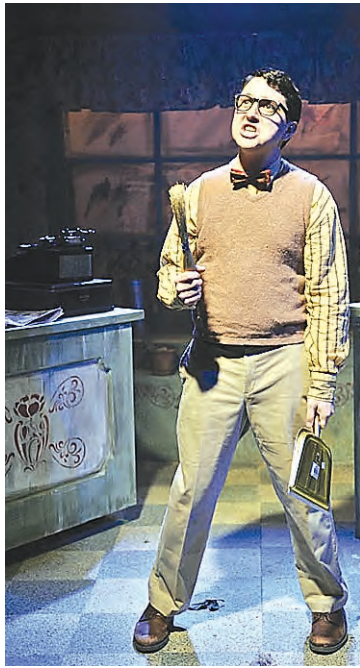


I love acting. It is so much
more real than life.

– Oscar Wilde

The Picture of Dorian Gray, 1891

Nominations for 2010 Wilde Awards for Excellence in Professional Theater



Jason Richards, "Little Shop of Horrors,"
Performance Network Theatre

BEST COMEDY:

"Boeing-Boeing," Meadow Brook Theatre,
Travis W. Walter, director

"The Book of Liz," Who Wants Cake? Theatre,
Joe Bailey & Jamie Warrow, directors

"A Midsummer Night's Dream," Blackbird
Theatre, Barton Bund, director

"The Servant of Two Masters," Hilberry
Theatre, Lavinia Hart, director

"The Tale of the Allergist's Wife," The Jewish
Ensemble Theatre Company, Christopher
Bremer, director

BEST ACTOR - MUSICAL:

Steve DeBruyne, "Little Shop of Horrors," The
Encore Musical Theatre

Vince Kelley, "Rent," Who Wants Cake?
Theatre

Mitchell Koory, "Evil Dead: The Musical," Who
Wants Cake? Theatre

Jason Richards, "Little Shop of Horrors,"
Performance Network Theatre

Jordan Whalen, "The Fantasticks," Hilberry
Theatre

BEST DESIGN - PROPS:

Monika Essen & Diane Ulseth, "The Big
Bang," The Jewish Ensemble Theatre
Company

Monika Essen, "Little Shop of Horrors,"
Performance Network Theatre

Jen & Ted Hansen, "Evil Dead: The Musical,"
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Charles Sutherland, "It Came From Mars,"
Performance Network Theatre & Williamston
Theatre

BEST ORIGINAL ONE-ACT COMEDY:

"Bro. Dude. Bro.," Go Comedy! Improv
Theater, Bryan Lark, director

"Miracle on 9 Mile Street," Go Comedy!
Improv Theater, Michelle & Tommy LeRoy,
directors

"The Opal Show," Go Comedy! Improv
Theater, Shannon Ferrante, director

"The Real Housewives of the North Pole,"
Sweetlove Productions, Marke Sobolewski,
director

"Silent," Go Comedy! Improv Theater, Pj
Jacokes, director



"K2," Performance Network Theatre

BEST ACTRESS - DRAMA:

Connie Cowper, "Snowbound," Planet Ant
Theatre

Julia Glander, "The Lady With All the
Answers," Tipping Point Theatre

Sarab Kamoo, "The Blank Page," The Jewish
Ensemble Theatre Company

Stephanie Nichols, "Happy Days," Matrix
Theatre Company

Emily Sutton-Smith, "A Picasso,"
Performance Network Theatre

BEST DESIGN - LIGHTS:

Andrew Hungerford, "K2," Performance
Network Theatre

Justin Lang, "Little Shop of Horrors,"
Performance Network Theatre

Rahme Rayes, "The Last Five Years,"
Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company

Tim Sutton, "The Seagull," Hilberry Theatre

Daniel C. Walker, "Our Town," The Purple
Rose Theatre Company

BEST NEW SCRIPT:

Margaret Edwartowski, "Snowbound," Planet
Ant Theatre

Jeffrey Jackson, "Two Point Oh," Detroit
Repertory Theatre



"Two Point Oh," Detroit Repertory
Theatre

David MacGregor, "Gravity," The Purple Rose
Theatre Company

See Nominations, page 30

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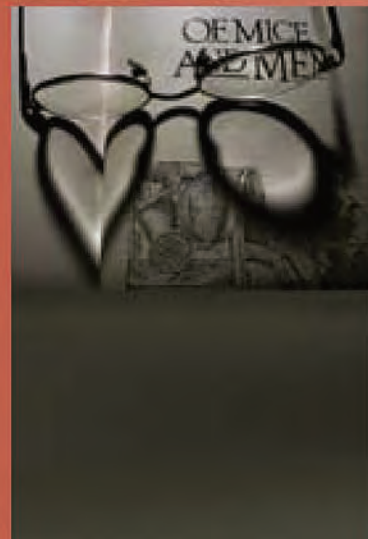
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- Best Comedy
- Best Actor - Musical
- Best Design - Props
- Jim Posante Community Pride Award
- Best Original One-Act Comedy
- Best Actress - Drama
- Best Design - Lights
- Best New Script

WILDE-r Awards - Part 1

Awards Presentations

- Best Production of a New Script
- Best Design - Costumes
- Best Support - Comedy
- Best Drama
- Best Teamwork
- Best Touring Production

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- Best Play with LGBT Themes or Characters
- Best Design - Sets
- Best Actress - Musical
- Best Support - Drama

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Awards Presentations

- Critics' Choice Award
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- Best Actor - Drama
- Best Support - Musical
- Best Design - Sound
- Best Actress - Comedy

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Nominations for 2011 for Excellence in Performance

► Nominations

Continued from p. 26

Demetri Vacratsis, "Love Bombing After the Earthquake," Breathe Art Theatre Project

Joseph Zettelmaier, "It Came From Mars," Performance Network Theatre & Williamston Theatre

BEST PRODUCTION OF A NEW SCRIPT:

"Escanaba," The Purple Rose Theatre Company, Guy Sanville, director

"Gravity," The Purple Rose Theatre Company, Guy Sanville, director

"It Came From Mars," Performance Network Theatre & Williamston Theatre, Tony Caselli, director

"Snowbound," Planet Ant Theatre, Michael Carnow, director

"Two Point Oh," Detroit Repertory Theatre, Harry Wetzel, director

BEST DESIGN - COSTUMES:

Judy Dery, "Last Days of a Translator," Detroit Repertory Theatre

Tommy & Michelle LeRoy, "The Book of Liz," Who Wants Cake? Theatre



Connie Cowper
"A Sleeping Country"
Tipping Point Theatre

Liz Moore, "Boeing-Boeing," Meadow Brook Theatre

John D. Woodland, "The Seagull," Hilberry Theatre

John D. Woodland, "Good," Hilberry Theatre

BEST SUPPORT - COMEDY:

Connie Cowper, "A Sleeping Country", Tipping Point Theatre

Stacie Hadgikosti, "Wake," The Purple Rose Theatre Company

Henrietta Hermelin, "The Tale of the Allergist's Wife," The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company

Lynnae Lehfeldt, "The Tale of the Allergist's Wife," The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company

Justin Vanden Heuvel, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Hilberry Theatre



BEST DRAMA:

"The Blonde, the Brunette and the Vengeful Redhead," Performance Network Theatre, David Wolber, director

"K2," Performance Network Theatre, Tim Edward Rhoze, director

"The Lady With All the Answers," Tipping Point Theatre, Quintessa Gallinat, director

"A Picasso," Performance Network Theatre, Tony Caselli, director

"This Wonderful Life," Williamston Theatre, Tony Caselli, director

BEST TEAMWORK:

Dave Davies & Charles Reynolds, "Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo," The Abreact Performance Space

Bryan Lark & Sarah Switanowski, "The Opal Show," Go Comedy! Improv Theater



"Spring Awakening"
photo: Joan Marcus

James Bowen & John Michael Manfredi, "K2," Performance Network Theatre

Brian Thibault & Gregory Trzaskoma, "The Big Bang," The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company

Andrew Huff & Kevin Young, "Love Bombing After the Earthquake," Breathe Art Theatre Project

BEST TOURING PRODUCTION:

"August: Osage County," Wharton Center & Broadway in Detroit

"Jersey Boys," Broadway in Detroit

"Spring Awakening," Broadway in Detroit

"The Phantom of the Opera," Broadway in Detroit

"The Wizard of Oz," Broadway in Detroit



Joe Bailey, "Die! Mommie! Die!"
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

BEST ACTOR - COMEDY:

John Astin, "Bluff," BoarsHead Theater

Joe Bailey, "Die! Mommie! Die!," Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Jacob Hodgson, "It Came From Mars," Performance Network Theatre & Williamston Theatre

Aaron T. Moore, "A Sleeping Country," Tipping Point Theatre

Lorenzo Toia, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Blackbird Theatre

BEST PLAY WITH LGBT THEMES OR CHARACTERS:

"Based on a Totally True Story," Who Wants Cake? Theatre, Joe Bailey, director

"Die! Mommie! Die!," Who Wants Cake? Theatre, Joe Plambeck, director

2010 Wilde Awards Professional Theater

"Rent," Who Wants Cake? Theatre,
Jamie Richards, director
"[title of show]," Who Wants Cake?
Theatre, Joe Bailey, director

BEST DESIGN - SETS:
Dennis G. Crawley, "Escanaba," The
Purple Rose Theatre Company

Dave Early, "Orpheus Descending,"
Blackbird Theatre

Monika Essen, "Little Shop of
Horrors," Performance Network
Theatre

Kristen Gribbin, "Enchanted April,"
Meadow Brook Theatre

Daniel C. Walker, "A Picasso,"
Performance Network Theatre

**BEST ACTRESS -
MUSICAL:**

Roxanne Bruner, "Side by Side by
Sondheim," Michigan Shakespeare
Festival

Janet Caine, "A Forbidden Broadway
Christmas," The Gem Theatre

Naz Edwards, "Little Shop of
Horrors," Performance Network
Theatre

Sarah Litzsinger, "Sweeney Todd,"
The Encore Musical Theatre



Jaime Moyer
"The Book of Liz"
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Will David Young, "Gravity," The
Purple Rose Theatre Company

BEST MUSICAL:

"Evil Dead: The Musical," Who Wants
Cake? Theatre, Joe Plambeck,
director

"A Forbidden Broadway Christmas,"
The Gem Theatre, William Selby,
director

"Little Shop of Horrors," The Encore
Musical Theatre, Barbara F. Cullen,
director

"Little Shop of Horrors," Performance
Network Theatre, Carla Milarch,
director

"Sweeney Todd," The Encore Musical
Theatre, Dan Cooney, director

**BEST ACTOR -
DRAMA:**

Dr. Arthur Beer, "Trying," UDM
Theatre Company

John Leopard, "This Wonderful Life,"
Williamston Theatre

Alex Leydenfrost, "Gravity," The
Purple Rose Theatre Company

John Michael Manfredi, "A Picasso,"
Performance Network Theatre

Will David Young, "Our Town," The
Purple Rose Theatre Company

**BEST SUPPORT -
MUSICAL:**

Tobin Hissong, "Breaking Up is Hard
to Do," Meadow Brook Theatre

Paul Hopper, "Little Shop of Horrors,"
The Encore Musical Theatre

Jamie Kolacki, "Breaking Up is Hard
to Do," Meadow Brook Theatre

Aaron T. Moore, "Little Shop of
Horrors," Performance Network
Theatre

Dez Walker, "Rent," Who Wants
Cake? Theatre

**BEST DESIGN -
SOUND:**

Mike Duncan, "Boeing-Boeing,"
Meadow Brook Theatre

Quintessa Gallinat, "This Wonderful
Life," Williamston Theatre

Burr Huntington, "Causa Mortis
or The Medical Student," Detroit
Repertory Theatre

Burr Huntington, "Last Days of a
Translator," Detroit Repertory Theatre

Chad Keilman, "A Sleeping Country,"
Tipping Point Theatre



"[title of show]"
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Courtney Myers, "Little Shop of
Horrors," Performance Network
Theatre

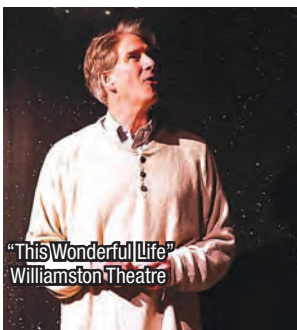
**BEST SUPPORT -
DRAMA:**

Melissa Beckwith, "Trainspotting,"
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Connell Brown Jr., "Palmer Park,"
The Jewish Ensemble Theatre
Company & Hilberry Theatre

Naz Edwards, "The Blank Page," The
Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company

Linda Rabin Hammell, "Orpheus
Descending," Blackbird Theatre



"This Wonderful Life"
Williamston Theatre

**BEST ACTRESS -
COMEDY:**

Christina Flynn, "The Servant of Two
Masters," Hilberry Theatre

Sarab Kamoo, "A Sleeping Country,"
Tipping Point Theatre

Kate Willinger, "The Tale of the
Allergist's Wife," The Jewish
Ensemble Theatre Company

Jaime Moyer, "The Book of Liz," Who
Wants Cake? Theatre

Suzi Regan, "The Blonde, the
Brunette and the Vengeful Redhead,"
Performance Network Theatre

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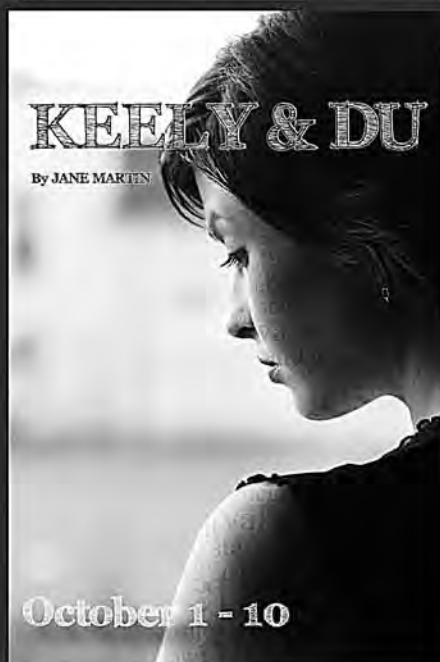


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Pay(ton) It Forward

For two decades, our hometown hero Barbara Payton never let anything in the way of her career – not even cancer

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

People can't believe that Barbara Payton hasn't carried her dreams out of Detroit. But the Motown mainstay says there's good reason for that: Music here rocks.

"I honestly believe we have one of the best music communities in the country," says Payton, just before her gig at the Arts, Beats & Eats charity preview, Arts du Jour, at the Royal Oak Farmers Market last week. "We have some of the finest musicians, and we're not as jaded as a lot of the other big cities are."

That's kept Payton, 47, firmly planted in Michigan, currently abiding in a Birmingham condo with her partner of six years, a live events producer, and away from the fame so many saw for her. She'll keep it local again during Arts, Beats & Eats over Labor Day weekend, performing with her band, the Big Boss Trio, at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 5 on the Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort Stage. Payton, who's played all over Michigan for the last 20-plus years, likes it that way.

"I'm not in it to be a star," she says. "I'm in it because I love music. I love to work with other musicians, and I like to grow as an artist. I never got into music to be famous."

"I talk to a lot of artists who feel robbed if they don't make it, if they're not a huge success, and I don't necessarily feel that way. We should be grateful we were given a gift that some people wish they had."

Payton never had to hope for it; it was always just ... there. Born into a family of music teachers, she sang and played brass instruments as a kid, but she couldn't decide where to take her inevitable music career – until Bette Midler and a hot rocker chick came into her life. Besides a big Divine Miss M infatuation, a biker bar in her Port Huron hometown at the time led her to voice. Payton was just in high school, getting chummy with a bouncer who let her frequent the joint and check out a local rock band. She was totally into the female front woman.

Payton laughs, "I was just completely infatuated with the lead singer ... on many levels! I had a crush on her, and I thought her voice was amazing. She just belted out this straight-on rock 'n' roll and I had never heard anything like that live before."

Now people say that about Payton, who released her first album, "Walk on Water," too long ago, apparently, since she can't even recall the year during our chat at the Farmers Market. Days later, when she

See Pay(ton) page 36



Photo: Andrew Potter



Gerry Visco and Co. "Gerrifying" Times Square. Photo courtesy of Gerry Visco

Crazy Sexy Cool

NYC nightlife queen fiercifies the Arts, Beats & Eats crowd

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

There's a way to emancipate yourself without popping happy pills – and Gerry Visco knows the secret, because, well, she invented it: Gerrification.

During Arts, Beats & Eats weekend, the New York City performer/writer/fabulousopher swooshes on over to Five15 in Royal Oak to continue her divine mission of turning the world into a shiny place, promoting harmony and her own far-out fashion. It's interactive, which means you might get to try on her platinum wig, and a group of Gerrys will help narrate the History of Gerry and the Gerry Platform.

Before she Gerrifies metro Detroit, we caught up with Visco, who talked about the method's origins, her own journey there and how you – yes, you! – can achieve ultimate fabulousness (even without that wig).

So, you're known for some killer outfits. Whatcha wearing right now?

I'm at my day job. My hair is fabulously teased in a platinum Jimi Hendrix 'fro. I have on bubblegum pink lipstick, with bright turquoise eye shadow. My nails are a chipped bright turquoise. And I'm wearing one of my insanely stylish, bright green, raw silk dresses I picked up for \$9.99 at Goodwill Industries with a pair of pointy, red, French-imported, spiked pumps – also \$9.99 from Goodwill. Girl's gotta look good on a budget!

How did Gerrification begin?

Gerrification was suggested to me by my

Gerrification

with Gerry Visco

9 p.m. Sept. 3 (Free)
Five15 Media Mojo & More
515 S. Washington Ave., Royal Oak
www.gerryvisco.com

friend, performance artist Joseph Keckler. He understood I was developing my own brand and personal style and philosophy. Coining the term Gerrification made it all come together and made sense to my followers, who worship me. I have stalkers galore and a few thousand Facebook friends who follow my every move and look. Gerrification is sweeping the nation and the planet. All of us in the Gerry party are doing our best to eradicate war, poverty, ugliness, impotence, boredom and other challenges, and it looks like this will all happen sooner rather than later.

How do you define fabulous?

I'm fabulous. You too can be as fabulous as me if you follow my advice and get Gerrified. Fabulous means being unafraid to be different and make a statement. You set trends, not follow them. You always make an effort to look good, even if you're just going to the grocery store. You must have a sense of humor about your appearance and be ready to be a cliché. Being fabulous is not about yuppie consumerist purchases of expensive clothes.

You can be even more fabulous by being able to concoct a look no matter where you are or where you buy the outfits. And you should be able to whip up something elegant even if you don't have a lot of money. Being fabulous from my point of view is Gerrification: having fun, wearing platinum hair, cat-eye glasses, lots of makeup and colorful, outrageous clothing.

On your own personal journey to fabu-

lousness, what was the biggest challenge?

Growing up, I needed braces to correct my overbite, and because I was teased and unpopular in school during my early years, I had to learn to disregard criticism and jealousy. From the awkwardness of my teenage years, I became truly fabulous and developed my own style. No doubt my former tormentors need some emergency Gerrification.

How has being "Gerrified" helped you in other avenues of your own life, professionally or otherwise?

I look better, I feel better, and I am having fun. Why? Because people adore me the minute I enter the room, for one thing. Even if they start out jealous or snobby, I disarm them with fun, games and conversation. I am cutting through the bullshit and going to what we all need: glamour and parties!

I have a day job at Columbia University as an administrator. I'm not the traditional academic

See Gerry, page 43

Photographer Gerry Visco to exhibit work at new Royal Oak art gallery



Photographer/performer Gerry Visco will exhibit her work – including this photo of herself, party promoter Matthew Herra'C and performance artist Joseph Keckler – in Royal Oak. Photo: Gerry Visco

Gallery U, a new contemporary art space located in downtown Royal Oak, will hold its grand opening during Arts, Beats & Eats weekend from 6-10 p.m. Sept. 4. Formed by its parent company, Universal Institute, a rehabilitation facility for people with traumatic brain injuries and neurological impairments, the gallery's mission is to showcase the best original contemporary artwork at affordable prices.

Gallery U will present artwork by people with disabilities as well as emerging artists from around the world. Work by photographer Gerry Visco, who will also appear at Five15 the day before (see accompanying story), will be on hand during the opening, along with many other artists.

Gallery U is located at 310 Fourth St. in Royal Oak. For more information, call 248-399-7322.



Official MIST Parties Beginning @ 8PM

Saturday Sept. 4, 2010:

Menjo's Complex Club 9 Rainbow Room
Como's, Danny's Irish Pub, Post Bar Ferndale

Sunday Sept. 5, 2010

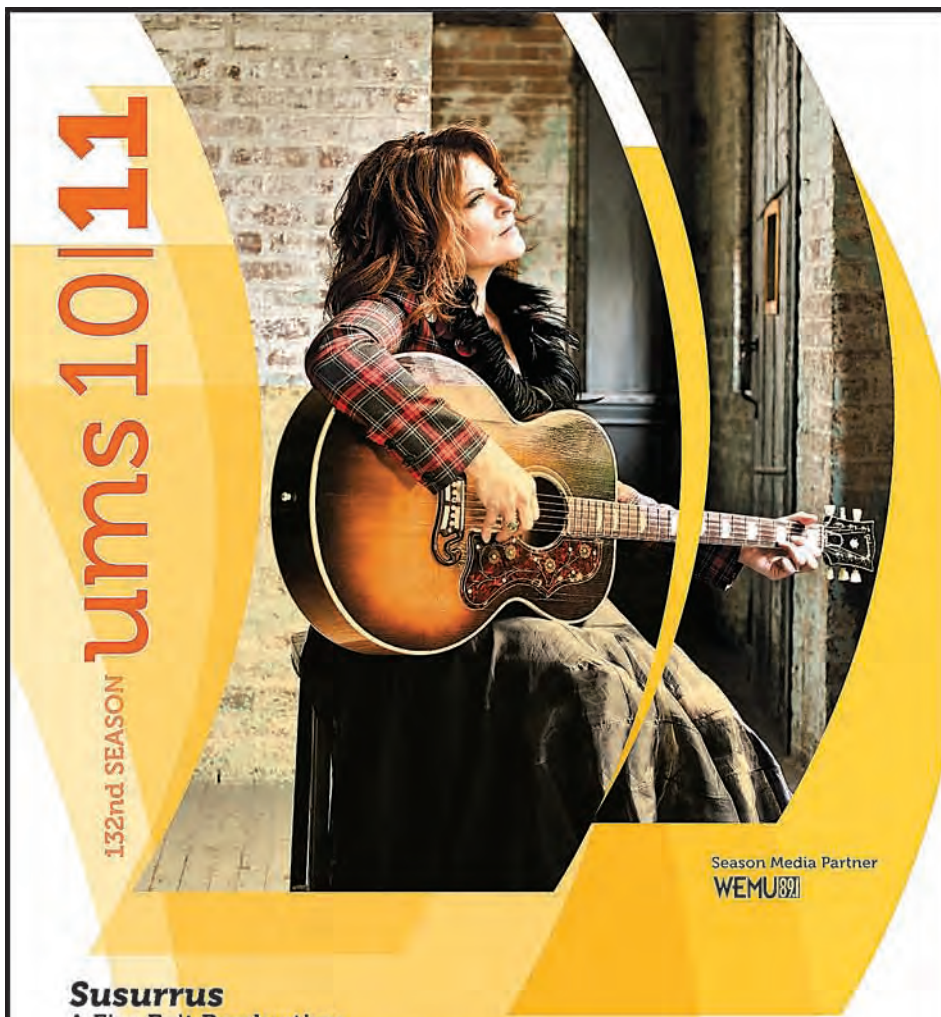
Closing Party @ Menjo's Complex



Games played at Rotunda Fields & Ford Woods Park in Dearborn starting @ 8 AM Saturday Sept. 4, 2010 & Sunday Sept. 5, 2010



The MDSL is proud to host the 25th annual MIST LGBT softball tournament. 32 Teams from across the U.S. and Canada are participating. Join MDSL at any of the locations above for official MIST parties!



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The season opens with a unique and intimate theatrical experience in the Matthaei Botanical Gardens. This stroll through nature includes a narrative on an iPod that weaves together snippets about opera, memorial benches, and botany, in a mournful and poignant story of love and loss loosely based on Benjamin Britten and W.H. Auden's collaboration on Britten's opera, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Recommended for ages 16 and up. Contains adult content.

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The List

Rosanne Cash

Saturday, September 25 | 8 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

Rosanne Cash lends her unique, sophisticated perspective to selections from her father Johnny Cash's list of "100 Essential Country Songs," embracing her heritage with music that has shaped who she is as an artist.

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The Route to the New World: From Spain to Mexico

La Capella Reial de Catalunya with Hesperion XXI and Tembembe Ensamble Continuo

Jordi Savall music director

Thursday, September 30 | 8 PM
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH

This concert, conceived by early music superstar Jordi Savall, traces the movement of music from Spain to the New World, bringing together ensembles from Spain and Mexico, and fusing Hispanic baroque and guitar music with contemporary jarocho and huasteco traditions.

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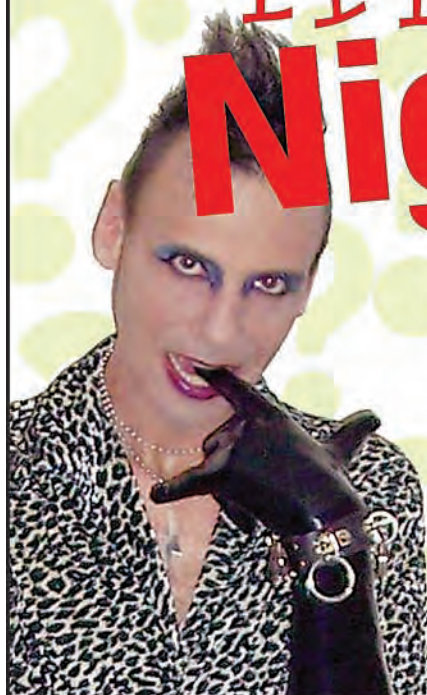
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BTL's Best of the Beats

MICHIGAN LOTTERY STAGE: NATIONAL MUSIC STAGE

Friday, Sept. 3

5:30 p.m. Royal Oak Symphony Orchestra (Classical)

Sunday, Sept. 5

10 p.m. Macy Gray (R&B/Soul)

MADE IN DETROIT STAGE AT ROMT

Friday, Sept. 3

7:30 p.m. Spitting Nickles (Rock)
8:30 p.m. Prussia (Rock)

Saturday, Sept. 4

10 p.m. Hard Lessons (Rock)

Sunday, Sept. 5

7 p.m. Jessica Hernandez & The Deltas (Rock)
8:30 p.m. Jody Raffoul & Friends (Rock)

SOARING EAGLE CASINO & RESORT STAGE: AMERICANA/COUNTRY

Friday, Sept. 3

2 p.m. Candy Band (Punk Rock)

Saturday, Sept. 4

5 p.m. Susan Calloway (Rock/Pop)
6:30 p.m. Julianne & the Rogues (Country/Classic Rock)
9:30 p.m. The Twistin Tarantulas (Rock-a-billy)

Sunday, Sept. 5

5 p.m. Taylor Fernandez (Acoustic/Rock/Pop)
6:30 p.m. Barbara Payton Band (Rock/Blues/Soul)

Monday, Sept. 6

11 a.m. Misty Lyn & The Big Beautiful (Indie/Folk)
12:30 p.m. Kari Lynch (Country/Pop/Acoustic)
6:30 p.m. Jody Raffoul & Friends (Rock'n Soul)

CITIZENS BANK STAGE: ACOUSTIC/CULTURAL

Friday, Sept. 3

7 p.m. Mosaic Youth Singers

Saturday, Sept. 4

2 p.m. Mosaic Youth Singers
3:30 p.m. LVNMUZIQ (Indie Folk)
8 p.m. La Chispa & Company (Flamenco)

Sunday, Sept. 5

5 p.m. Rachael Davis (Folk/Blues/Jazz)
8 p.m. Jan Krist (Indie Acoustic)

FORD FIESTA STAGE: ALTERNATIVE ROCK

Friday, Sept. 3

12:30 p.m. The Mydols (Pop/Rock)
5 p.m. Swamp Sisters (Alternative)
8 p.m. Carolyn Striho Group (Pop Punk)
9:30 p.m. Killer Flamingos (Electro Pop)

Saturday, Sept. 4

3:30 p.m. Jessica Hernandez & The Deltas (Modern Rock)
6:30 p.m. The Cult Heroes (Punk Rock)
8 p.m. Silverghost (Indie Rock/Pop)

Sunday, Sept. 5

6:30 p.m. The High Strung (Rock/Pop)
10 p.m. CRUD (Alternative)

Monday, Sept. 6

11 a.m. Eliza Neals (Rock'n Soul)
4 p.m. The Barrettes Ladies Barbershop Quartet (Pop/Rock)
6:30 p.m. LusterKraft featuring Liz Larin (Rocktronik)
8 p.m. "Labor Day" with Amp Fiddler (Electric Funk/Soul)

VINCE & JOE'S STAGE: INTERNATIONAL

Friday, Sept. 3

11 a.m. Hip-Notic Dance Detroit/Mind, Belly & Soul (Belly Dancing)
12:30 p.m. Vince & Joe's Presents a Gourmet Experience with Executive Chef Neil

Sunday, Sept. 5

6:30 p.m. La Chispa & Company (Flamenco)
9 p.m. Zap Toro featuring Sean Blackman (Latin Jazz/Funk)

Monday, Sept. 6

6:30 p.m. Madame XD (China)

BUDWEISER STAGE: ROCK

Saturday, Sept. 4

12:30pm See Jane Rock (Rock/Alternative)
9:30 p.m. The Howling Diablos (Rock'n Blues/Funk)

Sunday, Sept. 5

3:30 p.m. Julie Haven (Alternative/Pop)
5 p.m. Dave Edwards & The Look (Rock'n Soul)
6:30 p.m. Brandon Calhoon (Rock'n Blues/Soul)
8 p.m. Stellar Drive (Rock)
9:30 p.m. Rev. RightTime (Funk)

Monday, Sept. 6

6:30 p.m. The Jill Jack Band (Folk Rock)

PEPSI STAGE: JAZZ/R&B

Friday, Sept. 3

6:30 p.m. Jamie Register and The Glendales (Soul/Funk/R&B)
8 p.m. Priscilla Price (R&B)
9:30 p.m. Thornetta Davis (Blues/R&B)

Saturday, Sept. 4

11 a.m. Mistee Merritt (Hip Hop/R&B)
8 p.m. Sky Covington (Neo Soul)
9:30 p.m. HotSauce (R&B/Hip Hop)

Sunday, Sept. 5

3:30 p.m. Alina Morr & Urban Tropical (Latin Jazz)
6:30 p.m. Pamela Wise (R&B/Jazz)
8 p.m. Inoh Savid (R&B/Jazz)

Monday, Sept. 6

11 a.m. Susie Woodman (Jazz/R&B)
12:30 p.m. Katrina Carson (R&B/Hip Hop)
6:30 p.m. Sheila Landis featuring Rick Matle (Jazz/Samba)
8 p.m. Tumbao Bravo (Latin/Jazz)

For the complete lineup, visit www.artsbeatseats.com.



Barbara Payton (center) with her band, the Big Boss Trio. Photo: Andrew Potter

► Pay(ton)

Continued from p. 33

does remember its 1995 release – noting its follow-up, “Enjoy the View,” followed seven years later – she jibes: “I suppose I’m right on schedule with the start of the next CD!”

For as long as Barbara Payton’s been a Detroit music fixture, it’s hard to believe she’s just now prepping her third album. But she’s finally ready: “I need to do this,” she says, “for myself, if nothing else.”

The hook was thyroid cancer, which threatened her future as a singer, but also brought her closer to the recording studio. “It really just changed my perspective on everything,” says Payton, cancer-free as of June. “It’s not always as if when you have a life-threatening illness you have an epiphany, but I did. I decided to pull back from performing too much and I just re-evaluated things that were important to me and how I wanted to approach my career.”

She considered how she could use her talent to help others – but not just with her music (she’s mentoring 14-year-old Taylor Fernandez for her 5 p.m. set), but with massage, too. Payton, who has her own in-home studio, says she wants to apply her 18 years of massage therapy experience to caring for cancer patients because she’s sympathetic to the anxiety associated with the disease.

And Payton has the credentials, no matter how she got them: “My ex was going to school for it and she dropped out. I started reading her books and became fascinated with anatomy and physiology, and

Barbara Payton

6:30 p.m. Sept. 5

Arts, Beats & Eats

Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort Stage, Royal Oak
www.artsbeatseats.com

then I started to go to school. It pissed her off because I finished and she didn’t” – she laughs, breaking off into a long pause – “but we’re not together anymore anyway, so it doesn’t really matter.”

Payton relishes the seclusion granted by her private massage sanctuary, transformed into a mini India, as it pulls her completely away from the raucous she causes onstage. And she’s there, rocking, a lot. She’s been a mainstay on the live circuit for over 20 years – and singing with raw, in-the-moment emotion that’s tough to translate to record, she’s always been more stage than studio. That’s because albums scare the hell out of her.

“I get very nervous because I know it’s going to be recorded. It’s permanent. Once it’s out there, you have to let it go,” says Payton.

One of her rocking recordings, a cover of Patty Griffin’s suicide lament “Tony,” landed on her sophomore album and, with its graphic imagery, deep into the minds of anyone who’s heard her sing it. The song, personalized because of Payton’s own ordeals (an ex-partner of hers had committed suicide, along with a closeted friend),

became a part of the performer’s Pride sets. Not everyone cared to hear it.

“It seemed to offend some people because of the lyrics,” she recalls. “But I’m always looking to rock the boat a little bit – and to challenge people.”

Even herself, as she pulls away from rock and enters uncharted musical territory. At the charity preview, Payton gives “I Smell a Rat” biting conviction and honors its blues roots (even Arts, Beats & Eats bills her as Americana) – and that’s just where she’s heading on her upcoming album. The project’s only in its conceptual stages, but since uniting with the Big Boss Trio her fixed sound’s veered into blues.

“It’s a style of music I’m not used to doing,” Payton says. “Normally I was a straight-up rock singer, but I feel like I’m finally growing as an artist. I got a bit stagnate there for a while.”

Even out of her habitual zone, Payton looks to be at home, swaying and smirking and singing with the unjaded passion of someone doing this for the first time.

This is hardly hers, of course, as she’s made her rounds not only across the state, but around the world, performing with Kid Rock and Bob Seger on their own tours. Locally, she plays bars, restaurants and festivals. She gets Royal Oak all fired up for Arts, Beats & Eats, and Pride loves her so much that she’s as regular as anything rainbow.

“I’ve been out and proud for a long time,” Payton says, “and I love our community. They’ve been very supportive of me over the years – and continue to be.”

MICHIGAN'S WEEKLY NEWS FOR LESBIANS, GAYS, BISEXUALS, TRANSGENDERS AND FRIENDS

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Tastes, sights, sounds – gays?

On eve of festival's first year in queer-central Royal Oak, residents rap on Arts, Beats & Eats going LGBT

BY JESSICA CARRERAS

Jon Witz knows a thing or two about discrimination: The Arts, Beats & Eats festival producer says he dealt with unnecessary negative stigma for years when his festival was held in Pontiac. Now that it will take place in Royal Oak for the first time ever Sept. 3-6, Witz intends to make sure that everyone feels welcome – including the LGBT community, which is expected to be involved in the annual Labor Day festival like never before.

No one quite knows what to expect when ABE takes over Royal Oak's Washington Street. Will it draw larger crowds? Gun-toters? More teenagers? Less Detroiters? Much remains to be seen, but local LGBT community members, businesses and nonprofits know one thing: they want in on the action.

"When we first heard about Arts, Beats & Eats moving to Royal Oak, we knew about the opportunities for charities to be involved as a beverage booth participant," says Carrie Copeland, special events manager for Affirmations. The Ferndale-based LGBT community center will be raising funds at a beverage booth along with 20 or so other nonprofits. Adds Copeland: "(The location) was definitely a motivator for us to get involved."

But more than just through Affirmations, Copeland is excited to attend as a member of the gay community – and she believes many other people will be, too.

"I definitely think the fact that Royal Oak is known as being a very gay-friendly city is probably one reason why so many LGBT people are really excited about participating this year as opposed to previous years," she says. "I see the LGBT community becoming a lot more integrated and confirmed within the larger community, and I think Arts, Beats & Eats is probably just going to be another representation of that."

Witz hopes so, and stresses that though the festival will now be held in the heart of LGBT life, it has always been welcoming and diverse.

"Even in Pontiac, (Arts, Beats & Eats) has been inclusive, just in its diverse offerings," Witz maintains. "I think we really have an eclectic event with many music forms presented, many art forms presented, and I certainly would call the gay and lesbian community on the cultural side of life. I think we've always been that way."

But now, Royal Oak natives are ready to embrace it as their own, including gay business owners. Five15 Media Mojo & More, which sits right in the middle of the ABE action, will be hosting NYC performer Gerry Visco on Sept. 3 to coincide with the festival. Steppin' Out, which hosts AIDS Walk Detroit every September at the Royal Oak Farmers Market, will also be hosting a beverage booth to raise funds to distribute to local HIV/AIDS organizations.

Pronto! proprietor Bill Thomas, who serves double-duty as board president of Steppin' Out, is especially excited that his restaurant and store are smack-dab in the middle



Royal Oak's Washington Street, though usually calm and slow on a weekend afternoon, will be bursting with activity when Arts, Beats & Eats takes over downtown Sept. 3-6.

of the festival, providing diners with a prime location for people-watching from the patio.

"What's so wonderful is that it gives our community an opportunity ... to watch everything right at our windows," Thomas gushes. "Once you're in, we have a front patio, we have a back deck, we have ample seating for people – I think it will just give a bird's eye view of everything that's happening."

And, Thomas teases, Pronto! will sit right in back of a display of never-before-seen cars from lead ABE sponsor Ford Motor Company – including the new all-green Explorer.

"We're honored that Ford picked us and that our building looks so bright and festive with all the colors and ferns and everything," Thomas says with a laugh. "It's exciting for us and it's very exciting for our community."

Even though, Witz insists, the festival didn't gay it up to accommodate queer tastes. And why would he need to? The target ABE audience, after all, has always been diverse. Thus, this year's additions are aimed at expanding, not honing in on specific groups.

"Just based on the eclectic nature of the community, we've added more cultural attractions and more international music," Witz explains. "We just wanted to add more interesting and unique music forms, and it was specifically targeted toward the diverse and eclectic nature of the city."

Still, Witz admits, festival organizers couldn't ignore their inherent gay audience, many of whom will essentially be welcoming Arts, Beats & Eats into their backyards. Nor do they intend to.

"We are excited to be close to the gay community, and we're excited that a lot of members of the gay and lesbian community will be enjoying the festival," Witz says. "That's something that is a very positive thing for the event."

"We've always tried to be diverse and inclusive and eclectic," he adds. "I think people might not have noticed that as much in Pontiac as they will in Royal Oak, but when you walk around, the different sites, smells, sounds that you'll hear are enough that any human being would find something they can enjoy. I really believe that."

So do Royal Oak residents like Thomas, who is thrilled to have an event that not only stresses staying at home instead of skipping town, but also that diversity can be a beautiful – plus good-tasting and pleasant-sounding – thing.

"Diversity is what makes a successful event and embracing it just makes it stronger. It makes it all about the community," Thomas says. "We don't need to go away on Labor Day. We can hang out in our own backyard."

Mingling with Macy Gray

Singer talks life, death and sex

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Maybe you forgot about Macy Gray. Not that anyone could: She's a loopy, 6-foot-tall standout with a distinctive, soulful rasp. But Gray's success since the monster hit "I Try" has been just that – try after try. To make a big impression again, she released what she calls her best album yet – "The Sellout" – earlier this summer, and she'll perform during Arts, Beats & Eats at 10 p.m. Sept. 5 on the National Music Stage at Seventh and Center Streets in Royal Oak.



Macy Gray performs in Royal Oak at 10 p.m. Sept. 5. Photo: Guilliano Bekor

Gray buzzed us to talk about the gayest song on her fifth album, the beauty in her own world and the trip she wants to take – to the afterlife.

Tell me about the beauty in your own world.

Lots now: The music I make, my kids and my family. I think I've grown up in the last couple of years – finally – and I feel better about a lot of things. And what else? I don't know. There's tons of it! It's hard to list it all.

So what's caused you to grow up?

Too many mistakes. I had to stop and get myself together. It's cool to be carefree and all that shit, but at some point you have to know what you're doing (laughs) and be committed to something, and I really just got around to that the last couple of years. And I can tell I'm doing a lot better.

Would you say you're weird?

Am I weird? Absolutely! I see things a little differently. What makes you different is really what you want out of life.

What do you want?

I would like to die for two weeks and see what it's all about, but then I want to come back. I'm just really fascinated by what goes on when someone passes away, because obviously it's not over. I'd just like to get a peek into what's in store for me.

What song on the album do you think your gay fans will most get a kick out of?

Probably "Kissed It," because it's a song about sex – this relationship that I stay in because the oral sex is so great.

Why has it been a struggle to achieve the same success as your debut, "On How Life Is"?

Only in America. In Europe I did really well with all my albums. It's different; they're a lot more open to music in Europe.

More than anything I just want to do something epic. I want to do something historical, like Frank Sinatra's "My Way" or Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean." Something people never forget.

Macy Gray

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Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the June 3 edition of Between The Lines. For the full interview, visit www.pridesource.com.

Touring Alaska

A Primer on Gay Travel in America's Last Frontier

I recently returned from my second trip to America's largest and least populated (by density) state, Alaska. These facts aren't a big surprise to most people, but sometimes it's difficult to grasp the state's sheer dimensions – for example, Alaska is about 15 times bigger than Pennsylvania, but Pennsylvania has 17 times the number of residents. Beyond coming up with startling (and geographically geeky) trivia facts like these, it's difficult to describe Alaska's terrain and scenery without resorting to trite superlatives.

It's truly a land you need to visit to even begin to comprehend. The leading highlights for most visitors are up-close views of massive glaciers (dozens of them in some areas), a fascinating array of wildlife and North America's highest peak (20,320-foot Mt. McKinley, in Denali National Park). Alaska also offers some of the world's most exciting kayaking, fishing, rafting, hiking and camping (not to mention dog-sledding). This is a state rich in history – from indigenous culture to tales of Russian trappers and U.S. gold-fortune seekers. And the abundance of delicious fresh seafood makes this a terrific dining destination. Alaska is ideally suited to outdoorsy travelers, but – thanks to cruise ships and scenic railroads – it's also relatively easy to enjoy the natural beauty from a comfy and controlled environment.

Is There a Gay Scene in Alaska?

Let's put it this way: I wouldn't recommend traveling to Alaska expressly to partake of gay nightlife or to meet other "family." Anchorage is a large, modern city with a couple of gay bars, including the extremely fun and friendly dance club Mad Myrna's (<http://www.alaska.net/~madmyrna>) – you'll also find some excellent museums and many stellar restaurants in Anchorage. The state's second largest city, Fairbanks, has a small but active GLBT scene, some of it tied in Alaska's oldest college, the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Juneau, with a population of about 30,000, is the state capital and is generally considered the most progressive city in the state – a fair number of gay folks live here, and bars and restaurants are generally quite friendly. Also noteworthy is tiny but funky Talkeetna, midway between Anchorage and Denali National Park. This cool little village is a great base for exploring Denali and a haven of free-spirits (it was the inspiration for TV's Northern Exposure). Throughout Alaska, and especially around Anchorage, you'll find many gay-owned and gay-friendly inns and B&Bs. There's a good list of these at PurpleRoofs.com (<http://www.purpleroofs.com/usa/alaska/alaskaregion.html>).

An excellent general GLBT resource for the state is BentAlaska.com, a website with events, news, and organizations of interest to the community, plus a list of gay-friendly businesses.

Taking a Cruise in Alaska

Even if you're not especially enamored of cruise vacations, traveling by boat is without

question the best way to see southeastern Alaska's scenery, including areas like Glacier Bay National Park and College Fjord. Many major cruise lines offer Alaska cruises, with Holland America Line (<http://www.hollandamerica.com>) and Princess Cruises (<http://www.princess.com>) offering the greatest variety of itineraries, along with the exceptional line of smaller, upscale ships, Cruise West (<http://www.cruisewest.com>).

These are all extremely gay-friendly and gay-popular cruise lines. Several GLBT-oriented tour operators, notably RSVP Vacations (<http://www.rsvpvacations.com>), Olivia (<http://www.olivia.com>), Atlantis (<http://www.atlantisevents.com>) book all-gay charter trips on some of the major lines that ply Alaska waters, including Holland America and Princess, as well as Carnival (<http://www.carnival.com>), Celebrity (<http://www.celebritycruises.com>), Norwegian (<http://www2.ncl.com>), and Royal Caribbean (<http://www.royalcaribbean.com>). Also note that such ultra-luxurious lines as Silversea (<http://www.silverseaships.com>) and Regent Seven Seas (<http://www.rssc.com>) regularly visit Alaska.

Even on cruises booked to the general public, you'll nearly always find gay and lesbian passengers (and certainly some crew). And on these cruises, there's usually at least one and sometimes several GLBT mixers or meet-ups onboard during the week. If you'd like to find other gay travelers booked on the same cruise, or read other GLBT feedback related to cruise travel, check out the gay/lesbian cruising forum at Cruisemates.com (<http://www.cruisemates.com/forum/gay-lesbian-cruising>).

I can speak very positively about Alaska cruises based on my recent sailing aboard Holland America's exceptionally well-outfitted Statendam. I traveled with my family, seven of us altogether, and we chose a particularly glacier-intensive itinerary, through the Inside Passage, with calls at Ketchikan, Juneau (my favorite), and Skagway, plus a day each sailing through Glacier Bay and College Fjord. I'm not, for the record, a general fan of cruise vacations – just a personal preference, as I'm more partial to the freedom of road-tripping, and traveling without a set itinerary. But this Holland America cruise was a wonderful adventure from start (out of Vancouver) to finish (in Seward). And if you are planning a trip with a few friends or relatives, a cruise can be ideal in terms of logistics, value and the pure fun of sharing countless memorable experiences together.

Alaska cruises range greatly in price, starting for as little as \$600 per person, based on double-occupancy, with an inside cabin on one of the less-fancy ships that visit the region, such as the Carnival Spirit or Norwegian Star – this is also assuming you book during the shoulder months (May and September). For a stateroom with balcony on an upscale line like Holland America, expect to pay \$1,500 or more, depending on the size of the cabin, the particular ship, and the time of sailing (June through August are high season). And if there were ever a great time to splurge for a balcony cabin, it's an Alaska cruise, as a huge part of the experience is observ-



Harvard Glacier is one of the highlights of a cruise through Alaska's breathtaking College Fjord. Photo: Andrew Collins

ing the magnificent scenery from aboard the ship.

If you're averse to organized-group travel, would like to combine driving your own car with traveling by ship, or simply enjoy the excitement and relative affordability of ferry-boat transportation, consider a do-it-yourself version of an Alaska cruise: traveling the Alaska Maritime Highway System (<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs/index.shtml>). You can get around via this extensive network of state-operated ferries, just as many Alaskans get from town to town, either without a car or – at considerably greater expense – with one. This is an adventurous way to sail through the Inside Passage, starting either down in Bellingham, Washington, or much closer to Alaska in the Canadian port city of Prince Rupert. The ferry stops at all the major towns in southeast Alaska.

You can also sail via the ferry system through Prince William Sound and to Kodiak Island (with stops in Valdez, Cordova, Whittier, Homer, and others), or through southwestern Alaska's remote Aleutian Chain, from Chignik all the way to Unalaska/Dutch Harbor. Again, traveling with a car and sleeping onboard in cabins can make this a fairly costly trip – figure on about \$800 to \$900 for two passengers, a car, and a cabin for a one-way trip from Port Rupert to Skagway. But you can choose an itinerary that allows you to get on and off at a number of ports, and it's still cheaper and allows for greater flexibility than a cruise.

Touring Alaska on Land

Whether you reach Alaska by cruise ship, plane or car (the 2,300-mile drive from Great Falls, Montana to Fairbanks on the Alaska-Canada Highway is quite a memorable undertaking), it's worth taking some time to explore some parts of the state's rugged and largely unspoiled interior.

Many cruise lines offer one-way itineraries (as opposed to "loop" itineraries, that return you back to Vancouver, Seattle, or wherever the cruise started). These begin or end in Alaska, typically in a port that's relatively close to Anchorage, such as Whittier or Seward. This latter community, home to the superb Alaska SeaLife Center aquarium and Kenai Fjords National Park, is where my recent Holland America cruise ended.

From here my family and I rented a couple of cars and explored the area, continued on to Anchorage, and then spent two nights up in Talkeetna. Other notable areas within relatively easy driving distance of Anchorage and the Kenai

Peninsula include the charming little vacation town of Girdwood, which is home to upscale Alyeska Resort; Homer, a popular fishing town; and Whittier, which has kayaking and boating on Prince William Sound plus access to several stunning glaciers. Farther afield and also well-worth investigating are Denali National Park (4 to 5 hours north of Anchorage), Fairbanks (2 hours farther north of Denali), and Valdez (6 to 7 hours east of Anchorage).

One way to explore the interior without a car, as far north as spectacular Denali National Park and on up to Fairbanks, is via the scenic Alaska Railroad (<http://www.alaskarailroad.com>). Many Alaska cruises offer post- or pre-trip options that includes several days on the railroad, or you can book a your own railroad package, which includes riding the railroad's gleaming railcars past incredible scenery, tours at different stops, and overnight hotel accommodations. These packages range from five to 12 nights and start around \$1,800 per person.

Shorter day trips are also available on the Alaska Railroad – among the most rewarding itineraries are the ride from Anchorage to Denali (starting around \$150), and the Glacier Discovery Trains to Grandview (starting around \$85).

Another great option is to book a trip with a local outfitter. Based in Fairbanks, Out in Alaska (<http://www.outinalaska.com>) is a highly reputable, gay-owned tour operator that offers exciting trips, both camping (starting around \$1,800 for six days) and hotel-based (from \$2,500 for seven days), to some of the state's most scenic areas. Out in Alaska trips typically last a week to 10 days, have 5 to 10 participants, and include meals, transportation within the regions visited, activities, and – in the case of camping – gear.

Some Out in Alaska trips are oriented primarily toward sightseeing and might cover major national parks (Denali, Kanai Fjords, Wrangell-St. Elias) and the regions around Fairbanks and Anchorage. The more activity-driven trips – which can be themed around glacier trekking, hiking, rafting, or kayaking – venture into the state's remote wilderness, from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to the Yukon or Copper rivers. The company also organizes small LGBT group adventures on some of the mainstream cruises offered through the Inside Passage.

However you explore this majestic land, it's absolutely worth the time and effort to get yourself up here – and to plan on spending a minimum of seven days. When even seasoned travelers talk about "trips of a lifetime" and "most memorable travel experiences," they're often referring to adventures they've undertaken in Alaska.

Katy Perry's hot 'n' cold 'Teenage Dream.' Plus: Sara Bareilles' solid sophomore CD



Katy Perry, 'Teenage Dream'

As if Christina Aguilera and Ke\$ha didn't already send pop music to its deathbed this year, Katy Perry comes close to finishing it off. The Bible-girl-gone-bad runs wild on the emotionally scrambled hit-factory "Teenage Dream" – not kissing girls (and liking it), but waking up in a post-party haze, reliving her horny adolescence and shrugging off scandalous pics of her online. And then, to add more cotton candy to her song catalog, there's the frothy first single "California Gurls," where life is peachy, there are popsicle-melting peeps ... and Snoop Dogg. The title track lives in paradise, too – a celebration of youth and finding love, themes that bobble along a current of cosmic rev and a guitar line that sounds faintly like it belongs to "Since U Been Gone." "Let's go all the way tonight," she hoots. And when she follows it up with the trashy, oh-so-clever "Peacock," her subtly challenged ode to you-know-what that's so '80s it wears a leotard, she's obviously not bluffing. Perry, who began criminally overtaking the charts with mind-hijacking hits off 2008's "One of the Boys," is still the McDonald's of pop music: an irresistible no-no that quenches hook-hungry heads, especially with the '90s-sounding soap opera "The One that Got Away." The pop tart's a decent writer, a decent singer and a perfect sexpot. And she knows exactly what she's doing – living deep in our own dirty dreams. *Grade: C+*



Sara Bareilles, 'Kaleidoscope Heart'

If we learned anything from Sara Bareilles' "Little Voice," her impression-making major label debut, it was that she was lying: Nothing about her sweet, soulful croon is tiny. That big voice, which blew up because of a certain "Love Song," commands throughout her follow-up, one that's poised for lots of play on the CW with its jaunty coffeehouse pop. Her good-vibes sound – for instance, "Uncharted," a sugary high that's pure power anthem – feels good even when she's not. On "Gonna Get Over You" Bareilles bebops through heartbreak, and she makes "King of Anything," a killer kiss-off, seem as inviting as a prettily packaged bazooka. But this album isn't some "Love Song" molding machine; Bareilles' voice reaches into her, well, kaleidoscope heart to pull out all the colors of her voice – the most gorgeous of which shines through "The Light," a simple, cushy ballad. The delicate "Bluebird," with its careful breaks and floating piano, achieves the same greatness. "Machine Gun" begins deceptively, another acerbic rant that bounces into a blaze of instrumental fury and a vocal that reaches past the sky. And it's Bareilles' voice that, even when she's sometimes off her game lyrically, makes this "Heart" beat. *Grade: B+*

Also Out



The Weepies, 'Be My Thrill'

Like She & Him, the Weepies' whimsical indie folk-pop – also performed by a gender-opposite duo – is as cute as it is emotionally charged. The title track is a perky piece of genius, and even boasts lesbian love in its video. Dig deeper, past songs like "I Was Made for Sunny Days," and there's melancholy longing, as heard on the clever tearjerker "Not a Lullaby." A thrill, for sure.



Megan McCormick, 'Honest Words'

Off to a good start with a line of songs that drill and bite, the 23-year-old's debut coasts with raw,

bluesy rockers and a muscular beyond-her-years voice. "Do Right," a pop-country cut, especially sounds like a hit looking for a home. But when the charged opening tuckers out, she falls back on tedious folkie balladry that's authentic and endearing, but monotonous and sagging.



Ryan Star, '11:59'

Reality show-birthered rockers often feel like extensions of each other – Chris Daughtry sounds like David Cook sounds like Ryan Star. CBS's "Rock Star: Supernova" offspring, though, likes to play up the pop sensibility more than either "Idol" contestant, turning every other song into a sound juggernaut. But, if Star wants to be one, it'll take more than some bait and a big voice.

Reach Chris Azzopardi at chris@pride-source.com.

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Ann Arbor's OutFest on Sept. 18

OutFest, Ann Arbor's annual LGBT celebration, will return this year at 5 p.m. Sept. 18 in Braun Court, said \aut\ Bar co-owner and planner for the event, Keith Orr. So far, details are still being worked out, but local bands Drag King Rebellion and (the) fundamentalists will perform.

Expect, as usual, resource booths and dancing, said Orr. This is OutFest's 16th year despite the shift in organizers last year, when the Washtenaw Rainbow Action Project lacked the resources to hold the festival. Since, Orr and \aut\ Bar co-owner Martin Contreras have kept the celebration alive. Look for more details in Between The Lines as they're announced.



OutFest celebrates 16 years on Sept. 18. Photo: BTL file photo

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► Gerry

Continued from p. 34

type – most people at the university have decided looking pained, busy and miserable makes them more serious, but I beg to differ.

Gerrification is part of my creative life in writing, photography and especially performing. But it also makes me have friends and influence people. Because Gerrification will someday eradicate the money system, I am a bit short on cash at the moment, and because I need to devote my time to my political platform of being fabulous, I'm not able to focus on one partner. I'm deliciously single. But I will say that I'm having the time of my life.

What makes you so qualified to offer advice on being fabulous?

I've been there, done that. I've worked in many professions, some of them a bit scandalous, some of them merely dull drudgery, anywhere from file clerk at a wig factory to a part in a Woody Allen flick. I moved to NYC at the age of 20 when people were afraid to walk the streets or

“Everyone should and can be Gerrified no matter who they are. Even if they're evil or limited, like George Bush or Sarah Palin, Gerrification just might help these misguided souls see the light someday.”

take the subway for fear that a knife would be stuck in your back or you would be raped and robbed – and naturally, I was.

I'm afraid of nothing as a result. As a child and teenager growing up in the suburbs of Massachusetts, I was tortured for being “different” by some of the moronic conformist dopes I went to school with. Unfortunately, this was pre-Columbine. However, I learned that being gorgeous and well-dressed was the best defense, and being unique and unafraid to set the fashion trend was always the way to go.

When I moved to New York City in the 1970s, I earned a degree at the Fashion Institute of Technology. And of course, hanging out with the gay boys since the age of 16, I've learned how to do my

makeup, my hair and boogie with the best of them.

Does everyone have what it takes to make this transition?

Everyone should and can be Gerrified no matter who they are. Even if they're evil or limited, like George Bush or Sarah Palin, Gerrification just might help these misguided souls see the light someday. Even dogs and cats can and should be Gerrified. Let's face it, we all need a makeover.

Will Gerrification turn the world gay?

The world is already gay, at least under the surface. Gerrification is designed to bring it all out into the open. Gerrification is not about gender, per se, but about being willing to go a little wild

and transcend categorization.

And how can it improve sex lives?

Naturally, sex lives are improved by having fun, feeling better and looking better. And being unafraid to blend the confines of gender a bit. However, one of the slogans of Gerrification is, “Down with sex and up with dildos.” This does not mean sex is discouraged, but more an encouragement for people to pleasure themselves when need be rather than struggle through toxic relationships. Sex toys and fantasy are great tools to use when you're not getting what you need.

Gerrification is all about being sexual and not being locked into a category or worrying about where your desires take you or what gender you've been assigned. Most people aren't really straight or even gay, they're just horny and they have a right to do what they want with willing partners, as long as it doesn't involve children, animals or leather couches. And also, the real problem in this world with sex is how can we combine a long-term love with eroticism? Is monogamy with exciting sex even possible? If you're Gerrified, it will at least keep things interesting.

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Happenings

EDITOR'S PICK



The Metro Detroit Softball League will be hosting the 25th annual Midwest Invitational Softball Tournament Sept. 3-5, which includes as many as 32 teams at two area fields playing numerous softball games.

Local teams will compete with out-of-state groups, including visiting teams from Cleveland, Chicago, Toronto, North Carolina, Cincinnati and Columbus. Games will be played at Rotunda and Ford Woods Park Fields in Dearborn, and guests are invited to come cheer their favorites on.

After the games, which end at 6 p.m. Sept. 4 and 5 p.m. Sept. 5, there will also be numerous social outings, including a closing party at Menjo's Complex in Detroit. The Closing Party, which begins at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 5, will include a dinner catered by Marinelli's Italian Restaurant of Madison Heights, plus an awards ceremony. Wristbands are required for entry.

To learn more, visit www.2010mistdetroit.com.

OUTINGS

Thursday, Sept. 2

Unnatural Causes, 11 a.m. A viewing of the documentary that explores whether inequality is making LGBT people sick. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Friday, Sept. 3

Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m. Bisexual social group. All are welcome. Washtenaw Rainbow Action Project, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-678-2478. BiPrideAnnArbor@gmail.com

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. "The World Unseen" In a world where boundaries are rigidly defined, two wildly different women cross them in this story that focuses on their budding romance in apartheid South Africa. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Sept. 4

Midwest Invitational Softball Tournament, 8 a.m. A weekend of softball games, social events and more. Metro Detroit Softball League, Metro Detroit. www.2010mistdetroit.com

Aerial Fitness Program, 11:30 a.m. A six-week course that will cover stretching, trapeze, aerial hoop, circus rings and more. Cost: \$85. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. www.goaffirmations.org

Labor Day Luau Pig Roast, 6 p.m. Grass skirts, leis and coconut bras abound! Food, drinks, fun and an entire roasted pig. Admission: \$5 with a dish to pass, \$10 without a dish. Windover Resort, 3596 Blakely Road, Owendale. 989-375-2586. www.windoverresort.com

Men's Discussion Group, 6 p.m. A group for adult gay, bi or trans men. Topics range from public displays of affection or LGBT images in advertising to movie nights and picnics. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Tuesday, Sept. 7

Paid Piano Accompanist, 7 p.m. Sing Out Detroit is looking for a paid piano accompanist for rehearsals starting in September through July. Contact Linda for info. Sing Out Detroit, Royal Oak. 248-943-2411. linda@singoutdetroit.com. www.singoutdetroit.com

Euchre Tournament, 7 p.m. Euchre tournament fundraiser to benefit Out Loud Chorus, Washtenaw county's original GLBT chorus. \$10 entry, cash prizes. sh\aut\ Cabaret and Gallery, 325 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-973-6084. outloudchorus@gmail.com. www.olconline.org

Thursday, Sept. 9

Hang Out Night, 7 p.m. Join other young, up-and-coming adults in the Emerald Room for drink specials, free pizza, networking and lots of fun! Hosted by Affirmations. Rosie O'Grady's, 279 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. jsimpson@goaffirmations.org. www.goaffirmations.org

Meet 'n Greet, 7 p.m. Welcoming LGBT people and allies ages 18-33. A meeting with light snacks and dinner to follow. 20 Somethings, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. www.the20somethings.org

Friday, Sept. 10

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. "And Then Came Lola" This romantic comedy follows scatterbrained photographer Lola as she attempts to make it to a key meeting on time. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

See Outings, page 46

KALEIDOSCOPE

A celebration of the resilience of LGBTQ youth featuring a youth developed documentary on Vogueing

Join us for an evening of light hors d'oeuvres,
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kaleidoscope *[kə-lī-ə-'dɔɪ-skəp-jən]* a reflection of a constantly changing pattern of shapes and color.

This event is supported by the following sponsors:

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Rippin' Gaysurfers.net

BY DAN WOOG

With its chill, let-it-all-hang-out image – and its show-off-that-bodacious-body beach environment – you'd think surfing would offer a welcome haven for gay men in the larger, often homophobic sports world.

Think again.

When a magazine article implied that rising star Cheyne Horan was gay, he lost endorsements and friends.

When a top-ranked surfer Robbins Thompson's sexuality became known, he heard slurs in the water. On land, his car was vandalized.

And when young surfing sensation Shane Dorian was asked what he'd most like to eliminate from the world, he responded, "diseases, the Devil, flat spells (and) dykes and fags."

Those incidents took place in the 1990s. The situation changed little through the past decade.

Earlier this year, all that changed.

Just four months after "Thomas" – a Frenchman who spent seven years in Australia, and prefers to not divulge his last name – started www.gaysurfers.net, the site had drawn over 1,500 members. Most came from the U.S., Australia and France. But it spread rapidly, and now there is solid representation from South Africa, the U.K., Spain, Italy, Indonesia, South America and India.

Users love the chance to search for other gay surfers, and send private messages. They have created groups and forums. They read surfing articles, and search for movies with "gay" and "surf" in the title.

And they share a growing list of gay-friendly surf spots around the world.

"I believe there is a surf culture beyond the macho young man, and there are things we want to share with other gay surfers beyond dating," Thomas told Australia's gay magazine DNA. "I was hoping someone out there would build

this community, but it never happened."

So Thomas did it himself.

His social-networking site has two goals. One is to help gay surfers meet – including those deep in the closet. The other is to change public awareness by spotlighting gay surfers and bringing the sport's homophobia into the bright sunshine.

The DNA story tried to explain surfing's anti-gay history.

One surfer called the sport "adolescent." Teenage boys, he said, "are the least sure of their sexual orientation." Having perhaps experimented with same-sex activity, they may "tilt toward homophobia as a means of denial."

He believes there will be little change until "some courageous, high-profile dude, basically a pro, comes out and says 'f--- you homophobes.'"

An 18-year-old commenter on Gaysurfers.net said that geography has little to do with attitudes. "Sydney is supposed to host the biggest community of surfers in the world, and the second biggest gay community after San Francisco," he wrote.

"But still no sign of gay surfers. I can't seem to find any."

Thomas said that the U.S. "seems to be the country with the biggest number of gay surfers." Most, he noted, live in very open-minded places like San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Hawaii. Gay surfers from Hawaii are "very active on the site and supportive of the project."

Several gay European surfers said they had found little hostility on the shores of their continent. They admitted, however, that they know very few other gay surfers.

Australia, by contrast, "has more rural communities of surfers that do experience homophobia," Thomas said. One surfer from Down Under refused comment for the DNA story. Most gay surfers are still closeted, he said – "especially the older guys."

"Gay surfers are all hiding some-

where," a 26-year-old named Alan posted on Gaysurfers.net. "I hope here (too). In my hometown there are at least five gay surfers, but they keep their sexuality for themselves. I don't know how to tell them that I am gay. Maybe they are on here?"

Gay surfers are not the only ones who read and comment on his website. It's attracting straight people, too. They bring a variety of attitudes.

"Some don't understand why gay surfers need their own space," Thomas said. "Some others do get it, and think it's a great idea."

Perhaps, he added, surfers think their culture "expects" them to be homophobic. As they read and learn about the gay surfers in their midst, they "slowly open up to it."

A heterosexual surfer named Scott wrote on the site: "I know sooo few gay surfers. It intrigues me. Surfing is for all who appreciate this world." He offered to help "mediate with a straight's perspective on surfing."

As with most Internet ventures – especially one dedicated to a sport that puts a premium on looking hot – the talk often turns to sex.

"Quite honestly, I was hoping to see as many near-naked butt shots of guys as I see of girls in most surf magazines and website," wrote one commenter.

But, he told Thomas, "thus far, you've kept it classy."

Dan Woog is a journalist, educator, soccer coach, gay activist, and author of the "Jocks" series of books on gay male athletes. Visit his website at www.danwoog.com. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutField@qsyndicate.com.

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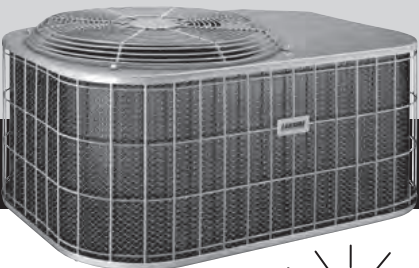
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EDITOR'S PICK



The Woodward Dream Cruise is over, but for car enthusiasts, the fun is just beginning. Explore a range of glamorous, gritty and “green” predecessors to today’s cars – including early examples of steam and electric-powered vehicles – during the 60th anniversary of the Old Car Festival, held Sept. 11 and 12 in Greenfield Village.

The weekend will include displays and demonstrations of such cars as the Stanley Steamer, Baker Electric and Detroit Electric, plus old favorites like the Model T. In addition, guests can speak with owners of over 500 antique vehicles and watch as they parade roadsters, race cars and convertibles around the streets of Greenfield Village.

Entrance to the Old Car Festival is included with Village admission, which is \$22 for adults, \$21 for seniors, \$16 for youth and free for Henry Ford members. To learn more, call 313-982-6001, or visit www.thehenryford.org.

► Outings

Continued from p. 44

Behind Closed Doors Office Party, 10 p.m. Business formal attire suggested, but not required. No cover, but donations to ICON Detroit charities appreciated. Hayloft Saloon, 8070 Greenfield, Detroit. www.icondetroit.net

Saturday, Sept. 11

LGBTQ Fall Welcome Picnic, 11 a.m. The annual event with picnic food, games, prizes and a musical performance by Casey Grooten. Hosted by CARES, KGLRC, Project(!) and others. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer Street, Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. www.kglrc.org

Aerial Fitness Program, 11:30 a.m. A six-week course that will cover stretching, trapeze, aerial hoop, circus rings and more. Cost: \$85. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. www.goaffirmations.org

Scavenger Hunt, 1 p.m. A benefit for Together We Can, \$5 donation for team scavenger hunt. On foot only, with prizes! Meets at Nine Mile Road and Planovan, Ferndale. twdetroit.com www.twdetroit.com

Men's Discussion Group, 6 p.m. A group for adult gay, bi or trans men. Topics range from public displays of affection or LGBT images in advertising to movie nights and picnics. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

YEP Awards, 7 p.m. An awards ceremony to honor Affirmations youth and their accomplishments. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

MUSIC & MORE

BENEFITS/SOCIAL EVENTS

Detroit International Jazz Festival “Lights Actions Jazz” The opening night party for the Detroit Jazz Fest with performances by the Mulgrew Miller Trio and Tower of Power. Campus Martius, Detroit. 5 p.m. Sep. 3. 313-447-1248. www.detroitjazzfest.com

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts “Benefit Appraisal Day” Appraisals by DuMouchelle Gallery. Registration: \$15 per item for KIA members, \$18 for non-members. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. 10:15 a.m. Sep. 11. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Overture Society of the Southern Great Lakes Symphony “Breakfast Fundraiser” To raise funds for scholarships, with musical performances by 2009 scholarship winners. Tickets: \$35. Grecian Center, 16300 Dix-Toledo Road, Southgate. 10 a.m. Sep. 11. 313-382-7532. www.downriverarts.org

University Musical Society “On The Road with UMS” The annual auction benefiting UMS, with food and live music. Tickets: \$100. North Campus Research Complex, 2800 Plymouth Road, Ann Arbor. 6:30 p.m. Sep. 11. 734-764-8489. www.ums.org/ontheroad

CLASSICAL

Lansing Symphony Orchestra “Beethoven's Triple” Part of the MasterWorks series, with performances of works by Beethoven and Brahms. Tickets: \$12-45. Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 8 p.m. Sep. 10. 517-487-5001. www.lansingsymphony.org

CONCERTS

Arab American National Museum “Jesus ‘Chuy’ Negrete” Part of the extension of the Concert of Colors. Tickets: \$10 Arab American National Museum, 13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. 6:30 p.m. Sep. 9. 313-624-0215. www.arabamericanmuseum.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts “Zion Lion” The kickoff to the Art & All That Jazz season. Admission: \$3 adults, free for members. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. 5:30 p.m. Sep. 10. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Kerrytown Concert House “Chard & Holland” The annual benefit concert, with baritone Roger Chard and pianist Maurita Patterson Holland. Tickets: \$15-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Sep. 10, 8 p.m. Sep. 11. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Live Nation “Eminem and Jay-Z” A once-in-a-lifetime performance by the rap superstars. Tickets: \$49.50-99.50. Comerica Park, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Sep. 2, 7:30 p.m. Sep. 3. www.livenation.com

MotorCity Casino “Ludacris” Battle of the Sexes, a performance by the Grammy Award-winning rapper. Tickets: \$32-39. Sound Board Theater, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Sep. 10. www.motorcitycasino.com

MSU College of Music “Guest Artist Recital” With soprano Janet Williams and pianist Alan Nathan. Tickets: \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, free for students. Music Building Auditorium, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 7:30 p.m. Sep. 8. 517-353-9958. www.music.msu.edu

Olympia Entertainment “Dukes of September Rhythm Revue” With Donald Faen, Michael McDonald and Boz Scaggs. Tickets: \$39.50-103. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Sep. 8. www.ticketmaster.com

Palace Sports and Entertainment “KISS” The Hottest Show on Earth Tour, with special guest The Academy Is... Tickets: \$28-78. DTE Energy Music Theatre, 7774 Sashabaw Road, Clarkston. 6:30 p.m. Sep. 11. www.palacenet.com

Palace Sports and Entertainment “Heart” The Red Velvet Car Tour, with original rock sisters Ann and Nancy Wilson. Tickets: \$10-42. DTE Energy Music Theatre, 7774 Sashabaw Road, Clarkston. 7:30 p.m. Sep. 3. www.palacenet.com

Palace Sports and Entertainment “Lady Gaga” The Monster Ball Tour with special guest Semi Precious Weapons. Tickets: \$52.50-178. The Palace, 5 Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. 8 p.m. Sep. 4. www.palacenet.com

FESTIVALS

Arts, Beats & Eats “Arts, Beats & Eats Festival” The annual Labor Day weekend celebration of metro Detroit’s best foods, sounds and artwork. Admission: \$3, with VIP packages available. Downtown, Royal Oak. Sep. 3 - Sep. 6. www.artsbeatsand.com

Detroit International Jazz Festival “Detroit Jazz Fest” A weekend of concerts, jam sessions, shows and more on five stages from Hart Plaza to Campus Martius. Free. Downtown, Detroit. Sep. 3 - Sep. 6. www.detroitjazzfest.com

Jewish Community Center of Metro Detroit “Stephen Gottlieb Festival of the Arts” A week of lectures, music, dance, fine arts and more. Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. Aug. 31 - Sep. 5. 248-432-5692. www.jccdet.org

The Henry Ford “Old Car Festival” Featuring nearly 500 antique cars, plus new cars, green cars and special performances and exhibits. Free with Village admission: \$22 adults, \$21 seniors, \$16 youth, free for members. Greenfield Village, 20900 Oakwood, Dearborn. 9 a.m. Sep. 11, 9 a.m. Sep. 12. 313-982-6001. www.thehenryford.org

FILM & VIDEO

LSA Theme Semester “The Wizard of Oz” Shown in the Helmut Stern Auditorium. Free. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Sep. 7. 734-763-UMMA. www.umma.umich.edu

Michigan Theater “Gone with the Wind” Part of the Summer Classic Movie Series. Tickets: \$9 adults, \$7 students, seniors and veterans. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. 1:30 p.m. Sep. 5, 7 p.m. Sep. 7. www.michtheater.org

Michigan Theater “Casablanca” Part of the Summer Classic Movie Series. Tickets: \$9 adults, \$7 seniors and veterans, free for students. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Sep. 6. www.michtheater.org

Michigan Theater “Metropolis” Part of the Summer Classic Movie Series. Tickets: \$9 adults, \$7 students, seniors and veterans. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. 1:30 p.m. Sep. 12, 7 p.m. Sep. 14. www.michtheater.org

Michigan Theater “Renewal” Part of the Stonyfield Sustainability Film Series. Tickets: \$6 adults, \$5 members, students and seniors. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Sep. 8. www.michtheater.org

Olympia Entertainment “A Name is a Name” A showing of a film about Macedonian people and their fight to have their name and identity recognized. Tickets: \$25 general admission, \$100 VIP. Masonic Temple, 500 Temple, Detroit. 7 p.m. Sep. 11. 313-271-3110. www.anameisname.com

OTHER

Detroit Waldorf School “Mom to Mom Sale” A day of sale and swapping of children’s clothing, toys and equipment. Detroit Waldorf School, 2555 Burns Ave., Detroit. 10 a.m. Sep. 11. www.detroitwaldorf.org

Healthy Oakland Partnership “Family Market Day” Enjoy Oakland County Parks and Recreation physical activity mobile units, music, activities, prizes, exhibits and more. Oakland County Farmers Market, 2350 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford. 9 a.m. Sep. 11. www.oakgov.com/health

Robert Mondavi “Discover Wine” Learn about food, wine and entertaining from the authentic California authority on wine during Arts, Beats and Eats. Downtown, Royal Oak. Sep. 3 - Sep. 6. 248-334-4600. www.robertmondavi.com/discover_wine_tour/20

The Auction Block “Seized Goods Auction” Flat screen TVs, new computers, digital cameras, Wii, Play Stations, Xbox, iPods, cell phones, DVD players, jewelry and much more. Auction starts at \$1. The Auction Block, 12660 Greenfield, Detroit. 9 a.m. Sep. 11. 313-659-3376. www.theauctionblock.com

SHOWS

Palace Sports and Entertainment “Fall Home Improvement Show” Advice from experts, ideas for decorating and remodeling and more. Admission: \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door. The Palace, 5 Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. 10 a.m. Sep. 11, 10 a.m. Sep. 12. www.budgetconsumerexpo.com

THEATER

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

Caroline, or Change A co-production with Peppermint Creek Theatre Company. \$20. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Sep. 9-19. 517-482-5700. www.riverwalktheatre.com

The Drowsy Chaperone A Michigan premiere. \$17. Village Players of Birmingham, 34660 Woodward Ave., Birmingham. Sep. 10-26. 248-644-2075. www.birminghamvillageplayers.com

PROFESSIONAL THEATER

Boeing-Boeing \$25-\$38. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Sep. 11. 734-433-7673. www.purplerosetheatre.org

Criminal Hearts \$20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff Ave., Hamtramck. Sep. 10 - Oct. 2. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

Dying City Free. Capital TheaterWorks at The Ledges Playhouse, 133 Fitzgerald Park Dr., Grand Ledge. Sep. 3-12. 517-944-0221. www.capitaltheaterworks.org

Fridays and Saturdays at Go Comedy! \$15 per show; “Dark Matter” is free. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Last of the Red Hot Lovers Previews Sept. 2-3 (\$20), \$28-\$30. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Sep. 2-Oct. 16. 248-347-0003. www.tippingpointtheatre.com

Opera at The Acorn \$25. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Sep. 11. 269-756-3879. www.acorntheater.com

South Pacific \$34.50 and above. Broadway Grand Rapids at DeVos Performance Hall, 303 Monroe Ave., Grand Rapids. Sep. 7-12. 1-800-745-3000. www.broadwaygrandrapids.org

Sundays at Go Comedy! \$7 for the evening. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Susurrus \$30. Times vary; groups of four admitted every 15 minutes. Recommended for ages 16+; contains adult themes. University Musical Society at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor. Sep. 9 - Oct. 3. 734-764-2538. www.ums.org

The Last Great British Sex Farce Ever! \$14-\$16. Broadway Onstage Live Theatre, 21517 Kelly Rd., Eastpointe. Sep. 10 - Oct. 9. 586-771-6333. www.broadwayonstage.com

The Rocky Horror Show \$19.50 reserved, \$15 general admission. Etico Productions at Meadow Brook Music Festival, 3554 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills. Sep. 10-11. 1-800-745-3000. www.meadowbrookmusic.com

Thursdays at Go Comedy! \$10 for the evening. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Til Death Do Us Part \$10 in advance; \$15 at the door. BusyB Productions at 1515 Broadway, 1515 Broadway St., Detroit. Sep. 10-12. www.facebook.com/busybproductions

Wednesdays at Go Comedy! \$5 for the evening. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Woman Before a Glass \$25-\$41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Sep. 5. 734-663-0681. www.performancecenter.org

AUDITIONS

CENTER STAGE JACKSON - auditions for Rodgers and Hammerstein’s “Cinderella,” Sept. 9-10, www.centerstagejackson.org; **TIBBITS YOUNG AUDIENCES** - auditions for children in grades 3-8 for “Miracle in Mudville,” Sept. 1-2, 517-278-6029.

ART 'N' AROUND

323East Gallery “Our Infinite Universe” An exhibition of poster works by The Silent Giants. 323East Gallery, 323 E. Fourth Street, Royal Oak. Aug. 18 - Sep. 9. 248-246-9544. www.323east.com

Art & Ideas “Social Realism 2010” An exhibition of photographic work by Thomas McMillen-Oakley, Julia DeClerck and Shaq Kalaj. Art & Ideas Contemporary Art Gallery & Studio, 15095 Northville, Plymouth. Aug. 7 - Sep. 18. 734-420-0775. www.artandideasingallery.com

Basement 414 “Unfathomable Reins/Animalesque” A solo and group exhibition, featuring works connecting to animals and an installation of hybrid sculpture. Basement 414, 414 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. Aug. 6 - Sep. 4. <http://b414.org>

Cass Cafe “Detroit and Issues” Works by four Detroit-area artists. Cass Cafe, 4620 Cass Ave., Detroit. July 17 - Sep. 18. 313-831-1400. www.casscafe.com

Charles H. Wright Museum “Portraits of Life and Landscapes” The Art of Frank Kelley Jr. Charles H. Wright Museum, 315 E. Warren Ave., Detroit. Aug. 27 - Dec. 12. 313-494-5800. www.charleswrightmuseum.org

Community Arts @ Paramount Gallery “Custom Guitar Exhibit” Works by Steve Brook and Daniel Cascardo. Paramount Bank, 22635 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Aug. 13 - Sep. 24. www.paramountbank.com

Gallery Project “Faux Real” Free. The Gallery Project, 215 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. July 28 - Sep. 5. 734-997-7012. www.thegalleryproject.com

Gallery Project “Politics of Fear” A multimedia exhibit of works by 35 artists visualizing fear in American society. Opening reception held 6-9 p.m. Sept. 10. The Gallery Project, 215 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Sep. 8 - Oct. 17. 734-997-7012. www.thegalleryproject.com

Holocaust Memorial Center “Synagogues in Germany: A Virtual Reconstruction” Computer aided design reconstructions of 14 synagogues destroyed during Kristallnacht. Holocaust Memorial Center, 28123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. Aug. 29 - Nov. 29. 248-553-2400. www.holocaustcenter.org

Jewish Community Center of Metro Detroit “The Green Show” Sculptures, jewelry and other art created from recycled materials. Children’s workshop held 12-2 p.m. Sept. 19. Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. Sep. 2 - Oct. 14. 248-432-5579. www.jccdet.org

EDITOR'S PICK



The Village Players of Birmingham will present the Michigan premiere of the Tony Award-winning musical "The Drowsy Chaperone," 8 p.m. Sept. 10, 11, 17, 18, 24 and 25 and 2 p.m. Sept. 19 and 26 at the Village Players Playhouse, 34660 Woodward, Birmingham.

Gary Mach, president of the Village Playhouse board of trustees, says that people often ask, "Why don't they write musicals anymore that the whole family can enjoy?" Well, they have, and it opens the theater group's 88th season.

"The Drowsy Chaperone" returns us to the jazz age, where tap dancing gangsters, mixed up lovers, a frustrated producer and a chorine take us on a fast paced musical trip. Lots of classic characters take their turn singing and dancing to spirited new music as the tale unwinds. In the end, the girls get their guys and everyone is on their way to the altar.

Tickets are \$17. For reservations or information, call 248-644-2075

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Flowers in Art" Selections from the KIA collection featuring the beauty of flowers. Free. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. May 29 - Sep. 12. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Beauty amid Thunder" The past two centuries of Chinese art, in the new Joy Light Gallery of Asian Art. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. Aug. 28 - Oct. 17. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Wondrous ink" Selections from the Richard Fabian Collection, held in the new Joy Light Gallery of Asian Art. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. Aug. 28 - Dec. 5. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Strong Women, Beautiful Men" Japanese Portrait Prints from the Toledo Museum of Art, held in the new Joy Light Gallery of Asian Art. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. Aug. 28 - Oct. 31. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Kerrytown Concert House "In The Studio" Paintings and drawings by local artist Sarah Innes. Opening reception held 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sept. 9. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Aug. 26 - Sep. 27. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Lawrence Street Gallery "Celebrate the Print" Works by 40 local printmakers. Opening reception held 6-9 p.m. Sept. 3. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Sep. 1 - Sep. 24. 248-544-0394. www.lawrencestreetgallery.com

Macomb Center for the Performing Arts "In the Making of the Moment" Works by Steven Kuypers and Tyson Skross. Reception held 5-8 p.m. Sept. 16. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts Gallery, 44575 Garfield, Clinton Township. Aug. 26 - Sep. 9. 586-286-2089. www.macombcenter.com

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum "Regional Biennial Juried Sculpture Exhibition" A showing of 32 works by 24 local artists. Free. Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, Saginaw Valley State University, Saginaw. July 3 - Sep. 18. 989-964-7096. www.marshallfredericks.org

MSU Museum "Sticks, Strings and Shadows" A collection of puppets of Asia. Runs through Nov. 7. MSU Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 517-432-1472. <http://museum.msu.edu>

Riverside Arts Center "Great Lakes Small Works" A 2D and 3D juried exhibit. Artist reception held 5-7 p.m. Sept. 11. Riverside Arts Center, 76 N. Huron, Ypsilanti. Sep. 2 - Sep. 25. 734-480-2787. www.riversidearts.org

Sherry Washington Gallery "Summer Solstice X" An exhibition of paintings, drawings and sculpture by 13 artists. Free. Sherry Washington Gallery, 1274 Library, Detroit. July 17 - Sep. 25. 313-961-4500. www.sherrywashingtongallery.com

The Butcher's Daughter Gallery "Paycheck to Paycheck, part one" A group exhibition in two parts, each running for the length of a worker's pay cycle. Opening reception held 6-9 p.m. Sept. 4. The Butcher's Daughter Gallery, 22747 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Sep. 4 - Sep. 18. 248-890-6536. www.thebutchersdaughtergallery.com

The Henry Ford "Play" An exhibit that explores how people interact with each other. Admission: \$15 adults, \$14 seniors, \$11 youth. The Henry Ford Museum, 20900 Oakwood, Dearborn. June 19 - Sep. 19. 313-982-6001. www.thehenryford.org

Universal Institute "Gallery U" A contemporary art space with works by people with disabilities. Gallery U, 310 Fourth Street, Royal Oak. 6 p.m. Sep. 4. 248-399-7322. <http://gallery-u.blogspot.com>

University of Michigan Museum of Art "On Beauty and the Everyday" The prints of American artist James McNeill Whistler. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor. Aug. 21 - Nov. 28. 734-763-UMMA. www.umma.umich.edu

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Out of the Ordinary" Selections from the Bohlen Wood Art and Fufeld Folk Art Collections. Free. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor. 10 a.m. Sep. 11. 734-763-UMMA. www.umma.umich.edu

Wayne County Community College "Haiku Middle Passage" A multimedia exhibition commemorating the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Brown and Juanita C. Ford Gallery, 1001 Fort Street, Detroit. July 29 - Sep. 17. www.wcccd.edu

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Ann Arbor theater says hello to 'Bye, Bye, Birdie'

Ann Arbor Civic Theatre will present the musical comedy "Bye, Bye, Birdie," directed by Rachel Francisco, Sept. 16-19 at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre.

One of the most beloved American musicals, "Bye, Bye, Birdie" finds a small town in Ohio in the mid-20th century turned upside down by the arrival of a famous rock star, Conrad Birdie. Birdie's agent, Albert, has arranged for Birdie to kiss a local girl before his induction into the army - a publicity stunt that goes awry when the less-than-wholesome star

hurts into town. With timeless comedy and classic songs like "Put on a Happy Face" and "A Lot of Livin' to Do," "Bye, Bye Birdie" is one of the best feel-good musicals of all time.

"I really wanted to direct something light, happy, and fun," said director Rachel Francisco in a press release. "'Birdie' fits the bill, and it has great roles for people of all ages. We have lots of new faces in this production, including a kids chorus of adorable youngsters as young as 5 years old. We're striving to preserve the look and

feel of the era, and the result is a classic musical for the entire family."

Performances are at 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday with a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday. Friday, Saturday and Sunday tickets are \$22 (\$20 for seniors and \$12 for students). On Thursday only, all seats are \$17. Tickets and information are available online at www.a2ct.org, through the A2CT office at 734-971-2228, or at the door of the theater before each performance.

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DEAR JODY



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Her pets are a problem!

Q. My girlfriend "Sandra" and I have been together for seven months. Sandra loves animals; she has three cats, two dogs, a parrot and a gerbil. I think she has too many animals to take care of - plus, her house smells like a zoo. She doesn't seem to notice how her house smells. Don't get me wrong, I do like pets, just not so many and only when they are clean and the environment that they live in is well taken care of. Sometimes when I am over there, I feel like I have to breathe through my mouth so the smell doesn't gag me.

I usually suggest we spend time at my house so I won't have to put up with her dogs and cats climbing all over me, leaving pet hair. Being at my place works great, but if we want to spend the night together, it has to be at her house because she can't leave the pets alone all night. I have made it clear that when I am there the animals can't be in the bedroom, but that doesn't eliminate the smell and the hair that is all over everything.

At first this just seemed like a quirky little problem we had. I was willing to put up with it to be with Sandra. But as time goes on I am beginning to feel scared to get too serious because I just couldn't live like that. I mean, who wants to live in a zoo?

I wouldn't have put up with it this long but Sandra is a wonderful person. She is kind, loving, funny, smart and an all around great partner. I couldn't ask for more. We are compatible and have such a great time together. I have never felt so connected to anyone. I feel like I am falling in love with her, but part of me just wants to run because of the pet problem. I haven't really told Sandra how I feel, other than insisting that we not have animals in the bedroom.

I really think this relationship could be the one I have been looking for. Sandra always tells me that I am the soul mate she has been searching for. So, how do I tell Sandra how I really feel about her menagerie? Should I just keep my mouth shut, my nose plugged and hope that things will get better as time goes on? I don't want to lose this relationship.

Falling for a Zookeeper

At first this just seemed like a quirky little problem we had. I was willing to put up with it to be with Sandra. But as time goes on I am beginning to feel scared to get too serious because I just couldn't live like that. I mean, who wants to live in a zoo?

A. You are fooling yourself if you think things will get better "as time goes on." I'd put my money on the situation feeling worse to you if you're in it 24/7. As it is now, Sandra is not bothered by this, so why would she change things? You will get more and more irritated by it - quirky little problems are like that.

It sounds like you and Sandra have a relationship worth fighting for, but you're going to need to bring honesty into it. Start out by letting her know your feelings for her. Then tell her your dilemma. Let her know how you really feel (delicately, as these critters are her babies); tell her that you like pets, but pet hair and smell are getting to you. She may not be able to smell the problem, having lived in it so long and/or her olfactory sense is not that keen. There are things she can do, like washing and brushing pets more often, pet deodorants, improved cleaning of home environment, as well as not getting or replacing pets (or at least cut down on the number of pets) as time goes on.

In order for this to work, she is going to have to be willing to work with you, and you are going to need to do some compromising yourself. It will be a good test to see if you both are relationship-ready. Good relationships happen when people honor each other's needs and work to compromise on issues.

Jody Valley spent 12 years as a clinical social worker. She worked with the LGBT community both as a counselor and a workshop leader in the areas of coming out, self-esteem and relationship issues. The "Dear Jody" column appears weekly. Reach Jody at DearJodyValley@hotmail.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

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Between THE Lines™

MICHIGAN'S WEEKLY NEWS FOR LESBIANS, GAYS, BISEXUALS, TRANSGENDERS AND FRIENDS

Just be yourself, Virgo!

Venus and Mars dancing through Libra while opposing Eris boost competition and conflict. Mercury retrograding past the Sun in Virgo brings egotistical miscalculations into the picture. Go slow, easy and careful. Be the tortoise, not the hare!

ARIES (March 20 – April 19):

Strive for your best without comparing yourself to colleagues. Can you be the best at teamwork? Even efforts to cooperate will highlight your ego, but as long as you're your own sharpest critic, that can be good for you.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20):

Too often you feel your best isn't good enough. Your efforts are appreciated. Why do you shortchange yourself? Playfully exaggerating those feelings – and whatever comes up with them – can help you get clarity.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20):

"The family that plays together slays each other?" That's not how it goes, but maybe you should find your fun outside for now. Either way, remember that standing in your community is based more on cooperation than being "the best" at anything.

CANCER (June 21- July 22):

Slips of the tongue reveal what you really think about your roots and your current job and trajectory. Pick your company carefully, being sure to have a confidante you can trust. Also, use these accidental insights to revise your plans.

LEO (July 23 – August 22):

Be very careful of your facts and figures. You're likely to exaggerate the humiliation of being caught in a mistake, but the financial costs of errors can be much more real than the cost to your ego.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22):

Let others plan your birthday party. You're having too much trouble managing details and they'll fall all over each other trying to make your bash everything you deserve. Trying to look sexy is sure to backfire. Just be yourself and they'll come running.

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22):

Worries about your relationship are at least exaggerated and likely unfounded. Go over them carefully, preferably with your partner, strip away the needless fears, and get a clearer

vision of real problems you can work on.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21):

Friends are too eager to help, but listen politely, if briefly. There might be some good suggestions in all that "meshugas." Competing with colleagues can drive you crazy. Focus on doing your best. You'll accomplish more.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20):

Your long-range plans are not looking good. Normally you would roll with that and adapt. Now it looks more serious. That's just worry, but yes, some revisions need to be made. Analyze problems now; solve them next month.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19):

Work is looking good if you can only keep your mouth out of the way. Absorb information and others' perspectives now. Take time to figure that out before responding. Even if by negative examples, your family offers excellent lessons for building your future.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18):

You may be able to convince everyone you're right, but something at the heart of your argument is wrong. Invite criticism. Open discussion and testing your premises can help you figure out where the flaw is.

PISCES (February 19 – March 19):

Money and sex are the two biggest issues for couples to deal with, but first get ego and miscommunications out of the way. Humility and admitting mistakes is necessary on both sides, but you can only do for yourself.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available for personal and business consultations in person in San Francisco, or online everywhere. He can be reached at 415-864-8302, through his website at www.starjack.com, and by e-mail at QScopes@qsyndicate.com.

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3. Scroll down to the entry form for the fake ad contest and enter your name, etc.
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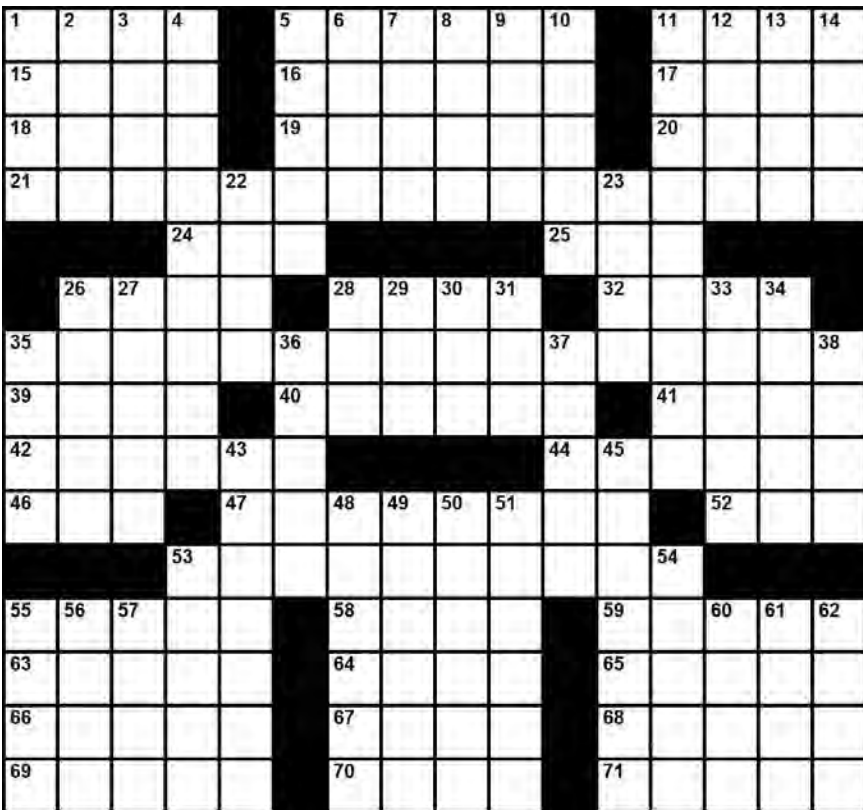
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Q P U Z Z L E

Turn of Phrase

Across

- 1 Pitcher's rubber
- 5 Whitman's dooryard bloomers
- 11 Get ready for action
- 15 Succotash bean
- 16 Tennis star Mauresmo
- 17 "Little Caesar" gangster
- 18 Crude cartel
- 19 "Scent of a Woman" Oscar winner
- 20 Point of view intro, at Gay.com
- 21 Start of a quip
- 24 Sault ___ Marie
- 25 Start of a footnote abbr.
- 26 Threesome
- 28 Doesn't feel up
- 32 Buster Brown's bulldog
- 35 End of the quip
- 39 "Victor/Victoria" actor Peter
- 40 Verdi opera
- 41 ___ Gay Hamilton
- 42 Liam of "Kinsey"
- 44 Straw hat
- 46 Beginning to whiz
- 47 k.d. lang's "___ Gal"
- 52 Barrie's precipitation
- 53 Source of the quip
- 55 No note for a butch
- 58 "The Mod Squad" character
- 59 Edmund to Colette?

- 63 Saying
- 64 "Village Voice" honor
- 65 "Three Tall Women" writer
- 66 Material on a drag queen's legs
- 67 Tony-winning musical
- 68 Defamation in print
- 69 Forest opening
- 70 Like Izzard's comedy
- 71 Rock Hudson roles, usually

Down

- 1 Lagging behind
- 2 Prefix with suction
- 3 Nat. counterpart in MLB
- 4 Bottoms
- 5 Memory gap
- 6 "___ my wit's end!" (cry of a bottom comic's lover?)
- 7 One who says, "Let us prey"
- 8 You could get caught in this
- 9 Armed Forces VIP
- 10 Capital of Margaret Cho's ancestral home
- 11 Adventurous desert queen
- 12 Hoar
- 13 Alpine feedback
- 14 "Billy Elliot" epithet
- 22 "Believe ___ not!"
- 23 Mil. student body

- 26 Number of sides to a gay symbol
- 27 Transsexual Richards
- 28 Queen of the hill
- 29 Dick's running mate
- 30 Like Abner, before Viagra?
- 31 NBC sketch source
- 33 Stud's strides
- 34 To eat, to Ulrichs
- 35 Tart taste
- 36 Kind of column
- 37 Old TV comedian George
- 38 Poet Teasdale
- 43 Like antigay language
- 45 Third testicle?
- 48 Pussy's last name, in "Goldfinger"
- 49 Greased the palm of
- 50 With title to
- 51 Fine point
- 53 George Burns film
- 54 Gay porn director Francis
- 55 Dangle like a package
- 56 Pastoral poem
- 57 The Oscars, e.g.
- 60 "Dancing Queen" band
- 61 Have-not's condition
- 62 Disney pictures

See solution on page 53

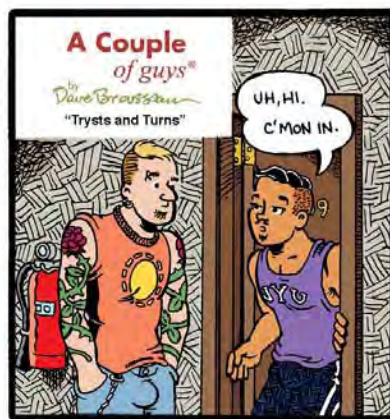
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How'd Ya Like a Nice Planter's Punch?

"That's the thing about Planter's Punch," Sal shouted over the din at BarHarbor one Friday evening as a crowd of guys holding sweaty dress shirts over their arms, not-so-fresh from the city, yelled remarks at each other while getting smashed on overpriced drinks. "What's the thing?" I screamed back. Sal only seemed to mouth his reply; I couldn't hear a word of it. Sal's boyfriend, Shea, broke in: "Fact is, this drink was served by Cuban slave owners but made by slaves from rum distilled by slaves and fruit grown by slaves. Bottoms up!" ("Where?" the wag next to us cried.)

Sal and Shea are once-a-month housemates. Shea is a successful and very handsome 32-year-old actor; he's always in something, from Broadway to off-off-off. Sal, whose last name is Amminio – his parents were either clueless or just plain mean – comes from South Philadelphia via Harvard Law, and is 50. Dismissing a lucrative career in corporate law in favor of various low-paying legal gigs for the LGBT community, Sal had little savings. He'd also learned from the bitter 25-year experience of working with and for PIGs (Phenomenally Idiotic Gays) to detest much of our community. I teased him relentlessly about his name and spent that weekend obscurely singing, "Who killed Teddy Bear? Does anybody care?"

BarHarbor's Planter's Punch was obviously made in vats meant for storing crude oil. Heavy on cheap juice and full of ice, it still cost \$12 a pop. By the time the bar boy, who looked like a sixth-grader with very grown-up armpit hair, worked his way through the pheromone-high crowd, the punch was basically flavored ice water.

"I 'an do be'er than this!" I slurred over the requisite playing of Cher's "Believe." "Duh yoo buh-leeof..." Shea sang out in perfect imitation. "We can, darling," Sal hollered back. And with that we headed home for dinner.

The conversation over grilled salmon and store-bought potato salad became heated. Sal and I held equally rigid but opposing positions on the subject of Planter's Punch. Saturday's beach time consisted of more squabbling interrupted by comments about the Speedo-clad boy parade at the water's edge. The words "rum," "juice," and "you're such an asshole" formed the foundation of our debate. We finally agreed to use Quaker principles: we had to reach consensus on every ingredient and proportion.

Well, we followed the rules but didn't act very Quakerly. There was far too much tasting and giggling, and Sal and I were already flying high by the time Dan and Sean came downstairs. Sal spent the whole

dinner laughing wildly at anything anyone said, while I (I am told) simply passed out at the table. Sal says everybody loved the punch, but I can't remember the evening at all.

Planter's Punch

This recipe makes enough for six drinks

- 1-cup dark rum (I prefer Havana Club Rum)
- 1/2-cup orange juice
- 1/2-cup pineapple juice
- 1/4-cup unsweetened lime juice
- 1/4-cup Orange Curacao (Sal's idea)
- 1/4-cup brandy (my idea; I like Azteca de Oro)

Pour all ingredients into a pitcher. Let it blend and chill for a few hours. Then serve over a limited amount of ice.

(Note: Some people add grenadine; we say "yuck!") Some people stick foofy little fruit slices on the edge of the glass – slivers of orange or lime. We say, "Who wants a piece of orange going up a nostril?" I, for one, don't like anyone or anything getting between me and my drinks.)

Ed Sikov is the author of "Dark Victory: The Life of Bette Davis" and other books about films and filmmakers.

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Tyler Perry has a taste for Old Spice guy

When Tyler Perry makes a decision that affects your life, sometimes he doesn't even bother to tell you about it at first. That's what just happened to Old Spice commercial overnight sensation Isaiah Mustafa (the man on the horse) when Perry cast him in a small role in his upcoming adaptation of the play "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf." The director then changed his mind and decided to upgrade Mustafa to the leading man role in his latest man-in-drag comedy "Madea's Big Happy Family." No word on what sort of leading man role this is, but based on past Perry films, it's a safe bet that Mustafa will play the no-good, mean, cheating husband or the poor-but-honest Christian laborer who saves the beleaguered heroine from the no-good, mean, cheating husband. Perry, as Madea, will then hit someone with a frying pan. It's going to be hilarious.

Revealed: the '90210' teen coming out is...

Not long ago, the creative minds over at the new "90210," realizing that "Degrassi: The Next Generation" had already beaten them to the punch a few years ago with a gay teenager storyline (they're already working with a transgender plot, that's how much more progressive they are in Canada), decided it was time to lumber for-

ward into the present and provide the kids at West Beverly a chance to forge new understandings about human sexuality. Enter Trevor Donovan's character, Teddy Montgomery. And he's already a part of the cast; we just weren't made aware that he was checking out the guys instead of the girls. In the new season Teddy will go public with his orientation and fall for an equally impossibly handsome student played by Kyle Riabko (the young man who took over for Jonathan Groff in "Spring Awakening" on Broadway). Mutual shirtlessness is bound to ensue.

'Law & Order's Prop. 8 slate

It's been settled (ish) in real life; now it's Prop. 8's turn to get its day in court on episodic television. As you may or may not be aware, California's Proposition 8 removed the rights of gay and lesbian citizens to marry, thanks to a ballot measure popular vote and a lot of Church of Latter Day Saints cash. Recently it was overturned, allowing Californians once again to live in the blissful state of marriage equality. And thanks to its history of ripping stories from the headlines, the latest "Law & Order" franchise, "Law & Order: Los Angeles," will explore the issue in an early episode when the series debuts this fall. The big names in the regular cast are, so far, Skeet Ulrich, Alfred Molina, Terrence Howard and Regina Hall. Which one of their characters will be most personally affected by the plotline? Tune in this fall and listen for that "chunk-chunk" sound to find out.



Old Spice commercial actor Isaiah Mustafa

'Golden Girls' gets new life ... in Spain

You "Golden Girls" superfans probably already knew this, but were the rest of you aware that other countries have already taken the "funny senior ladies living together" storyline and run with it? In the U.K. there was "Brighton Belles"; in Russia, "Bolshie Devochki"; and in Greece, "Chrysa Koritsia." Well now it's Spain's turn to reinterpret the "Girls" with "Chicas de oro" (literally translated: Girls of Gold). What's sure to interest some gay fans is the presence of long-

time Pedro Almodovar muse Carmen Maura as one of the four friends. The others are Spanish stars Concha Velasco, Lola Herrera and Alicia Hermida. Now, unless you've got some kind of super-satellite TV system that broadcasts international channels directly into your home, you'll have to wait until the DVDs hit the Spanish market to see this thing. And then need an all-region DVD player. But really, what devotion!

Romeo San Vicente thinks Betty White should guest star on this new show, and he's already setting up a Facebook page to lobby for it. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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