

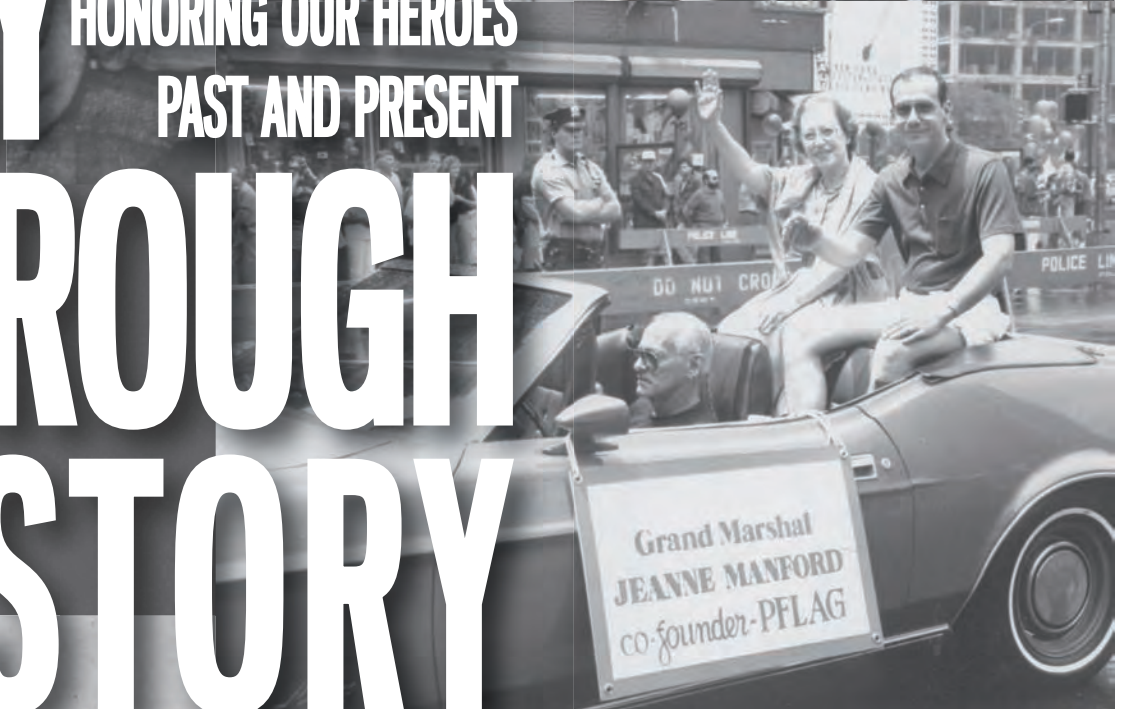
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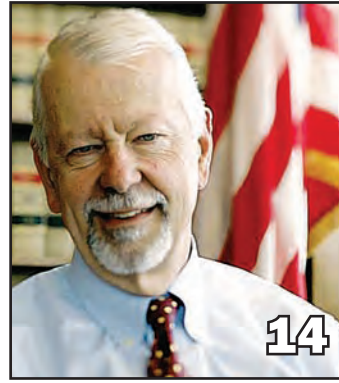
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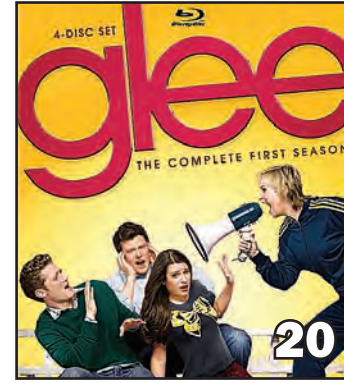
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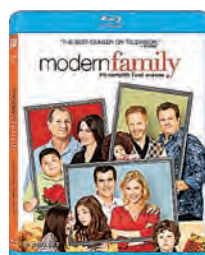
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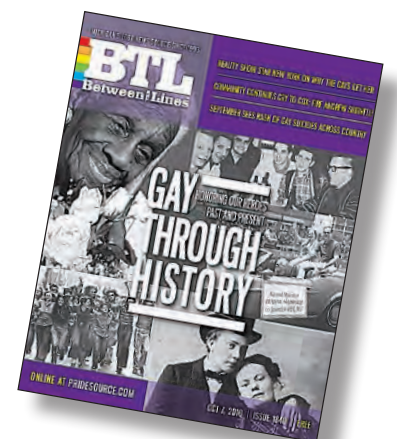


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By Jessica Carreras

Daniel Cuschieri is a social work student at Wayne State University and intern at Affirmations LGBT community center. The 30-year-old Berkley resident hopes to eventually work as a counselor for LGBT people.

1 What sparked your interest in working with the LGBT community?

When I made the decision to pursue a career in social work, I knew I wanted to help serve the LGBT community.

Feelings of isolation and anxiety have always been a certain rite of passage for anyone who has ever come out, and my experience really wasn't any different, but I was lucky enough to have the support of an amazing family who loved and accepted me. Unfortunately, we know this is not the typical experience. Our LGBT youth are at serious risk, and bullying and suicide are preventable. I want to provide the support that helped me survive. The LGBT community is always in need of good advocates and I just want to contribute to the effort.



Even among the most educated, misconceptions and misinformation about LGBT people are true dangers to professional practice.

viduals, especially with members of the trans community. Even among the most educated, misconceptions and misinformation are true dangers to professional practice, and care providers need to be better equipped to provide the best care.

I'm also in the process of developing some program proposals to fill in some programming gaps at Affirmations. We know we can't do everything for everyone, but the great thing about Affirmations is how they empower the community they serve. They are constantly evolving their programs to better suit the needs of the community and they rely heavily on community participation to realize goals and achieve success.

4 What do you hope to gain from your time at Affirmations?

I want to gain some experience working with as many different members of the LGBT community as possible. I'm hoping that my time there will help me identify the needs of the community that I wasn't aware of before.

It's kind of funny how our community is so diverse but for the most part we tend to keep to ourselves. Engaging casually in a social environment is entirely different from understanding how certain complicated issues impact people's lives in a major way. I want to be good at what I do, and I need a real clear picture of what different people experience to do that. I need as much exposure as possible to be a stronger advocate.

5 How do you hope to continue your LGBT advocacy work in the future?

I know that I definitely want to focus on providing services for members of the trans community. Many trans individuals, especially trans youth, cannot afford the counseling they need to receive the letter necessary to change their identification. They typically have a hard time in traditional school settings and often struggle for employment, and there are many challenges I had never even thought about before.

I also want to help beef up the resources and support services available to our LGBT youth, especially in our schools. We all need to do our parts. It can be as simple as supporting organizations like The Trevor Project, or just going into your community to raise awareness.

Get involved with Affirmations at www.goaffirmations.org

2 What brought you to Affirmations as an intern?

Despite being a member of the community, I really didn't have an impressive amount of outward knowledge regarding the complex issues that affect LGBT individuals. I wanted a crash course on the LGBT community and I knew there was no better place to gain that experience.

Affirmations isn't only the largest LGBT organization in Michigan, but also one of the 10 largest centers in the U.S. Our community is so rich with diversity and Affirmations really does try to provide something for everyone. I'd been dying to land an internship with Affirmations, so when the opportunity finally presented itself, I was thrilled!

3 Tell me about the projects you're currently involved in.

I'm currently involved with the LGBT Coalition on Aging. There are a lot of great people involved and they're all working to provide resources and support for LGBT older adults. We're planning our first community forum on Nov. 17 at Affirmations, which is really exciting, and we're really hoping that the older members of the LGBT community come out and help provide us with great discussion!

At Wayne State, I'm interested in expanding the counseling program curriculum to further explore LGBT issues of diversity and how they impact professional practice. Unless you specialize in LGBT care or seek it out, many counselors have very limited experience with LGBT indi-

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UM student harasser Shirvell takes leave of absence

Community, university shows outpouring of support for openly gay student president

BY JESSICA CARRERAS

Michigan Assistant Attorney General Andrew Shirvell, who made national news after word spread of his anti-gay blog attacking University of Michigan Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong, has taken a paid leave of absence.

The news, confirmed by Attorney General Mike Cox's office Sept. 30, caps off a week where Shirvell quickly went from local blogger to national symbol for anti-gay bigotry.

In May, *Between The Lines* identified Shirvell at a rally held outside of the Ann Arbor Civic Theatre's production of "The Laramie Project," where members of Westboro Baptist Church were expected to be protesting the play.

Instead, the rally was faced with a different foe: Shirvell, who spent his time there interrupting a speech given by then newly elected student president, Chris Armstrong, and holding a sign calling Armstrong a "racist liar."

Further investigation revealed that Shirvell runs a blog called "Chris Armstrong Watch," on which he posts photos and comments about the openly gay student president, who Shirvell frequently refers to as a "radical homosexual activist."

The country caught word of Shirvell's antics when he was interviewed on "Anderson Cooper 360" Sept. 28.

Cooper grilled Shirvell, reading him definitions of the words "bigot" and "cyber-bullying" and asking him if he thought either term applied to him.

Cox also appeared on "AC 360" Sept. 29, saying that Shirvell's blogging is protected under the First Amendment and that his job is safe.

"Mr. Shirvell is sort of a front-line grunt assistant prosecutor in my office," Cox said. "He does satisfactory work and off-hours, he's free to engage under both our civil service rules, Michigan Supreme Court rulings and the United States Supreme Court rule."

Cox, however, changed his tone as things continued to heat up, admitting to the Detroit News Sept. 30 that he hadn't yet read all of Shirvell's blog when he made his comments on Cooper's show.

"I'm at fault here," Cox said. "I've been saying for weeks that (Shirvell's) been acting like a bully, that his behavior is immature, but it's after-hours and protected by the First Amendment."

However, news that Shirvell was "suspended" was quickly rebuffed by Cox's office, who said that Shirvell's temporary departure was his decision.

Cox had indicated in his appearance on "Anderson Cooper 360" that his response to the issue might be different if legal action was taken against Shirvell. Cox spokesman John Sellek has said Shirvell could face a disciplinary hearing when he returns. Sellek said he couldn't say what that hearing might involve, but Cox has said he's troubled that Shirvell videotaped police breaking up a party at Armstrong's house in Ann Arbor over Labor Day weekend.

Armstrong takes action

Beyond that, legal action has already been



UM Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong. BTL photo by Emily Locklear.

taken by Armstrong.

Website AnnArbor.com first reported last week that Armstrong has sought a restraining order against Shirvell in an application filed with the Washtenaw County Trial Court Sept. 13. In the application, Armstrong calls Shirvell "a threat to my own personal safety," citing instances where Shirvell had taken photos and video footage outside of Armstrong's home, as well as followed him to various locations.

A hearing for the request was set for 1:30 p.m. Oct. 4 before Judge Nancy Francis, who denied Armstrong's request to issue the order immediately, but was pushed back to 1:30 p.m. Oct. 25, which court officials said was due to paperwork issues.

On Sept. 14, University of Michigan campus police also took action, reading Shirvell a "trespass order," meaning that he is prohibited from setting foot on UM's campus.

Armstrong read a statement addressing the issue at a recent student assembly meeting.

"I will not back down. I will not flinch. I will not falter. I will not succumb to any unwarranted attacks. What I will do is I will carry on with the utmost pride and vindication," Armstrong said. "I, along with the rest of this assembly, were elected to this body to represent the university. And nothing said about us, or regarding our personal merits, will waive our commitment to serve the student body."

University, politicians, community weigh in

Community response to the issue has centered around two key points: support Chris Armstrong and fire Andrew Shirvell.

Both points have generated responses from various University of Michigan officials, as well as the school's LGBT office, the Spectrum Center, and innumerable LGBT and allied citizens in Michigan and beyond.

"The University of Michigan stands behind our community's value of expecting respect," said Laura Blake Jones, UM's dean of students.

"We continue to take the situation very seriously."

UM President Mary Sue Coleman added in a statement, "As a community, we must not and will not accept displays of intolerance. We are heartened, but not surprised, by the response of the campus community in supporting Chris. We are impressed with his resiliency and stand by him and the important work he is doing on behalf of all of our students."

The response on social media networks has been overwhelming as well, ranging from reposts of stories and videos about the battle to the creation of several popular Facebook groups. As of press time, the group "Fire Andrew Shirvell" had over 14,000 fans; "We Support Chris Armstrong" had over 15,000.

Several Michigan politicians and hopefuls

have also joined the debate.

Democratic attorney general candidate David Leyton released a statement Sept. 29 "demanding Attorney General Mike Cox fire his assistant for harassing and stalking an openly gay student at the University of Michigan."

Leyton referred to Shirvell's blog as "cyber-bullying" and used the situation to take a jab at his opponent, Republican AG candidate Bill Schuette, who has not taken a public stance on the issue.

"Mike Cox doesn't have the guts to do what's right and fire Andrew Shirvell, and Bill Schuette is proving that he would provide the same weak excuse for leadership as our current attorney general," Leyton said in a statement. "Michigan needs a watchdog attorney general who will stand up to bullies – not lapdogs like Bill Schuette, who is content to let bullies and stalkers continue collecting a government paycheck."

Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm commented on the issue on her official Facebook and Twitter accounts Sept. 30. She stated: "If I was still attorney general and Andrew Shirvell worked for me, he would have already been fired."

On a national level, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan released a statement Oct. 1 addressing both the recent slew of suicides related to anti-gay bullying and the situation with Armstrong.

"This is a moment where every one of us – parents, teachers, students, elected officials, and all people of conscience – needs to stand up and speak out against intolerance in all its forms. Whether it's students harassing other students because of ethnicity, disability or religion; or an adult, public official harassing the president of the University of Michigan student body because he is gay, it is time we as a country said enough. No more. This must stop."

Saline School Board to vote on protecting LGBT students from discrimination

At 6:30 p.m. Oct. 12, the Saline School Board will be voting on whether or not to add sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression to the list of protected characteristics named in the district's anti-discrimination policy.

The pressure to protect LGBT students has been coming from the students themselves, led by leaders in Saline High School's gay-straight alliance, called Spectrum, many of whom are also members of Riot Youth, the LGBTQ group housed in Ann Arbor's Neutral Zone.

"This is a group that has been disproportionately harassed," Spectrum President Emma Upham told AnnArbor.com. "Changing the policy is the first step in creating a climate that's safe for all students."

The students, assisted by adult leaders at Riot Youth and backed up by numerous faculty, staff and administrators in the Saline school district, have been fighting to get the change passed for a number of months. They have met considerable opposition from both Saline School Board representatives and community residents.

Community members in support of protecting LGBT students from discrimination, which is different than but supplementary to an anti-bullying policy, are encouraged to attend the School Board meeting and speak out on the issue, said Riot Youth advisor Laura Wernick.

The meeting will be held at the Saline Liberty School, located at 7265 N. Ann Arbor-Saline Road.

MSU evaluates campus climate for LGBTQ students

Study, discussion shows majority feel comfortable

BY THOMAS WESLEY

While news of several recent suicides of gay students nationwide and the recent harassment of University of Michigan Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong dominates the media, some colleges and universities are taking action to assess how LGBTQ issues are dealt with on their campuses.

Mid Michigan is not often considered a Midwest haven for LGBT people. However, at the LGBTQ Campus Climate Symposium held Sept. 29 on MSU's campus, a recent campus climate survey was shared that places the school in good standing in comparison to the national average.

Dr. Sue Rankin, associate professor of Educational Policy Studies and senior research associate at the Center for the Study of Higher Education at Pennsylvania State University, has produced completed assessments at over 90 colleges and universities nationwide, including the 2010 assessment completed at MSU.

Her study found that overall, 57 percent of MSU students, staff and faculty were either "comfortable" or "very comfortable" on campus. In classroom or work settings, 62 percent of participants said the same. More findings include that 15 percent of LGBTQ survey respondents indicated that they had been the victim of some form of harassment, verbal, physical, or other. The national harassment rate is closer to 25 percent of all LGBTQ persons.

The respondents were broken down into subcategories of heterosexual, lesbian and women loving women, asexual, gay, bisexual, and "other." There were 1,051 total responses representing faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students, which were spread across the majority of genders and sexualities.

(Study) findings include that 15 percent of LGBTQ survey respondents indicated that they had been the victim of some form of harassment, verbal, physical, or other. The national harassment rate is closer to 25 percent of all LGBTQ persons.

Dr. Rankin said that the university should take advantage of the time where it can guarantee an audience, such as the classroom or residence halls, to talk to students about LGBTQ issues. "We can't control what's happening off campus, but we can control what's happening in our classrooms," she said.

Rankin added that the study exposed that the majority of harassment for students comes from other students; similarly, harassment of faculty and staff comes from their colleagues.

Dr. Brent Bilodeau, associate vice chancellor for student affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and former director of the MSU LGBT Resource Center, noted that though there are many challenges for the Michigan State University community, there are few universities with the resources that MSU has to create positive change for the future. Strong support from the administration, Bilodeau said – including Senior Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of Student Life Denise Maybank and Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Kim Wilcox, who were present at the symposium – plus strong alumni support, the

number of out faculty and staff members and a strong student support system were all incredibly powerful in taking action for inclusion and changing campus climate.

Following an original campus climate survey in 1992, Michigan State University has set many goals of inclusion and multicultural competency for the entire community of faculty, staff and students.

In 2005, many LGBTQ community members called for a new survey to assess the campus specifically for issues surrounding gender and sexuality. Five campus entities – the GLBT Faculty, Staff and Graduate Student Association, the Center for Gender in Global Context, the LGBTQ Task Force, the Coalition of LGBT Student Organizations and the LGBT Resource Center – created a coordinating committee to begin the campus assessment and ultimately hire Dr. Rankin.

Some on campus, however, still feel that more needs to be done.

A Latino MSU staff member who wished to remain anonymous said that he found the climate study very comprehensive, but it did not provide much new information to him. "I feel that while the campus climate is generally hospitable for LGBT individuals, it is still not as welcoming as it could be," he said. "I feel as a person of color who also identifies as gay that I am not always welcome into gay communities on campus. It would have been interesting to see more comparisons among different demographic groups that participated in the study."

Thomas Wesley is a graduate student at Michigan State University in the College of Education. He can be reached at wesleyth@msu.edu.

Traverse City approves anti-discrimination ordinance

Opponents vow to collect signatures to turn measure to public vote

BY JESSICA CARRERAS

TRAVERSE CITY – After a decade of trying, months of heated debate, right-wing scare tactics and skepticism voiced by some city commissioners, the Traverse City City Commission on Oct. 4 unanimously approved an anti-discrimination ordinance.

The ordinance, written by the city's Human Rights Commission, outlaws discrimination against gays within city limits in areas such as employment and housing.

Monday's vote brought a record number of residents to the City Commission meeting, who discussed their views on the issue for an hour before it was brought to vote. It was the culmination of both months of public discourse on the subject, and an on-and-off battle that was first waged a decade ago.

At that time, opponents of the ordinance brought a ballot measure before voters that would prevent the City Commission from passing any pro-LGBT ordinance. That measure was overwhelmingly voted down, but the ordinance itself was pushed into the background until earlier this year, when Traverse City Commissioner Jim Carruthers, who is openly gay, and the Human Rights Commission began talks to revive it.

Carruthers told *Between The Lines* in August that he believed that this time, the ordinance effort would be successful.

"I think Traverse City has grown and gotten more progressive and more open to everyone's rights," he said. "I think we want to carve the message out that it's about civil protections and civil rights."

Mayor Chris Bzdok agreed, addressing the concern at Monday's meeting that the ordinance would hurt local businesses.

"If there's evidence out there about a negative impact on business in any of the other Michigan cities that have passed these, I would like to see that," he said, according to the *Traverse City Record-Eagle*. "The opponents of this ordinance have brought us no evidence that there's an actual negative impact on business anywhere that's done this, and I would argue the places that have done this are thriving."

Opponents of the measure, led by resident Paul Napote, have vowed to collect the 482 necessary petition signatures needed to turn the law to a vote in a special election, the *Record-Eagle* reported. If they are successful, that vote could take place as early as February.

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BTL EDITORIAL

End suicides by showing teens success stories

When a teenager in the midst of personal crisis hears adults say, "Don't worry, this will all pass, and things will get better," oftentimes the message falls on deaf ears. That's not to say that efforts like Dan Savage's "It Gets Better" campaign, or videos on bullying and suicide by the likes of Ellen DeGeneres and Sarah Silverman, or encouraging words of perseverance from local LGBT leaders are unimportant; only that they may not be enough.

But when youth see *other youth* doing great things, triumphing over obstacles and surviving – or, better yet, fighting – the bullying, the taunts, the name-calling? The compound effect of all-sided support can, and does, save lives.

In regard to the recent news that seemed to announce a new gay teen suicide every hour of last month: it is impossible to not cry, to not be in pain, to not stay awake at night wondering what you can do to help. It is painful just to list the names: Asher Brown. Tyler Clementi. Raymond Chase. Seth Walsh. Billy Lucas. Hung, shot, drowned, dead at their own hands, and each death linked – or at least believed to be linked – to personal and societal refusal to accept that they were gay.

And for those of us adults who endured bullying of any kind, it brings back painful memories of our own experiences. But at least for us, they are just memories.

Whether these suicides really were a freak September 2010 epidemic or simply more heavily reported in the news due to the closeness of their occurrences is hard to say. What we do know is that suicide due to anti-gay bullying is not a fate restricted only to those five young men. It happens all the time, whether it's in the news or not.

Bullying, as we all know, is not a quick-fix problem. It has been around for as long as society itself, and it doesn't go away just because a school has a policy saying it's prohibited. Bullying policies get ignored, or worse, students and

For University of Michigan Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong, fighting his bully meant taking him to court. For Saline students, they've been so brave as to not only work to protect themselves from discrimination in school, but also to stand up to "bullies" on the School Board and in their community.

faculty don't even know they exist.

And yes, students need to know that there is a future ahead of them that is worth living for. But in the middle of a bully's attack, what matters most is to know that taking their own life is not the only option they have.

One great way to plant that seed in LGBT teens' heads is to show them instances where their peers have not responded to bullying with suicide, but by fighting back in a number of ways.

For University of Michigan Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong, fighting his bully meant taking him to court. For Saline students, they've been so brave as to not only work to protect themselves from discrimination in school, but also to stand up to "bullies" on the School Board and in their community.

Teens need to know that they are not powerless, not insignificant and not without a voice. If they know who they can talk to, they will speak up. If they know how to fight back against bullying, they will wage war. And if they know there are options for success, then hopefully we can stop losing them.

THE GAY MORALIST



Why aren't we talking more about HIV?

BY JOHN CORVINO

You may have seen last week's headline, "Study puts HIV rate among gay men at one in five." And the story starts off grim:

"One in five gay men in the United States has HIV, and almost half of those who carry the virus are unaware that they are infected, according to a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study."

So, here's the sorta-kind-almost good news: The headline is simply false.

A more accurate headline would have read, "Among gay men who frequent bars and dance clubs in metropolitan areas with high AIDS prevalence, the HIV rate is nearly one in five."

As the Center for Disease Control report explicitly warns, "the results are not representative of all MSM." The study focused mostly on bars and dance clubs in 21 cities with high AIDS prevalence. "A lower HIV prevalence (11.8 percent) has been reported among MSM in the general U.S. population."

11.8 percent is bad. But it's not one in five, or even close.

The sorta-kind-almost good news is still bad, since it means that the Washington Post, and the scores of other outlets that picked up the story, are spreading a falsehood. This is grossly irresponsible journalism.

And ultimately, there's really no good news in this story, since HIV-infection among club-going gay men in certain cities is indeed shockingly high, and HIV-infection among gay men more generally is also high—and rising.

Moreover, 44 percent of the HIV-positive men in the CDC report are unaware that they're infected – which means they may spread the disease without knowing it. The percentage of those unaware of their positive status is especially high among younger men and minorities (59 percent among African Americans in this particular study).

If anything good comes from these reports, it will be increased attention to this problem in our community. Frankly, it's long overdue.

I came out in 1988 – late enough that "safer sex" was part of our vocabulary, but early enough that I watched lots of people die. AZT was just becoming available, and protease inhibitors were some time off.

Thanks to medical advances, AIDS is no longer a death sentence. For this we are all grateful.

But the flip side of those advances is that too many gay men – especially young gay men – think of HIV as "no big deal." Either that, or they just don't think about it at all.

A 40-something friend of mine recently told me about several hook-ups with 20-something men who tried to allow him to enter them without a condom. In one case, he told the young

A 40-something friend of mine told me about several hook-ups with 20-something men who tried to allow him to enter them without a condom.

man afterward, "We probably should have had this conversation earlier, but just so you know, I'm HIV-negative." To which the younger man responded, "Yeah, I assumed you would have said something otherwise."

No, no, no! Don't assume. Ask. (And then use a condom regardless.)

Back in the late '80s, we learned how to have these conversations. While dimming the lights, we'd mention "By the way, I was last tested ..." or while unbuckling his pants, we'd ask, "So, do you know your HIV status?" It was awkward, maybe, but awkward was better than sick.

And yes, the sickness was a lot scarier then. When I sang in the Capitol City Men's Chorus (a gay chorus in Austin, Texas) in the early '90s, we would perform at a member's funeral just about every season. We kept photo albums of smiling groups of friends in their 20s and 30s – many of whom never saw 40. It was a horrible time.

So we learned to "use a condom every time." We got tested regularly. We took care of one another.

We worried that those infected would feel "untouchable," and so we tempered our rhetoric. It wasn't easy. It's hard to tell HIV-negative people "Avoid this at all costs!" while telling HIV-positive people "You're going to be just fine." It was a difficult balance.

Then the drug cocktails arrived, and the HIV-positive people really were fine – sort of. They had to take lots of expensive pills that often made them sick, and they had to bear the psychological burden of being positive. But at least they weren't dying left and right.

And so we stopped fearing HIV – especially those younger generations who never witnessed the plague. And then we stopped talking about it.

Recently a gay male contemporary of mine died of cancer. It was a rare cancer that most often strikes African children and AIDS patients. My friend was not an African child.

I don't know whether his death was AIDS-related. I do know that none of us wanted to bring it up, because it's "impolite" to talk about such things. But we need to talk about such things.

11.8 percent may not be one in five. But it should be enough to break the silence.

John Corvino, Ph.D. is an author, speaker and philosophy professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. His current fall speaking schedule is posted at www.johncorvino.com.

S/he said

Bullying and teen suicide

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL

"As different and no doubt multilayered as the individual circumstances of these four teenagers from different corners of the country were, they were all singled out for either being or giving the appearance of being gay. And while neither homophobic bullying – nor, sadly, teen suicide – were invented yesterday, the ability to turn an act of hate into an Internet-wide event gives their stories a dimension that's unique to their generation. Humiliation can now spread as quickly and permanently as a widely disseminated cellphone photo, can be as invasive and relentless as a series of cruel posts on a MySpace page."

- Mary Elizabeth Williams, in her column titled "Why are so many gay teens dying?," www.salon.com, Sept. 30.



Arne Duncan

"This week, we sadly lost two young men who took their own lives for one unacceptable reason: they were being bullied and harassed because they were openly gay or believed to be gay. These unnecessary tragedies come on the heels of at least three other young people taking their own lives because the trauma of being bullied and harassed for their actual or perceived sexual orientation was too much to bear. This is a moment where every one of us – parents, teachers, students, elected officials, and all people of conscience – needs to stand up and speak out against intolerance in all its forms. ... (I)t is time we as a country said enough. No more. This must stop."

- U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, in a press release, www.ed.gov, Oct. 1.

"Despite what has been accomplished, for many young Americans it still remains devastatingly difficult to be gay. The homophobic culture that took root in this country in the 1930s just refuses to let go."

- Daniel H., in a blog posting titled "How Can We Help Kids Like Tyler Clementi?," <http://outhistory.blogspot.com>, Sept. 30.

"Being a teenager and figuring out who you are is hard enough without someone attacking you. These kids needed us. We have an obligation to change this. There are messages everywhere that validate this kind of bullying and taunting and we have to make it stop. We can't let intolerance and ignorance take another kid's life."



Ellen DeGeneres

- Ellen DeGeneres, in a video about the shocking number of news stories in September about teens who have been teased and bullied and then committed suicide, www.365gay.com, Oct. 1.



"We have the power to give these kids hope. We have the tools to reach out to them and tell our stories and let them know that it does get better. Many LGBT youth can't picture what their lives might be like as openly gay adults. They can't imagine a future for themselves. So let's show them what our lives are like; let's show them what the future may hold in store for them."

- Dan Savage, in his column titled "Give 'Em Hope," written after the suicide of 15-year-old Billy Lucas, who hanged himself after having endured anti-gay bullying. Savage launched the It Gets Better Project, a YouTube channel of messages of encouragement and survival aimed at gay and lesbian youth, www.youtube.com/itgetsbetterproject, Sept. 23.



Parting Glances Then & Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Whap! Thud! Shazam!

O, the simple 10-cent pleasures of days long gone by! The Saturday joys that a shiny quarter could bring. A coke. A box of popcorn. A cowboy movie. A Roy Rogers serial. Way back when ...

I was an only child. But I didn't mind at all missing out on sibling rivalry. I grew up in a 65-unit apartment building, 444 Peterboro. (Now a vacant lot in a sadly vacant neighborhood.)

There were kids my age living at 444. Betty Renny. Patsy Kata. Joannie McGonegal. Tom Tudman. Tommy Black. Gorgeous Bobby Hendrix. We all read comic books, and part of our up-and-down, four-floor, eager socializing was trading and bartering our paper treasures.

Comics these days certainly have come of age. Minority comic characters – black, Asian, physically challenged – appear regularly. Gay characters are out as action heroes. We've come a long, long way, 'Bruceie' Wayne. It was not always that way.

Sixty years ago a shrink named Dr. Fredric Wertham claimed the bitter seeds of crime were sown by comics. His popular paperback, "Seduction of the Innocent" argued comic books helped turn impressionable kids homosexual.

"I have never come across any adult or adolescent who had outgrown comic book reading who would ever dream of keeping any of the 'books' for any sentimental or other reason," Wertham wrote. (Let's see, "Action Comic No. 1; 1938" markets for \$38M to \$350M.)

I'll admit, as a kid I secretly admired Captain Marvel. I knew that his alter ego, dot-eyed Billy Batson, was an ordinary runt like me. That was encouraging. With exercise, Wheaties, eight hours of sleep, and Brilcream – "a little dab'll do ya" – life held possibilities for real rooftop soaring.

But Wertham's darts weren't directed at Captain Marvel, Mary Marvel, Superman, Plastic Man, Submariner, The Flash, or Mr. Tweedle Dee Dee. (All my heroes.) They were aimed at closet queers Batman and Robin and crypto-dyke Wonder Woman.

Yes, the Caped Crusader had a "ward" (guardian, not prison) and Wonder Woman, well – as plump sidekick Etta Candy woo-woo'd it, "Aphrodite be praised" – she hailed from an island of Amazons, and they weren't selling books online in the forum, either.

"At home they lead an idyllic life," gossiped Wertham. "They are Bruce Wayne and 'Dick' Grayson. They live in sumptuous quarters with beautiful flowers in large vases. Batman is sometimes shown in a dressing gown. It is like a wish of two homosexuals living together."

(Under 30s, please note: A dressing gown is not drag. Large vases are House & Gardens optional. But, as everybody knows, 'Dick' is dick.)

"For boys, Wonder Woman is a frightening image," warned Wertham. "For girls, she is a morbid ideal. Where Batman is anti-feminine, the attractive Wonder Woman and her counterparts are definitely anti-masculine." (Stone butch, maybe?)

Wertham may have been on to something about the Wayne-hyphen-Graysons. DC Comics, which continues to drive the lucrative Batmobile Rolls Royce to the bank, refuses to grant permission to use any illustrations of the crusading pair – gardening or fisticuffing – for psychological dissing about the their sex lives.

As far as gays and real-time violence is concerned, David Nimmons, in his book "The Soul Beneath the Skin" (St. Martin's Press) says instances of LGBT street or public violence are remarkably few.

His data are taken from police records, notably those of Greenwich Village, Provincetown; Boy's Town, Chicago; and Washington, D.C., where, of five large-scale gay events held in one year, with 1,400,000 attendees total, only 10 disturbance arrests occurred. (None in capes, leotards, or parked Batmobiles.)

"Oddly enough," says Nimmons, "America has a vast peaceable (LGBT) kingdom in its midst, yet has scarcely noticed." (Too busy duct-taping Gotham City, no doubt. Holy KY Lube, Batman!)

Charles@pridesource.com. Facebook, too!

EVENTS

Thursday, Oct. 7

Discussion with Craig Covey, 6:30 p.m. A talk with the mayor of Ferndale and long-time openly gay politician, hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. College of Arts, Science and Letters, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Drag Show, 8 p.m. With performances by amateur drag queens and kings. Hosted by Out 'n About. **Grand Valley State University**, Allendale. outabout@mail.gvsu.edu

Monday, Oct. 11

Rainbow Run, 9 a.m. A 5K in honor of National Coming Out Day with cash prizes, costume contest and more. Hosted by Windsor Pride. Riverfront Plaza, **Windsor**. www.rainbowrunwindsor.com

Coming Out Day, 12 p.m. A social picnic and celebration of the national holiday, hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. University Center Lawn, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Coming Out Day Fair and Discussions, 12 p.m. A fair to bring awareness to the coming out process and encourage and celebrate differences, featuring pamphlets, a "closet door" and snacks. John Corvino will give a talk at 1 p.m. in the Student Center, followed by a discussion led by Dr. Simone Chess. Gullen Mall, Wayne State University, **Detroit**. waynestateglbt@gmail.com

Tuesday, Oct. 12

Screaming Queens, 6 p.m. A screening of the film and discussion hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Kochoff Hall B, University Center, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Wednesday, Oct. 13

But I'm a Cheerleader, 8 p.m. A showing of the Coming Out Week film, plus Cheerleader Bingo and costume contest. Suggested donation: \$5. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Thursday, Oct. 14

Coming Out Day, 10 a.m. A day of information and discussion about LGBT issues. Hosted by Out 'n About. Grand Valley State University, **Allendale**. outabout@mail.gvsu.edu

Saturday, Oct. 16

Homocoming, 7 p.m. The annual dance for LGBT youth with snacks, live DJ and Homocoming court. Tickets: \$5. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Monday, Oct. 18

Ally Dinner Gala, 6 p.m. A black tie, three-course meal in honor of National Allies Week, with a performance by the Detroit Together Men's Chorus. Suggested donation: \$10. Hosted by OUT! at LTU. Alumni Hall at Taubman Building, Lawrence Tech University, **Southfield**. outattitu@gmail.com

Lecture by historian Tim Retzlaff, 6 p.m. Join Retzlaff as he shares some of his research on the history of Michigan's LGBT community. Hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Kochoff Hall A, University Center, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Wednesday, Oct. 20

Queer the Quad, 11 a.m. With information booths from local LGBT groups and businesses. Hosted by OUT! at LTU. The Quad, or the Buell Building Atrium if there's bad weather, Lawrence Tech University, **Southfield**. outattitu@gmail.com

The Legacy of Matthew Shepard, 7 p.m. A discussion with Judy Shepard on ending hate. Hosted by OUT! at LTU. Ridler Field House, Lawrence Tech University, **Southfield**. outattitu@gmail.com

Friday, Oct. 22

Blue Devil Drag Show, 6 p.m. A talent show with professional and amateur drag queens and kings. Cover: \$2 for non-students/faculty/staff. Hosted by OUT! at LTU. S100 Auditorium, Science Building, Lawrence Tech University, **Southfield**. outattitu@gmail.com

Tuesday, Oct. 26

An Evening with Holly Hughes, 6 p.m. A performance piece by the well-known performance artist UM professor of art, design and drama. Hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Location TBA, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Thursday, Oct. 28

LGBTQ History Month Luncheon, 12 p.m. With special guest UM Provost Kate Davy, author of "Lady Dicks and Lesbian Brothers." Hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Quad E, Fairlane Center, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Celebrating LGBT History

UM-Dearborn to host series of events to raise awareness, pride

BY JESSICA CARRERAS

The University of Michigan-Dearborn Gender and Sexuality Alliance wants to give its school's students a little history lesson. But these teachings on times gone by aren't anything that can be found in a class: it's the history of LGBT America.

While many college and high school LGBT student groups use October to focus only on National Coming Out Day, UM-Dearborn GSA President Benjamin Jenkins – who, not surprisingly, is a history major – decided to use the whole month to raise awareness, both about gay students on campus and the history of the gay civil rights movement.

"The main purpose of history month, to me, is to learn, but also to be able to show that we are as much a part of America as anybody else," Jenkins says of the series of events, which began Oct. 5 with a showing of "The Times of Harvey Milk."

He adds, "It's mostly a sensitivity thing so people can realize (LGBT students) are on campus and we have a history and it's important to learn about it and understand it. You can learn a lot from our history."

The GSA, in collaboration with several other student groups and university offices, intends to showcase that in a variety of ways: talks with Oakland County Commission candidate Craig Covey and historian Tim Retzlaff. Several films and discussions to follow. A performance by avante garde entertainer Holly Hughes. A luncheon with UM-Dearborn Provost Kate Davy, author of "Lady Dicks and Lesbian Brothers,"



Spend an Evening with Holly Hughes. See Oct. 26 in the events listing for details.

which chronicles the history of Manhattan playhouse the Women's One World Café Theatre.

"We really wanted to have a lot of different kinds of events," Jenkins explains. "We have luncheons, we have speakers and we have a performance piece, so we tried to get a lot of different ways of reaching people."

And in the middle of all of it, the GSA is celebrating National Coming Out Day, too, with a picnic and a chance for the group's members to proudly showcase their identities on T-shirts emblazoned with words like "gay," "bi" or however they see themselves.

"We thought doing something more loud

and obnoxious and fun, rather than a solemn march, it would look more powerful," Jenkins said of the decision to host a picnic instead of a political event. "Coming Out Day is supposed to be more of a relaxed opportunity for us to do something that's not exactly so history-based, but that's more of an opportunity for us to gain more momentum for the rest of the month as well."

The message behind the event, however, is quite serious, especially in light of both the numerous suicides last month by gay teenagers and the nationally followed harassment of Chris Armstrong, the student body president at UM-Dearborn's sister campus in Ann Arbor.

For Jenkins and the GSA, celebrating LGBT History Month provides a chance to show that their campus is supportive and appreciative of LGBT students, too. "We're not very vocal at UM-Dearborn about (LGBT issues)," he admits. "I think UM-Ann Arbor is a little more prideful, which is something we're hoping to change."

And not just to show support for Armstrong, but for the LGBT students that attend classes at UM-Dearborn every day so that tragedies similar to the two college students who took their lives will never happen at Jenkins' campus.

"Sometimes the easiest way to recognize and understand a people is to recognize their trials and struggles," Jenkins says. "Through these (LGBT History Month) events and through events like Coming Out Day, I think we can send a message that at this university, we're trying our best to make the atmosphere something that's more comfortable, where people feel like they don't have to take that option (of suicide)."

"I think it's incredibly important."

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On the cover

Upper left: The late Ruth Ellis. Photo: Jason Michael.

Upper right: Patrons at the State Bar in Flint, in the late 1950s. From private collection.

Lower left: NYC 1970 first Stonewall march.

Middle right: 1983 NYC March with PFLAG founder and grand marshal Jeanne Manford. Photo: Joseph Barna.

Lower right: Female Michigan couple, early 1900s. From the Lesbian Herstory Archives.

BTL has an exciting new look!

After working on BTL's new cover design for months, we thought it only appropriate to launch it with the LGBT History Month issue. Our covers have evolved just as our community has grown and changed. We hope you like our new look – let us know what you think!

Gay Through History

BTL looks back at chats with several LGBT icons

Every October, GLBT History Month honors 31 key players who have fought, sung, written, acted and spoke out for civil rights for all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in America and beyond. This year, Between The Lines looks back at a few chats we've had with five of the 2010 honorees who have changed our lives for the better and given each and every LGBT person hope that they, too, can keep making history.



E. Lynn Harris, Flint native and author of over 10 novels, including "Invisible Life," "I Say a Little Prayer" and "Mama Dearest"...

...on the motto of his memoir, "Basketball Jones": "Don't ever give up, don't ever give up, don't ever give up. So many people think about it and I'm here, living proof, to tell them to just wait, be patient."

...on being from the Mitten: "I love Detroit. I think they claim me as their own, and I'm really honored by that. It's one of those cities where I could come and stay a week and do something every day and still have nice crowds."

...on being an openly gay author: "I don't ever shy around the fact that I'm gay and that my books are about gay people. I don't let people restrict me and I don't restrict myself."



Eric Alva, retired Marine and first American wounded in the Iraq war in 2003, as well as ardent "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" repeal spokesman...

...on volunteering for the Human Rights Campaign: "I was thinking I would work at a booth signing people up and handing out T-shirts. HRC had bigger plans for me."

...on opponents' fear of DADT repeal: "I think that what (opponents) think is that allowing gays to serve openly, that means here comes all the rainbow flags, here comes all the leather. People really fail to see the stupidity of that."

...on why he has faith in equality: "There's still going to be some obstacles and rough waters ahead to get this done, but I think we're headed in the right direction. I mean, we have to. We have to start letting people have the full independence this country was based on and stop discriminating."

Mara Keisling, activist and executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality...

...on why everyone should care about transgender rights: "There's almost nothing you could do to help transgender people that wouldn't help everybody else as well."

...on working together: "There are a lot of transgender communities, most of which never intersect. That's OK, but it's a question of if we get together on the stuff we need to get together on."

...on how we're making equality happen: "We're winning, because thousands of people around the country are educating their friends, their families and their communities about transgender rights."

Tom Ford, fashion guru and director of hit 2009 film "A Single Man"...

...on the "gay lifestyle": "I live with somebody I love. We make dinner at home together. We lie around and read books and watch television and walk our dogs and go on vacation and argue occasionally – that's a lifestyle?"

...on what he cherishes in life: "They're never material things. You're not going to wish that you worked more. You're not going to die thinking about a car you had in 1970-whatever. You're going to think about the connections that you had with other people; the moment in life where you felt truly connected to someone."

...on what people don't know about him: "I'm extremely romantic, and I'm extremely emotional and insecure and shy. I kind of always pose in the same way. I don't let a lot of people very far into my life. I've always kind of presented a surface veneer, which works for fashion."



Rufus Wainwright, singer/songwriter and political activist...

...on performing his large library of songs: "There's a lot for me to reap after making so many albums and performing in so many different types of venues that it's kind of like farming."

...on doing a pared-down solo show: "I tend to be humorous and everything, but it is a whole other mystique. It's more about really getting down to the business in terms of the songs and music and finding the essence of what is Rufus."

...on the economic crisis: "I think it is time that people spend less and become less consumer animals. And we have to learn how to be more thrifty and more conscious of our fellow man, as opposed to our pocketbooks."

For a complete list of the 2010 GLBT History Month icons, visit www.glbthistorymonth.com. A new biography will be posted daily through October.



Oak is their king

Students step up to support dethroned transgender homecoming king

CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

MUSKEGON – Students at Mona Shores High School are coming together in support of 17-year-old senior Oakleigh Reed, who was told that he could not be homecoming king, despite having received the majority of votes. “Oak is president of National Honors Society, in the top of our class, one of the best musicians in band, many teachers’ favorite and very popular among the students,” said fellow student and close friend Nick Schrier. “Why didn’t they want him to win?”

The answer given by the school district is simple: Oak is registered for school as a female, and females don’t get to be king.

The homecoming dance has come and gone, and another young man was crowned, but Schrier and at least 30 other students are made a statement by wearing “Oak is my King” shirts to school last Friday.

“When I witnessed this injustice being committed, I had to do something. I thought Facebook would be a great way to organize schoolmates who thought action needed to be taken,” Schrier said. “The support from the students shows how student discrimination is not the issue. It is the adults who are making unfair judgments. While there are prejudice problems everywhere, this story illustrates how the climate is changing.

“When my generation takes over these positions, we will see a more accepting world.”



Mona Shores students wore “Oak is my King” shirts in support of trans home coming king Oakleigh Reed.

Schrier stressed that until now, he didn’t believe that there had been a problem at his school with Reed or respecting diversity. He pointed out

that Mona Shores has a Gay Straight Alliance, and that Reed was a popular, well-accepted kid.

“I’m sure Oak has had a lot of more intimate struggles, but as far as general attitudes and policies go, everything was going smoothly up until this point,” he shared. “Before Oak officially ‘came out,’ teachers avoided using any gender specific pronouns; that is my memory. Once Oak announced his gender status, he received hundreds of comments on his wall congratulating him and letting him know the community supports him. Teachers graciously used male pronouns and students respected his wishes. We do not fully understand why the school decided now was the time to go back on all the progress.”

Terry Babbitt, the superintendent of the Mona Shores School District, said that because schools must abide by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, he can’t disclose the exact legal rationale for the decision to deny Reed the title of king.

“I can say that this was not the first transgender issue that the school district faced,” Babbitt said, adding that the school sought legal counsel when faced with the issue of Reed as homecoming king. “I want it to be clear that this decision came as the result of a legal opinion, and not the decision of the principle or the staff at the high school. Everyone is supportive of Oak, but we have to follow the legal advice we were given.

“Our high school has a very rich tradition of being a real nurturing environment for all

students,” Babbitt continued. “We’re strongly supportive of Day of Silence. They cover controversial issues in our Sailor’s Log student newspaper. Our past says more about what we are about than this one legal issue.”

He added that he is proud of the students who are getting involved to support Oak. “We not only respect, but advocate that students get involved in the political process and have dialogue about issues.”

Schrier is helping to bring attention to this issue by running the Oak is my King fanpage on Facebook. The page currently has over 11,000 fans.

“The media attention has been crazy,” Schrier said. “Fortunately, this situation has opened up dialogue in the community about these types of issues. I hope people are getting the message about equality and acceptance.

However, he added, it has brought unnecessary negative attention to his school. “Our school is getting negative publicity,” he said. “Mona Shores is a great district and, until this point, made accommodations for minority students. We love our school, but we must let them know they made a mistake. We hope that they learn from their mistakes to become a more accepting district.”

To support Oakleigh Reed, search for “Oak is my king” on Facebook.

Local DJ Aaron-Carl, 37, dies

Detroit-area native remembered for career in electronic music

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

DETROIT – Innovative electronic music recording artist, DJ and producer Aaron-Carl died suddenly Sept. 30 following a brief bout with cancer. He was 37.

Born Aaron Carl Ragland on Aug. 19, 1973, the sweet-voiced singer attended public schools in Detroit and Taylor. But long before he graduated from Harry S. Truman High School in Taylor in 1992, his love of music and future career path were obvious. Aaron-Carl’s family, from a young age, called him “Boogie.” Inspired greatly by Prince, Aaron-Carl’s lyrics were often risqué and ripe with sexual innuendo.

“Musically, he was real,” said his friend and fellow DJ Pirahna Head. “He would say what it was that he needed to say. If he was feeling horny, you were gonna know that. He was gonna say it in a record.”

Aaron-Carl self-released his first full-length CD in 1996. Titled “Storm,” Aaron-Carl wrote, produced, arranged and performed all nine tracks himself. The CD, with its catchy and campy single “Wash It,” caught the attention of Mike Banks of Submerge Distribution, who signed him to his Soul City label.

Just two years later, Aaron-Carl created his own Wallshaker Records imprint. In 1998, he made the Billboard Top 40 Dance/Club Hits chart

with the song “My House.” But as his international acclaim grew – he toured the UK, France, Germany, Sweden and The Netherlands among other countries – he remained overlooked in the states, and in his hometown. He was nominated for three Performers Awards of Detroit and two Detroit Music Awards, but never managed to take an award home.

“A lot of Detroiters didn’t really give him the respect that he was due,” said Pirahna Head. “A lot of the bigger names here, they didn’t put him forth as the revolutionary house artist that he was.”

Aaron-Carl not only embraced his gayness, he celebrated it in his music. His 2002 release, “Uncloseted,” contained the single “Homosexual.” But if his openness caused him to be overlooked at times by others in the industry, it was, said Pirahna Head, clearly their loss.

“Aaron was a monster on the decks, man. He was one hell of a DJ. The boy was bad. He made some sick tracks, but a lot of people couldn’t really hear him. In my opinion, he was ahead of his time.”

The lack of recognition and commercial success weighed on Aaron-Carl from time to time, and even occasionally caused him to think of leaving the business.

“He would ask me, ‘Should I get a full-time job?’” recalled his partner Mel Winders.

“I’d always say, ‘No, this is your dream, this is what you’re good at and this is what you should be doing.’”

And there were triumphs. He produced remixes for artists such as N’Dambi and Kindred the Family Soul, wrote for CeCe Peniston and Michelle Weeks, and headlined the Detroit Electronic Music Festival in 2005 and 2008. In 2009, he started WARMTH International, Inc. to bring unity to the house and techno music communities.

“That’s his legacy,” said Winders. “His goal was to unify the electronic masses. It wasn’t about him versus anybody else or any other DJ. It was just about bringing the music together.”

Aaron-Carl was forced to cancel a planned European tour last month when stomach pains detoured him to the hospital. On Sept. 25, Aaron-Carl posted a video message to his website, www.aaroncarl.com, stating that had been diagnosed with cancer two days earlier and pledging to fight the disease. Further tests would reveal that it was Stage 4 Lymphoma.

On Sept. 28, Aaron-Carl posted to his Facebook page that he had, “finished the bone marrow biopsy. Ouch. Now I’m preparing for the lymph node removal. Surgery, here I come.”

Before he could undergo that procedure, Aaron-Carl went into cardiac arrest. He died at 6:50 a.m. Sept. 30, just one week after learning



that he had cancer.

“Aaron was a beautiful spirit,” said Pirahna Head. “He was a gentle gay giant. ... Even when he knew his adversaries were standing in his face, he would give them a hug. That’s the way he was.”

In addition to Winders, Aaron-Carl is survived by two sons, Stefan Carl and Jevon Justin Ragland. Funeral services are scheduled for 10 a.m. Friday at the O.H. Pye Funeral Home in Detroit, located at 17600 Plymouth Road. Donations can be made via the website www.warmth313.com.

September plagued with gay teen suicides

Bullying directly linked to several deaths, including Internet-outed student Tyler Clementi

PISCATAWAY, New Jersey (AP) – The death of a first-year university student stirred outrage and remorse on campus from classmates who wished they could have stopped the teen from jumping off a bridge Sept. 22 after a recording of him having a sexual encounter with a man was broadcast online.

“Had he been in bed with a woman, this would not have happened,” said Rutgers University student Lauren Felton, 21. “He wouldn’t have been outed via an online broadcast and his privacy would have been respected and he might still have his life.”

Gay rights groups say Tyler Clementi’s suicide makes him a national example of a problem they are increasingly working to combat: young people who kill themselves after being tormented over their sexuality.

A lawyer for Clementi’s family confirmed that he had jumped off the George Washington Bridge. Police recovered a man’s body Sept. 29 in the Hudson River just north of the bridge, which connects New York and New Jersey, and authorities identified it as Clementi’s the following day.

Clementi’s roommate, Dhraun Ravi, and fellow Rutgers student Molly Wei, both 18, have been charged with invading Clementi’s privacy. Middlesex County prosecutors say the pair used a webcam to surreptitiously transmit a live image of Clementi having sex on Sept. 19 and that Ravi tried to webcast a second encounter on Sept. 21, the day before Clementi’s suicide.

A lawyer for Ravi did not immediately return a message seeking comment. It was unclear whether Wei had retained a lawyer.

Collecting or viewing sexual images without consent is a fourth-degree crime. Transmitting them is a third-degree crime with a maximum prison term of five years.

ABC News and The Star-Ledger of Newark reported that Clementi left on his Facebook page on Sept. 22 a note that read: “Jumping off the gw bridge sorry.”

Even if the young violinist was not well known at his new school, his death stirred outrage.

“The notion that video of Tyler doing what he was doing can be considered a spectacle is just heinous,” said Jordan Gochman, 19, who didn’t know Clementi. “It’s intolerant, it’s upsetting, it makes it seem that being gay is something that is wrong and can be considered laughable.”

Other students who did know Clement were upset that they didn’t do more to help him. “I wish I could have been more of an ally,” said Georges Richa.

About 100 people gathered the night of Sept. 29 for a vigil on campus. They lay on the ground and chanted slogans



In this 2009 photo, Tyler Clementi plays with the Ridgewood High School Orchestra at a benefit dinner. Clementi, a student at Rutgers University, jumped to his death off a bridge a day after authorities say two classmates surreptitiously recorded him having sex with a man in his dorm room and broadcast it over the Internet. (AP Photo/The Record of Bergen County, Ryan Piffher)

like, “We’re here, we’re queer, we’re not going home.”

But Clementi’s death was just one of a disturbing number of suicides committed by gay teens in September.

Earlier in the month, 15-year-old Billy Lucas of Greensburg, Ind., committed suicide – an act that was suspected to have stemmed from daily bullying about his perceived sexual orientation. Seth Walsh, 13, of Tehachapi, Calif., passed away Sept. 28 after he attempted to hang himself on Sept. 19. It is reported that Walsh identified as gay and suffered constant hate-motivated bullying from peers. On Sept. 23, 13-year-old Asher Brown of Houston, Texas, reportedly shot himself, which his parents believe came as a result of allegedly unchecked anti-gay cruelty and harassment at his school.

And on Sept. 29, Johnson & Wales student Raymond Chase, 19, hung himself in his dorm room. He was 19.

Several other reports from LGBT organizations, as well as from celebrity blogger Perez Hilton, have referenced several other suicides said to be related to anti-gay bullying.

Clementi’s is currently the only one where the “bullies” involved are facing criminal charges.

Steven Goldstein, chairman of New Jersey-based Garden State Equality, said in a statement that his group considers Clementi’s death a hate crime.

“We are heartbroken over the tragic loss of a young man who, by all accounts, was brilliant, talented and kind,” Goldstein said. “And we are sickened that anyone in our society, such as the students allegedly responsible for making the surreptitious video, might consider destroying others’ lives as a sport.”

Rutgers University President Richard McCormick wrote in a letter to the campus, “If the charges are true, these actions gravely violate the university’s standards of decency and humanity.”

Several vigils were held in Clementi’s honor throughout last week.

On Oct. 1, students wore black and were encouraged to leave flowers or mementoes at a makeshift memorial for Clementi. The Rutgers Glee Club marched to the memorial and performed a rendition of “Rutgers Prayer,” which is traditionally sung when an important member of the Rutgers community dies or a tragedy happens at the university.

On Oct. 2, the school had a moment of silence for Clementi before the start of its homecoming game against Tulane.

The following night, students held a vigil at the school’s College Avenue campus in New Brunswick. McCormick said the events provided an opportunity for students and staff to come together and “reaffirm our commitment to the values of civility, dignity, compassion and respect.”

Creep OF THE Week

Andrew Shirvell

BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

Hopefully by the time you are reading this, Michigan assistant attorney general Andrew Shirvell is out of a job. Shirvell recently took a paid leave of absence after his favorite hobby became subject of a media frenzy. That hobby? Stalking and harassing a gay college student.

That student, 21-year-old Chris Armstrong, is the University of Michigan student body president. Shirvell maintains a blog called Chris Armstrong Watch that tracks the student’s every move, obsessively following Armstrong and his friends in real life and on Facebook and Twitter. Shirvell’s blog includes a photo with a Nazi swastika-adorned rainbow flag superimposed over Armstrong’s face along with the word “resign.”

Shirvell also holds one-man “protests” against Armstrong. In early September, a friend of mine witnessed Shirvell standing outside of Armstrong’s house holding a sign with the rainbow flag swastika photo on it. The whole thing was so bizarre she thought it might be part of some kind of fraternity hazing stunt. Not an actual adult man’s real life.

Shirvell claims that he’s just a concerned Christian UM alumni, but it’s clear that his main problem is the fact that Armstrong is gay.

On Sept. 4 Shirvell posted to his blog, “Parents of University of Michigan freshmen beware: the University’s first



Andrew Shirvell

Something tells me that Mike Cox wouldn’t have been so hot to go on national TV on defense if the object of Andrew Shirvell’s scorn was, say, black or Latino or Jewish.

openly ‘gay’ student body president, Chris Armstrong, is actively recruiting your sons and daughters to join the homosexual ‘lifestyle.’” Shirvell later claimed that the aim of a party thrown at Armstrong’s house at the beginning of the school year “was to liquor-up underage freshmen and promote homosexual activity in an effort to recruit them to the homosexual lifestyle.”

In mid-September, Armstrong filed for a personal protection order against Shirvell. Because the dude is totally creepy. If you need any more proof, all you have to do is watch the totally self-awareness-lacking interview Shirvell did with Anderson Cooper, in which he claims that he’s involved in a political campaign and is not doing anything wrong. Because, you know, hanging out in front of a kid’s house and videotaping him at 1 a.m. is totally normal “free speech” stuff.

The Cooper interview video has gone viral and Shirvell comes across as a total sociopath. It’s kind of sad, actually, that Shirvell apparently has no one in his life to grab him by the shoulders and say, “Don’t go on TV or the whole country is going to see that you are insane.”

Since that interview, plenty of people – like the nearly 15,000 fans of the Fire Andrew Shirvell Facebook page – have been calling for Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox to get rid of him. Instead, Cox did his own interview with Anderson Cooper, saying that Shirvell is just exercising his First Amendment rights.

It should be noted that Cox is no friend to LGBT Michiganders, so it’s no surprise that his office would employ folks who have an anti-gay agenda. It should also be noted that sexual orientation is not covered under Michigan’s civil rights laws. Something tells me that Cox wouldn’t have been so hot to go on national TV on defense if the object of Shirvell’s scorn was, say, black or Latino or Jewish.

“I have done NOTHING immoral OR illegal,” writes Shirvell on his blog in late September. “And, to all my vicious, anti-Christian detractors out there ... I have a message for you all: this watch site is here to stay. Get use (sic) to it.”

And yet, as of Oct. 1, Shirvell’s blog was no longer public. Let’s hope his job follows.

Optimism dominates AIDS vaccine conference

BY BOB ROEHR

AIDS vaccine researchers, meeting in Atlanta, expressed renewed optimism that they might finally be on a path to creating a product that can prevent the deadly HIV virus.

"A few years ago I was not even sure that it was possible," said Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Then last year, the RV144 trial in Thailand – a trial that many researchers thought would fail and tried to stop – showed a surprising 31 percent protection.

Fauci called it a significant "proof of concept" that such a vaccine is possible. "But we still do not know what the correlates of protection are." Correlates are those components of the innate and adaptive immune systems that provide protection.

Col. Nelson Michael, the U.S. Army researcher who led the Thai study, said collaborators at 20 academic centers are submitting the remaining blood samples from the trial to different analyses, trying to tease out exactly what was going on among those protected from infection.

The army, with the support of NIAID, is planning to start two mid-sized follow up studies in populations with high rates of infection in 2013. The study in Thailand will focus on men who have sex with men and female sex workers; the other, in southern Africa, will be among high-risk heterosexual couples.

They hope to use the information they gleaned from the initial trial to tweak the components of the vaccine. A second booster shot may be added to try and generate an improved immune response and level of protection.

Dr. Michael is particularly excited about a new combination vaccine. It that has shown greater protection in a small group of monkeys

Last July, a team at the NIH Vaccine Research Center announced the discovery of two potent neutralizing antibodies that worked against 91 percent of the different strains of HIV worldwide. Other researchers have since added to that list of antibodies. It had been a dozen years since the last, weaker antibodies were identified.

than has ever been seen before in that animal model.

Neutralizing antibodies

Earlier failures to develop a vaccine that could protect against initial infection led researchers to turn their attention to the T-cell component of the immune system. Several species of monkeys are able to live with the simian version of HIV infection and control the virus quite nicely, living a normal lifespan. The hope was to create a vaccine for humans that might do the same thing.

However, the STEP trial of a vaccine made by Merck stopped in late 2007 when it appeared that the vaccine made people more susceptible to becoming infected with HIV. It also did not slow the disease progression in those who became infected. That put a damper on a T-cell focus for a vaccine design.

Then last July, a team at the NIH Vaccine Research Center announced the discovery of two potent neutralizing antibodies that worked against 91 percent of the different strains of HIV worldwide. Other researchers have since added to that list of antibodies. It had been a dozen years since the last, weaker antibodies were identified.

John Mascola, one of the team leaders at the VRC, said, "We need to understand not just the final product but how it got there." His work has found that the two antibodies are structurally

similar, but their amino acid sequences are quite different. It suggests that there may be more than one pathway to the maturation of these neutralizing antibodies.

These developments are possible because of new technologies that allow researchers to work backwards from potential binding sites on the virus, using reverse engineering to identify the structure of antibodies that could fit into those binding sites, and then isolate the antibodies themselves. These tools have sparked a renaissance of interest in antibody research.

More trials

Lawrence Corey, the University of Washington researcher who heads up NIAID's international HIV Vaccine Trials Network, said the field has conducted a major vaccine trial about once every five years. That simply is not enough he said, adding that "the pace of conduct is slow by any standard."

He pushed for a modification of the traditional approach that favors large phase three trials which lead to approval by regulators such as the FDA. Given that correlates of protection for an HIV vaccine are still unknown, he argued for the use of trials designed to learn things rather than immediately seek regulatory approval.

Corey favors wider use of adaptive trial designs that are smaller, allow for modifications

along the way, and are quicker to carry out. He wants to see the research community launch 1 to four trials a year for the next four years.

One of his fears is that evolving new ways of preventing HIV infection will have to be incorporated into a trial beginning in about five years, and that will make vaccine studies more difficult and expensive to conduct.

Among those new tools are microbicides, which had its first trial success this summer, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), or the use of anti-HIV drugs such as tenofovir and Truvada, to prevent infections.

Either or both will mean that the incidence of new HIV infections will go down, and vaccine trials will have to enroll more participants and run longer in order to obtain sufficient new infections to evaluate differences between those who did and did not receive the vaccine. Dr. Fauci anticipates that the size and cost of such trials will double.

As an example, the Thai trial originally proposed to enroll 2,000 participants in the study. But that country began a strong prevention program based primarily around condom use, and the incidence of new infections plummeted. The study finally had to enroll 16,000 participants.

Money

More than a billion dollars a year goes into HIV vaccine research worldwide, with NIH and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation contributing about 80 percent. Fauci said getting other developed countries involved in this research is not as easy as getting their support for treatment.

Brazil, China, India, and South Africa are among those nations that recently have stepped up their vaccine research efforts. It is no coincidence that they also are countries with their own large epidemics.

Prop. 8 judge to retire

Walker's exit expected to have no impact on case moving forward

BY LISA LEFF

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) – The federal judge who struck down California's gay marriage ban as unconstitutional this year announced Sept. 29 he is retiring from the bench after 21 years.

Lynn Fuller, a spokeswoman for U.S. District Court in San Francisco, said Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker notified President Barack Obama by letter that he will step down in February.

The 66-year-old judge who was appointed by President George H.W. Bush and has been chief judge of the Northern District of California since 2004, did not state in the letter his reason for stepping down.

"Concluding 21 years of judicial service, I leave the bench with the highest respect and regard for the federal judiciary, its judges and their staff and the essential role they fulfill in our constitutional system," Walker wrote to the president.

Walker this year oversaw the high-profile trial over California's Proposition 8, a voter-approved initiative restricting a marriage to one

man and one woman. His August ruling that overturned the law as a violation of gay Californians' civil rights is being challenged by the measure's sponsors in a federal appeals court.

San Francisco Chief Deputy City Attorney Therese Stewart, who was part of the legal team that persuaded Walker to strike down the measure, said Walker's exit would not affect the course of the case. Because Walker's ruling included a thorough recounting of the evidence presented at the trial, it's unlikely the appeals court would send the case back to the district court for further proceedings even if it decides he ruled incorrectly, Stewart said.

"I would say it's extremely unlikely an appeal would result in a remand for additional fact-finding and therefore (Walker's retirement) should have little or no impact on the case going forward," she said.

Opponents of gay marriage have strongly criticized Walker since he issued his ruling Aug. 4. Some have suggested he was biased because of persistent rumors that the judge himself is gay. Walker has never publicly discussed his sexual orientation.

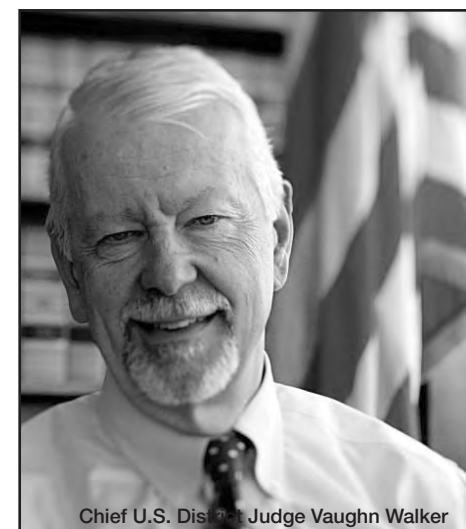
Speculation that Walker might leave the bench has circulated since before he was randomly assigned to oversee the Proposition 8 case.

"Because of the pressure of the work on the courts and the failure to fill vacancies and increase the number of judges when the dockets are getting bigger, people wear out and want to move on and have some fun while they are still in good health," Stewart said.

Besides the gay marriage case, Walker has presided over lawsuits challenging the U.S. government's warrantless wiretapping program and a Northern California sheriff department's use of pepper spray to quell tree-sitting logging protesters. He ruled in Microsoft's favor when Apple sued the company for copyright infringement over its Windows operating system.

Walker was born in Watseka, Ill., located south of Chicago. After graduating from the University of Michigan, he spent a year at the University of California, Berkeley on a fellowship for future college teachers. He wound up attending Stanford law school, earning his degree in 1970.

He was a prominent antitrust lawyer before



Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker

he ascended to the judiciary. In a statement issued by the court, Walker said he plans to return to private practice.

Judge James Ware, who also was appointed by the first President Bush, will assume the role of chief judge of the Northern District on Dec. 31.

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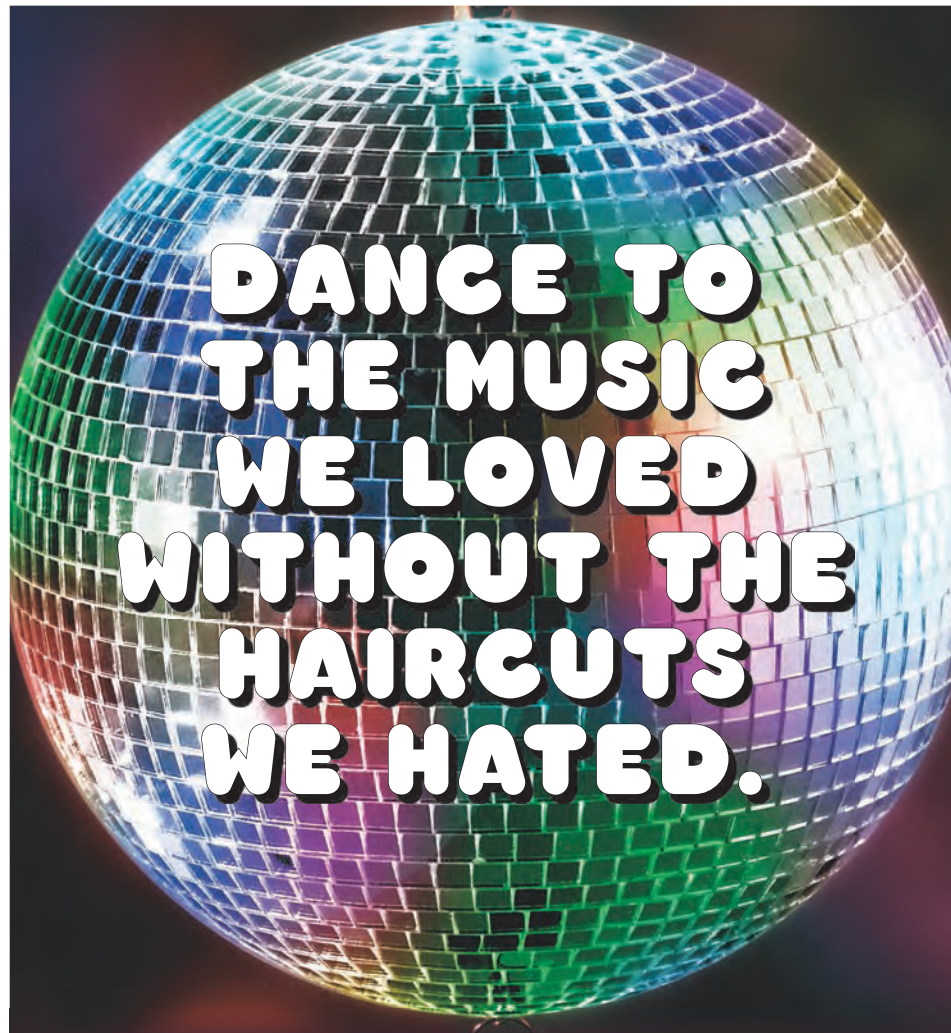


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 LINCOLN



Love, New York

Reality show star Tiffany Pollard on loving the gays, growing up – and starring in Lee Daniels’ new ‘Paris is Burning’?

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Love or hate her, Tiffany Pollard – better known as her reality show-spawned celebrity alias, “New York” – isn’t a name you forget. At least not if you caught her, and all the drama she dragged in, while starring in a string of saucy VH1 docu-series, including 2006’s “Flavor of Love,” “I Love New York” and her most recent, “New York Goes to Work.” Pollard wasn’t named “Head Bitch in Charge” for nothing, but the 28-year-old diva has cooled off, she says, and finally feels in charge – of her life.

Before stopping on Oct. 8 and 9 at Hamtramck’s Ice Nightclub, the reformed rabble-rouser called us from California to chat about why the gays get her, looking like a man, and how lunch with out director Lee Daniels led to her first major film role.

Do you stop by a lot of gay clubs?

Well, I’ve been blessed and very fortunate to have a large gay following. You know, gays confide in me; I love the gays. They give me so much love and support, and so I like to hang out and frequent a lot of gay clubs when I travel or when I’m here at home.

How old were you the first time you went to one?

Oh my goodness – I think I was 17!

How did you get in if you were underage?

I’ve always just been fabulous, so they had to let me in.

What goes on at these gay club appearances?

I mingle, I give love, I receive love. It’s always just a cool vibe. Gays are just full of love, and that’s how I’d sum up the gay lifestyle – just a

whole bunch of love.

What about you attracts the gays?

Gay people are fearless, and I know that they have a lot of challenges in their life, and because of that I feel like they’re real. A lot of gay people that I speak to are in-your-face, take-it-or-leave-it, love-me-or-hate-me, and I can relate to that in my life. And I’m a heterosexual, but I still relate to it. Strength recognizes strength.

What are you up to these days?

These days I’m still single. I haven’t decided

See New York, page 23

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Local film festival explores key issues

The Detroit Waldorf school will raise awareness on key issues concerning childhood, the environment, our food systems and Detroit during its film festival Oct. 8-9. Tickets are \$10 in advance/\$15 at the door (per day) and can be purchased at www.detroitwaldorf.org. Tickets for a specific series can be purchased for \$5 in advance/\$10 at the door. Attendees must be at least 18 years old to attend. Below are the films being screened:



"Grown in Detroit" will screen at 7:30 pm. Oct. 9 as part of the Detroit Waldorf School film festival.

DETROIT

"Regional Roots," 7 p.m. Oct. 9

Covers 300 years of history and uses the immigrant experience as an introduction to the diverse landscape of Detroit. From the earliest French and German settlers to today's growing communities, immigrants continue to shape the region in pursuit of the American Dream. Site: www.dwiff.org.

"Grown in Detroit," 7:30 p.m. Oct. 9

Focuses on the urban gardening efforts managed by a public school of 300, mainly African-American, pregnant and parenting teenagers. This school is one of three located in the U.S. As part of the curriculum, the girls are taught agricultural skills on the school's own farm located behind the school building. The young mothers are learning by farming to become more independent women and knowledgeable about the importance of nutritional foods. Site: <http://grownindetroit.filmmij.nl>.

ENVIRONMENT

"Chemical," 10 a.m. Oct. 9

Tackles household cleansers and chemical-

based hygiene products. Writer/director Andrew Nisker helps an "average" Canadian family to start living their lives free from harmful chemicals and other toxic substances. Site: www.chemicalnation.com.

"Garbage!" 11:30 a.m. Oct. 9

A feature documentary about how the family household has become one of the most ferocious environmental predators of our time. Site: www.garbagerevolution.com.

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Motown bowling tournament celebrates 25 years

Public invited to party with bowlers for anniversary event

BY BTL STAFF

The exterior LED neon lights at MotorCity Casino Hotel will proudly display the colors of the rainbow Oct. 8-10 in recognition of the Motown Invitational Classic, Michigan's oldest and largest LGBT bowling tournament.

MotorCity is the presenting sponsor and host hotel for the 25th anniversary event, which will welcome more than 250 participants from across Michigan, the U.S. and Canada.

It's one of several changes aimed at increasing visibility and visitors to the region's largest LGBT bowling event.

"In addition to our new host hotel, we also moved the competition to a new bowling center with the hope that bowlers would appreciate a change for our silver anniversary celebration," said Michael Odom, 2010 MIC co-director. "The MIC committee is certain that we have laid the groundwork for a one-of-a-kind memorable event."

Now 25 years in, the Motown Invitational Classic has a multi-national history.

The first tournament was held in 1985 and was designated the Detroit-Windsor International Freedom Tournament because it took place during two national holidays: Fourth of July and Canada Day. In 1989, the tournament

was renamed MIC and was moved to October in celebration of the U.S. Columbus Day and Canadian Thanksgiving.

This year, the tournament kicks off on Friday, Oct. 8, with an optional 9-Pin No Tap Event. A 9-Pin allows bowlers who roll a count of nine on their first ball to be counted as a strike. Similarly to previous years, the event is open to the public, and bowlers of any skill level are welcome and do not have to be registered in MIC to compete.

Cost is \$20 per bowler and registration begins at 7 p.m. in the Arena at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park. According to Odom, the event sells out every year, so anyone interested in bowling should plan to arrive early.

The singles event begins at 11 a.m. on Oct. 9 and is immediately followed by doubles. Bowlers will compete in four-person teams on Oct. 10 to finish the competition.

Proceeds from the 2010 MIC tournament will benefit several area nonprofits, including HIV/AIDS organizations Higher Ground and the Michigan AIDS Coalition, as well as the Michigan Animal Adoption Network.

To alleviate some of the tension during the competition, a hospitality suite at MotorCity will provide bowlers with time to relax as well as the chance to mingle with others. As part of the 25th



anniversary celebration, the hospitality suite will be open to the public on both Friday and Saturday beginning at 7 p.m.

"We encourage people to stop by and hang out with the bowlers," added Odom. "Many will party in the hospitality suite or try their luck on the casino floor. Some participants will make plans to visit Detroit's gay bars later in the evening and could certainly use friendly tour guides."

Once the tournament is completed, top

rankings will be determined for each individual category as well as all-around categories with prizes and awards distributed at an awards banquet Sunday evening.

After the banquet, bowlers will gather at Gigi's in Detroit for the official closing party. The event will feature live entertainment, dancing, raffles and prizes.

For more information on the Motown Invitational Classic, visit www.mictournament.org.



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'Modern Family: The Complete First Season' (Blu-ray, \$59.99; DVD, \$49.98)

So much of "Modern Family" is fall-on-the-floor funny because, come on, who doesn't love families crazier than our own? Since making a buzzy landing last year on ABC (the show just launched its second season, airing 9 p.m. Wednesdays), this game-changer's been a mighty comedic miracle, surging to the top of the TV pantheon and deservedly winning the Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Series.

It's no wonder: The landmark show's mingling of snappy writing, colorful characters (and what a cast playing them!) and some genuine, heartstring-tugging cuteness – shot in mockumentary style with the family doing sit-down couch confessionals – concocted such a delightful 24-episode first season, from the meet-the-bunch start to the awkward and sweet family-photo finish.

What came between – all the genius zings, awkwardness and physical comedy – was far and away better than anything TV sitcoms have offered in years. Seriously: "America's Funniest Home Videos" couldn't sift through enough family clips to find anything as amusing as some of the

'Glee: The Complete First Season (The Gleek Edition)' (Blu-ray, \$69.99; DVD, \$59.98)

Whether it's the gayest major-network show in some time (and it is), "Glee" is so much more: fun nerd escapism, a music lover's dream and a quip cache/biology lesson (Don't tell me you already forgot that dolphins are just gay sharks!).

In the 2009-2010 premiere season of gay creator Ryan Murphy's baby (new episodes, which began Sept. 21, air at 8 p.m. Tuesdays on Fox), the show-choir kids sang their way through teen pregnancy, coming out and cheerleading coach Sue Sylvester's club-killing wickedness. They proved unstoppable, against Sue (Emmy winner and supreme lesbian Jane Lynch) and in the ratings; even with god-awful raps and ridiculous plot no-you-didn'ts, the exhilarating, satirical musical dramedy is crack. Heck, my mom, who threw out the show like the garbage after catching the pilot episode, is now in a committed relationship with it (that's right, Mom, you're officially a Gleek).

"Glee," however, had me in a happy-go-lucky headlock from the start, with its addictive lollipop lining, smart snark and sweet heart. Then there was Madonna,



situations that these three broods – including one of television's best gay couples ever, Mitchell and Cam (Jesse Tyler Ferguson and Emmy winner Eric Stonestreet, respectively) – wound up in: Cam as "Fizbo the Clown," kicking ass and ... making balloon animals; Mitchell's bird-in-the-house freakout; the oopsy "ass touch" between Cam and his father-in-law. Also, of course, the classic pilot moment: our introduction to li'l Lily, the gay pair's adopted baby, whom the family meets in outrageous Cam fashion – with lights dimmed, "Lion King" music cued, and a spotlight on our diminu-

tive diva. Like that bit, "Modern Family" succeeds most at making mundane, everyday occurrences absolutely hilarious (A trip to Costco? Classic!).

Many of these moments are coolly culled from "Modern Family" crew's real lives, discussed on one of many bonus features. Elsewhere, learn about Stonestreet's real-life childhood aspirations to be a clown; see extended and alternate scenes; watch the cast flub lines during the charmingly hilarious blooper reel. Look through it all, really, because this family isn't one you'll mind spending time with.



whom they honored during the homage episode, "The Power of Madonna" – one of the best hours of TV ever, ever, ever. No, really – ever!

Truly, it didn't get better, or gayer, than this mid-season stunner, as the New Directions club headed for regionals during these 22 episodes. It got pretty close, though: the pilot's electrifying series-classic "Don't Stop Believin'"; a touching Sue-goes-soft "Wheels"; and a fabulous Lady Gaga episode. One of the best storylines, though, belonged to Kurt Hummel, the gay outcast who so touchingly came out to his dad – and cracked the code for the

football team's success: Beyoncé!

The series sang so many high notes during its debut season (oh, I almost forgot: Puck – all of him, all the time) that the only thing stopping me from going on and on is a word count. And that I've yet to gush over the special features, which include an ass-kissing look behind the Madonna event (because, well, it was!), promo interviews with Murphy and Lynch, and interactive how-tos on dancing and dressing like the cast. The coolest: How you can create playlists from the show's songs with a nifty jukebox. Don't you get all "Glee"-ful just thinking about it?

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Continued from p. 17

yet, but I'm leaning more toward doing it again and looking for love, but right now I'm working on some plays. There's one coming up in North Carolina. I'm also doing charity work; I'm going to Calcutta, India, and I'm excited about that. So I'm just trying to branch out and venture off and get onto a new path.

What made you interested in doing charity work?

I love people, and God is, like, the head of my life. And I don't think people know how spiritual I am, and I just feel if he's blessing me I have to spread it around and bless someone else.

So you actually *do* have a heart of gold.

(Laughs) Right, exactly! What's going to be cool about this is they're going to document the trip; I'm going with Joyce Meyer Ministries, so it'll play out on TV, all over the Internet and all over her podcast. I'm just excited to put that side of myself out there.

Will this tie into a reality show?

You know, the sky's the limit! And there's going to be a possibility there.

What do you think of the image you made for yourself on your reality shows?

I feel like my life is a progression; obviously you get a little older, but looking back at it, that was where I was at that time in my life. So, I still love New York, I still support New York; that's just who she is. But like I said, I got a little older, so I've calmed down a little bit more and focused more on ... I think I wanna get married! (Laughs) I'm, like, really ready to settle down and get my husband on. But I don't know if I want to have a baby yet.

Does this mean you're leaving New York behind?

I wouldn't say I'm leaving her in the dust; she's still there. She's not totally in the past, but more so that I'm discovering myself through a new light. And you got to understand, they're playing my shows in different countries now, and I get hit up from London and England and all over the place, and to just have that kind of notoriety is almost larger than me. It's like, I see the bigger picture.

And quite a feat to be larger than you, considering the size of your boobs.

Thank you very much! (Laughs) I got 'em done again, so thanks for noticing. They're perkier, they're higher and they're rounder.

Soon we'll see them in Detroit.

I have to wear the perfect outfit to showcase them!

Unfortunately, you'll be in a place where it won't matter.

(Screams) That's another great thing! I'm so glad you brought that up! I love the gay clubs because – I was just talking to my girlfriend the other day about this – I could



walk in there with just a thong on, and go topless, and nobody's going to touch me (laughs). I just love that.

So, back to your personal progression: You were in your early 20s when "Flavor of Love" aired. What's changed about you since then – besides the boobs?

Life! You know, if people see you on TV, they just figure all you live is what you live on TV. But no, life happens and I don't compare myself to the average person; I say that I am the average person, meaning that you just change, you evolve. The things that changed about me the most is that I figured out more of what I want in my life and I went down that path. Before I was just all over the place, but now I really know how to speak even more for myself and stand up for what I want, and that's how I go about life. So I've definitely changed.

What are some things you'd still like to accomplish?

Acting is still on my to-do list, but now that I'm a little older, I can't say that's, like, the heartbeat of my life. I can't say I really live for that. I think I live for people. I really enjoy interacting with my fans. I do a lot of charity work, but not only charity work – I go to places where most reality stars or even celebs wouldn't go, like if there's an opening in the ghetto and there's a nail shop. Just little things like that. So, I really live for interacting with people, and one of the things I really want to accomplish one day is opening up a homeless shelter and, like, feeding people and doing really good work like that.

As far as acting, you've said you want a role in a drama. Maybe something like Mo'Nique did in "Precious"?

Oh my goodness, yes! Wasn't that a killer movie?! That's so funny you brought that up because the guy who wrote and directed and produced that movie (Lee Daniels) reached out to me a month ago, and I met with him for lunch, and he's trying to draw up a movie for me to be in. He's like, "I gotta use you; you're just awesome!" So I might be the next, like, Precious' mom!

Did he mention what kind of movie?

Tiffany 'New York' Pollard

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Yes, he did – but it's probably a little bit confidential right now. But he wants to do – have you ever heard of (the documentary) "Paris Is Burning"? He wants to make that into a movie. He wants me to be one of the leading ladies, but I would be on with a couple of more – I won't name their names – very large celebrity women. We won't say whom, but yeah, that's going to be happening. He's working on Martin Luther King Jr.'s film right now, so I probably won't get to do that until next year some time.

Do you ever Google your name?

OK, I'm gonna show you my weak side: I don't Google my name. I'm afraid of that kind of stuff! I don't get on and see what people are saying or what they're not saying. I don't play that cat and mouse game. I try to stay away from it.

What are some of the craziest rumors you *have* read about yourself?

That I'm a man! That my mom really is not my mom! That I'm bleaching my skin – that's the latest one I had to deal with, like three weeks ago. Oh, and that I'm a heavy user of cocaine. And (that I did) a sex tape! Need we go on?

The man one – where do you think that comes from?

Strong personality. Strong features. You know, people forget that you're made with a father and a mother, so obviously I take more after my father. I'm strong. I'm big. People kill me when they think that (I'm a man)!

Thanks so much for talking to us, Tiffany.

I'm so excited about coming out, and I really appreciate the gay love that I get. My message to the gays is that I love gays, and I think they really need to know and embrace the fact that God loves gays, too.

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Atlanta's Hippest Neighborhoods

The cultural and commercial capital of the Southeast, Atlanta (www.atlanta.net) has rapidly become one of the nation's true A-list gay destinations, with its hugely visible and dynamic GLBT scene and a wealth of accommodations, nightspots, restaurants and shops with strong ties to the community. Atlanta's considerable sprawl and sometimes dizzyingly intense traffic can feel a little overwhelming at times, but if you venture away from the freeways and beyond the skyscrapers of downtown, you'll discover a number of engaging, vibrant neighborhoods rife with gay-popular bars, restaurants, inns and boutiques. Here's a look at some of the best Atlanta areas for exploring.

Inman Park and Little Five Points – 2.5 miles east of downtown

Inman Park (<http://www.inmanpark.org>), which is considered to have been Atlanta's first suburb, had become run-down and derelict before gay and African-American gentrification took hold in the early '80s, leading to the restoration of many of its elaborate Victorian houses. The mix of interesting architecture extends south to neighborhoods like Cabbagetown and Grant Park (<http://grantpark.org>), and the cool, eclectic shopping and dining pushes east into Little Five Points (<http://littlefivepoints.net>).

Highlights for hanging out and eating well in Inman Park include Shaun's (<http://www.shaunsrestaurant.com>), a chic contemporary eatery known for stellar regional American cooking, and Wisteria (<http://www.wisteria-atlanta.com>), which presents a creative take on classic Southern fare – the fried chicken with bacon-braised collard green is among the best in the city. In the more dressed-down Little Five Points – where piercings and tattoos have been in style for years – check out famed emporia like kitschy Junkman's Daughter and Psycho Sisters vintage clothing, before snacking on hefty burritos at El Myr (<http://www.elmyr.com>) or a spicy Cajun pie at Savage Pizza (<http://savagepizza.com>).

East Atlanta Village – 3 miles southeast of downtown

One of the most diverse and independent-spirited enclaves in the city, East Atlanta Village (<http://www.eastatlantavillage.net>) is a great area for walking, with a number of decidedly offbeat, arty and affordable businesses and restaurants set along two main streets: Greenwood Avenue and Flat Shoals Avenue. Highlights include a pair of gay bars, the fun-loving and quirky lounge Mary's (<http://www.marysatlanta.com>), and the friendly lesbian bar My Sisters Room (<http://www.mysistersroom.com>), which relocated here from Decatur a few years ago. Stop by Joe's Coffee (http://www.eastatlantavillage.net/joes_coffee.phtml) for strong java and a chance to mingle with a cross-section of neighborhood locals.

Virginia-Highland – 2 miles east of downtown

Just beyond Piedmont Park and the heart of Midtown's well-established gay scene, and with arguably the city's best all-around window-shopping, Virginia-Highland (<http://www.virginiahighland.com>) has been a fashionable place to live and explore since the neighborhood was developed roughly a century ago.

Rather than possessing one definitive center, Virginia-Highland comprises several small but lively commercial hubs. At Amsterdam Walk you'll find lively gay nightspots like Amsterdam sports bar (<http://www.myspace.com/amsterdamatlanta>) and Bellissima lesbian lounge (http://www.myspace.com/bellissima_lounge). Drive south along Highland Avenue through Morning-side, and past the intersections of Amsterdam, Virginia, and Ponce de Leon and you'll discover many more cool places to dine, drink, and shop. The old-school Majestic Diner (<http://www.majesticdiner.com>), whose neon sign proudly proclaims "food that pleases – since 1929", can be counted on for late-night pancakes after the bars close – it's a short drive from several gay clubs.

Midtown – 3 miles north of downtown

With its central location just off the interstate and skyline of modern apartment, office and hotel towers, Midtown may not leap out as a particularly notable neighborhood for walking around. Indeed, valet parking is commonplace at Midtown's many fine eateries. But this is the heart of Atlanta's GLBT community, and it's unquestionably trendy and fun.

The neighborhood has a few cultural highlights, including the High Museum of Art and Margaret Mitchell House & Museum. And if the weather's cooperating, do not miss the 15-acre Atlanta Botanical Garden, which adjoins leafy Piedmont Park (a favorite haunt of the city's gay sun-worshippers and outdoorsy types). Here you'll find one of the world's most important displays of tropical orchids.

Midtown contains the lion's share of Atlanta's gay bars, including such popular haunts as Burkhardt's (www.burkharts.com) video bar; Bulldog's, a one of the South's GLBT African-American hangouts; and Blake's on the Park (www.blake-sontheparkatlanta.com), a classic bar with a young, pretty crowd. There's also Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse (www.outwritebooks.com), the city's highly successful source of GLBT books and literature that doubles as a cozy java joint.

Definitive gay brunch spots include festive Babs (www.babsmidtown.com); Einstein's (www.einsteinsatlanta.com), also fun later in the evening for drinks or dinner, and the Flying Biscuit Midtown (www.flyingbiscuit.com), the original of which is in yet another cool part of town, Candler Park). Atlanta's branch of the upscale chain Ra Sushi (www.rasushi.com) is spacious, trendy, and enjoyable both for colorful cocktails and tasty Japanese food, while Ecco (www.ecco-atlanta.com) is reliable for first-rate southern European cuisine, including a dazzling selection of cheeses and cured meats.

Other stylish and sophisticated dining options of note include One Midtown Kitchen (www.onemidtownkitchen.com), a bustling restaurant just northeast of Piedmont Park that serves some of the city's most memorable regional American fare, and Pacci (<http://pacciatlanta.com>), which is set inside the hip Hotel Palomar and turns out sensational rustic Italian cuisine, including some of the best steaks in town.

Westside – 3 miles northwest of downtown

Known variously as West Midtown and Home Park (www.homepark.org), the very eclectic neighborhood that broadly takes in Atlanta's Westside is most interesting these days along Howell Mill Road, south for several blocks from about 14th Street. Large warehouses and shiny new structures contain condos, lofts, and a smattering of galleries and restaurants, some of them superb. This part of the neighborhood is known as the Westside Arts District (<http://wadatlanta.org>), and its culinary stars include Bacchnalia and its adjacent lunch room and gourmet-food shop Star Provisions (www.starprovisions.com), the see-and-be-seen contemporary American restaurant Bocado (www.bocadoatlanta.com), and the colorful coffeehouse Octane (www.octanecoffee.com).

Castleberry Hill – 1 mile west of downtown

Rapidly up-and-coming Castleberry Hill (www.castleberryhill.org) comprises a patch of handsome warehouses and industrial buildings that have been collectively rehabbed into a notable arts district. Along bustling Walker and Peter streets, you'll find several provocative galleries. You might begin your explorations with lunch at the superb (and gay-owned) No Mas Cantina (www.nomascantina.com), a festive Mexican restaurant that serves tantalizingly good tortilla soup and fish tacos. It's attached to a dramatic home-furnishings store filled with stunning, handcrafted furniture and decorative arts from Mexico.

Decatur – 6 miles northeast of Atlanta

An entirely separate city of about 20,000 that's a 10 to 15-minute drive from Midtown, Decatur is far more than a mere Atlanta neighborhood. This liberal-leaning community with a vibrant downtown does in some ways feel like an extension of Atlanta's GLBT scene. It's home to the gay and lesbian nightclub Traxx (www.traxxatlanta.com) as well as the seminal mod-Southern-food restaurant Watershed (www.watershedrestaurant.com), which is owned by one-half of the Indigo Girls duo, Emily Saliers, and serves absolutely fantastic food. Don't miss the Sunday brunch, which features creamy chicken hash, corn griddle cakes and poached eggs. Cafe Lily (www.cafelily.com), with its delicious pan-Mediterranean cuisine, is another great option for a meal.



Star Provisions is one of several trendy restaurants that have led to a renaissance in Atlanta's hip West Midtown neighborhood. Photo: Andrew Collins

Where to Stay in Atlantax

The Hotel Palomar (www.hotelpalomar-atlantamidtown.com) was opened by the favorite GLBT-friendly brand Kimpton in 2009 and has quickly become a favorite lodging choice for the design-minded, with its contemporary, understatedly elegant rooms. Try to get one facing south on a high floor, as views of the downtown skyline are impressive. It's an easy walk from Piedmont Park, gay nightlife and Midtown museums, as is the cushy Four Seasons (www.fourseasons.com), a striking, 20-story hotel with a stunning 12,000-square-foot spa.

For a reasonably priced Midtown option that's strong on personality and ambience, try the gay-popular Artmore Hotel (www.artmorehotel.com), which occupies a 1920s Spanish-Mediterranean-influenced building that's just steps from the High Museum. Also well-priced and with a sleek, smart design, the whimsically decorated Hotel Indigo (www.hotelindigo.com) has artful rooms with Nantucket-inspired blue-and-white furniture. There's also a 24-hour gym and a dapper little coffeehouse with comfy seating off the lobby.

In a city with relatively few historic inns, the gay-owned Gaslight Inn (www.gaslightinn.com) in Virginia-Highland stands out for its regal accommodations. In charming Inman Park, the King- King-Keith House B&B (www.kingkeith.com) occupies a dramatic 1890s "painted lady" Victorian with four period-style guest rooms plus a charming detached cottage. And just down the street from Piedmont Park and several gay bars and eateries, the eco-conscious and pet-friendly Stonehurst Place (www.stonehurstplace.com) is one of the city's most romantic small inns. The five spacious suites are exquisitely decorated and contain such plush amenities as iPod docks, flat-screen TVs with DVD players, and – in the top suites – fireplaces, heated bathroom floors, and two-person walk-in showers and spa tubs.

Andrew Collins covers gay travel for the New York Times-owned website *About.com* and is the author of *Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA*. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutofTown@qsyndicate.com.

Breathe Art's 'boom' : Apocalypse – now?

BY JOHN QUINN

*"This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper."*

Did playwright Peter Sinn Nachtrieb have T. S. Eliot in mind when he chose a lower case "boom" for the title of his quirky parable? Is the end of the world as we know it no big deal? Breathe Art Theatre Project helps answer that question and others in staging this tough little nut at The Furniture Factory.

Planetary cataclysm is a tried-and-true theme of science fiction; the standard scene of the "new" Adam and Eve strolling into the sunset hand in hand is old hat. What happens if "Adam and Eve" aren't compatible? Well, sci-fi becomes psy-fi.

Jules (Jeffery J. Steger), a socially challenged grad student in marine biology, lures an unsuspecting journalism student, Jo (Jaye Stellini), to his underground lab. What's the hook? He's placed a Craigslist ad promising

REVIEW

'boom'

Breathe Art Theatre Project at The Furniture Factory, 4126 Third St., Detroit. Friday-Saturday through Oct. 16, plus Sunday, Oct. 10 & 17. 248-982-4121. Then at Mackenzie Hall, 3277 Sandwich St., Windsor. Friday-Saturday, Oct. 22-23. 519-255-7600. \$20.
www.breathearttheatre.com



Jaye Stellini and Jeffery J. Steger in the Michigan and Canadian premieres of "boom." Photo: Breathe Art Theatre Project

"Sex to Change the Course of the World." Ready-for-action, Jo arrives to a situation for which she's unprepared. By studying the sleep habits of tropical fish, Jules has concluded that a "globally catastrophic event" is imminent - as in "When Worlds Collide" imminent. The manic biologist has a plan for the survival of humanity, and Jo is "it!" What does it matter if Jo is not interested in becoming breeding stock?

"boom" has more layers than the proverbial onion. It's a hard play to warm up to, since at the outset it verges on theater of the absurd. We really don't have a handle on what's happening, and the puzzle is deepened by the presence of a third character in our story.

To read the complete review, log on to ...
www. EncoreMichigan.com or PrideSource.com

Hilberry actors make hay with Noel Coward

BY MARTIN F. KOHN

Noel Coward's "Hay Fever" is the kind of thing contemporary dramatists disparage as "museum theater" when they complain about what theaters are producing instead of (their) new work.

"Hay Fever," which opens the 2010-2011 Hilberry Theatre season, truly is lesser Coward, lacking the comic-romantic tension of "Private Lives," the supernatural looniness of "Blithe Spirit." It has value as a historical artifact, providing early glimpses of the playwright's hallmarks that would be more successfully realized in his later work: his fondness for eccentrics, his affection for comical maids, his exploration of how infatuation is quickly mistaken for love and how it can evaporate just as rapidly.

For the Hilberry, whose graduate-student members are paid but which is

REVIEW

'Hay Fever'

Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Plays in rotating repertory through Dec. 4. \$20-\$30. 313-577-2972.
www.wsushows.com



Sara Hymes, Alan Ball, Samantha L. Rosentrater and Andrew Papa in "Hay Fever" at the Hilberry Theatre. Photo: Richard L. Fosbrink

essentially an academic program, "Hay Fever" offers its actors a wealth of educational experience. Sure, they get to play characters from another time and place — pretty commonplace for actors — but David J. Magidson has directed the play in the old-school manner: overacting rules the day and nuance and subtlety might as well be the name of a vaudeville team.

The actors aren't just playing characters; they're playing characters the way they might have been played in the 1920s, with a side order of ham, not to mention

British accents.

This makes sense. Half of the characters are members of the same privileged, self-absorbed Bliss family — novelist father, faded actress mother, grown son and daughter who don't do much of anything — who all tend to overdramatize, comically, everything in their lives.

To read the complete review, log on to ...
www. EncoreMichigan.com or PrideSource.com

'Keely and Du': an intense night of theater

BY JENN MCKEE

You know you're watching an intense play when an on-stage moment involving a woman biting a man's hand makes you want to pump your fist in the air, and when the climactic scene causes a patron sitting down the row from you to say "No way" audibly several times.

But Jane Martin's "Keely and Du," now being staged by the UDM Theatre Company, is known for provoking such responses.

Nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and winner of the 1994 American Theater Critics Association New Play Award, "Keely" tells the story of a young pregnant woman who's kidnapped and imprisoned by Christians who plan to force her to carry the baby to term, against her wishes.

Keely (Susan Boonenberg), the victim of her ex-husband's rape, wakes up handcuffed to a bed in a strange basement,

REVIEW

'Keely and Du'

UDM Theatre Company at Marygrove College Theatre, 8425 W. McNichols Rd., Detroit. Thursday-Sunday through Oct. 10. \$18. 313-993-3270.
<http://theatre.udmercy.edu>



Susan Boonenberg as Keely and Wendy Wagner as Du in UDM Theatre Company's production of "Keely and Du." Photo: Greg Grobis

finding herself in the care of a nurse named Du (Wendy Wagner), who's sympathetic and nurturing, but also steadfast about her mission to do God's work.

Obviously, "Keely" takes on the most controversial topic out there, and does so unflinchingly, offering occasional moments of humor in order to break the mounting tension. And mount it does over the course of two hours, as arguments on both sides of the issue are voiced, and Keely and Du inevitably grow closer.

On opening night, UDM's production

— directed by David R. Regal — sometimes felt sluggish in the first act, as the show strains to establish the passage of time (via several blackouts) and work in the necessary exposition.

To read the complete review, log on to ...
www. EncoreMichigan.com or PrideSource.com

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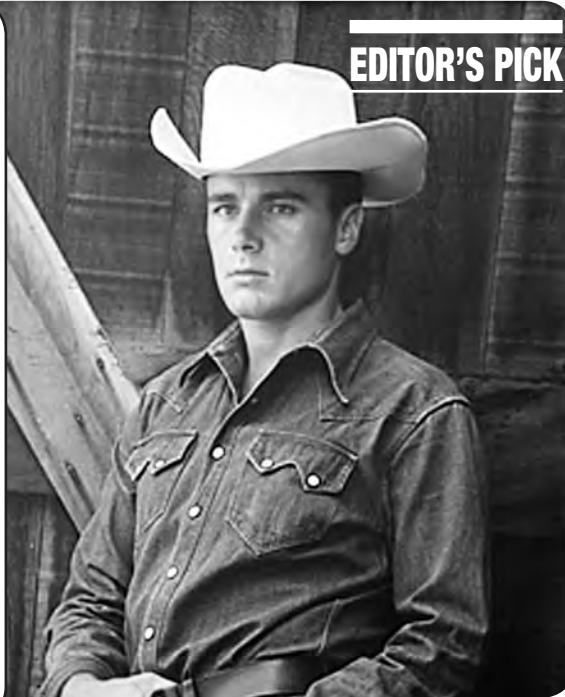
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Testimony: "I have seen Dr. Selma on television and I have learned so much about what the Bible says about many of my problems and concerns. Now, I hold on to the promises of God."
Joyce

Sixty paintings by fashion and automotive photographer Jack Whitehead will be on exhibit at the Affirmations LGBT community center's Pittmann-Puckett Art Gallery through mid-November. The Gala Invitational Opening for the exhibition, featuring snacks and music by Judy Adams, will be held 7-10 p.m. Oct. 8.

Whitehead, a Michigan native and well-known photographer, died in 2009 after undergoing kidney dialysis over a nine-year period. During that time, he switched to painting, creating 300 works, some of which will be on display in the Affirmations show. All sales proceeds from the show, as stipulated by the artist's estate, benefit the center.

The gala opening is free to attend. For more information about this and other exhibitions at Affirmations, call 248-398-7105, or visit www.goaffirmations.org.



EDITOR'S PICK

OUTINGS

Thursday, Oct. 7

Discussion with Craig Covey, 6:30 p.m. A talk with the mayor of Ferndale and long-time openly gay politician, hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. College of Arts, Science and Letters, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Young and Fabulous Night Out, 7 p.m. A night of fun with other LGBT young adults. Rosie O'Grady's, 279 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. www.goaffirmations.org

Drag Show, 8 p.m. With performances by amateur drag queens and kings. Hosted by Out 'n About. Grand Valley State University, **Allendale**. outabout@mail.gvsu.edu

Pride Night, 8 p.m. A monthly LGBT night, with proceeds going to help OUT! at LTU. Cover: \$4. JD's Key Club, 3 N. Saginaw, **Pontiac**. 248-338-7337. www.jdskeyclub.com

Friday, Oct. 8

October Downtown Lunch, 11:45 a.m. A lunch with local Lansing LGBTs. RSVP recommended. Lansing Association for Human Rights, 123 E. Kalamazoo, **Lansing**. milantino@aol.com. www.lahronline.org

Jack Whitehead Exhibition, 7 p.m. Selected works by the famous artist, with all proceeds benefiting Affirmations. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Carnival Weekend, 9 p.m. The annual fetish weekend hosted by ICON Detroit. Opening night will include fetish demos. Menjo's Complex, 928 W. McNichols, **Detroit**. www.icondetroit.net

Saturday, Oct. 9

Anger Management Group Workshop, 9 a.m. A 5-week workshop for men only to learn about anger and their relationship with it. Cost: \$30 per session. Hosted by the Lansing Association for Human Rights. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1712 E. Michigan Ave., **Lansing**. 517-410-9494. www.lahronline.org

Carnival Weekend, 9 p.m. The annual fetish weekend hosted by ICON Detroit. Main event will include performances, auctions, raffles and more. Hayloft Saloon, 8070 Greenfield, **Detroit**. www.icondetroit.net

Sunday, Oct. 10

Lets Talk About Sex!, 5 p.m. A discussion for women only about sexuality, hosted by Leslie Blackburn,

Sacred Sexual Healer & Transformational Guide, Detroit. 313-269-6719. www.mysterschoolofthetemplearts.com

Monday, Oct. 11

LGBT Michigan Artists Invitational Exhibition, 9 a.m. Held in honor of Joann A. Downing, wish works by local LGBT artists. Greater Flint Arts Council Gallery, 816 S. Saginaw, Flint. 810-238-ARTS. www.greaterflintartscouncil.org

Rainbow Run, 9 a.m. A 5K in honor of National Coming Out Day with cash prizes, costume contest and more. Hosted by Windsor Pride. Riverfront Plaza, **Windsor**. www.rainbowrunwindsor.com

Coming Out Day, 12 p.m. A social picnic and celebration of the national holiday, hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. University Center Lawn, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Chiropractic Care for People with HIV/AIDS, 7 p.m. A presentation on how chiropractic care can help individuals with HIV/AIDS. Hosted by Higher Ground. Ferndale Chiropractor Dr. Daniel Farkas' office, 22540 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. www.hghiv.org

Tuesday, Oct. 12

LGBTQA with Disabilities Support Group, 5:30 p.m. A support group to discuss issues affecting LGBT people with disabilities. Capial Area Center for Independent Living, 2812 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., **Lansing**. lccgsasecretary@yahoo.com

Screaming Queens, 6 p.m. A screening of the film and discussion hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Kochoff Hall B, University Center, University of Michigan-Dearborn, **Dearborn**. bmjenkin@umd.umich.edu. <http://gsa.umd.umich.edu>

Fund-Rasor for Aaron Bailey, 6:30 p.m. A fundraiser for the state senate candidate with invited guest Gov. Jennifer Granholm. Rasor Law Firm, 321 S. Williams, **Royal Oak**. 248-543-9000. www.rasorlawfirm.com

Wednesday, Oct. 13

Anger Management Group Workshop, 3 p.m. A 10-week course for men only to learn about anger and their relationship with it. Cost: \$15 per session. Hosted by the Lansing Association for Human Rights. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1712 E. Michigan Ave., **Lansing**. 517-410-9494. www.lahronline.org

TGM Open House, 4 p.m. An event to mark the official opening of Transgender Michigan's first-ever office. Community Pride Building, 429 Livernois, **Ferndale**. www.transgendermichigan.org

Fundraiser for Craig Covey, 6 p.m.

A fundraiser for Oakland County Commission candidate Craig Covey. Suggested donation: \$20. Friends of Craig Covey, 22634 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. www.coveyforoakland.com

New Volunteer Meeting, 6 p.m. A gathering for those interested in helping out at Affirmations. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

But I'm a Cheerleader, 8 p.m. A showing of the Coming Out Week film, plus Cheerleader Bingo and costume contest. Suggested donation: \$5. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Thursday, Oct. 14

Coming Out Day, 10 a.m. A day of information and discussion about LGBT issues. Hosted by Out 'n About. Grand Valley State University, **Allendale**. outabout@mail.gvsu.edu

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

Saturday, Oct. 16

Anger Management Group Workshop, 9 a.m. A 5-week workshop for men only to learn about anger and their relationship with it. Cost: \$30 per session. Hosted by the Lansing Association for Human Rights. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1712 E. Michigan Ave., **Lansing**. 517-410-9494. www.lahronline.org

Flu Shot Clinic, 11 a.m. Provided in collaboration with Rite Aid Pharmacy. Without insurance, prices range from \$20-25. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Hepatitis A and B Vaccinations 11 a.m. In partnership with ACCESS. Free, with HIV testing also available. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Homocoming, 7 p.m. The annual dance for LGBT youth with snacks, live DJ and Homocoming court. Tickets: \$5. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

MUSIC & MORE

BENEFITS/SOCIAL EVENTS

Bert's Warehouse "Detroit Erotica

Ball" Performances, dancing, art, body painting, food and more. Tickets: \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door with costume, \$20 without costume. Bert's Warehouse, Eastern Market, Detroit. 9 p.m. Oct. 9. 586-321-2273. www.detroitroticaball.com

Edward Jones Financial Services "Golf Fore Breast Cancer" A golf outing benefiting The Pink Fund. Tanglewood Golf Course, 53503 W. 10 Mile Road, South Lyon. 9 a.m. Oct. 9. 734-254-0114. www.edwardjones.com

Gallery U "Ladies' Night Out" A trunk show and handmade jewelry exhibit for women. Gallery U, 310 Fourth Street, Royal Oak. 6 p.m. Oct. 14. 248-399-7322. <http://gallery-u.blogspot.com>

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Art & All That Jazz" Music, mingling and fun to support the KIA. Admission: \$3. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. 5:30 p.m. Oct. 8. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit "Home Slice" A benefit for MOCAD with strolling supper, silent auction, live DJ and more. Tickets: \$85. Eastern Market Shed 3, Detroit. 7 p.m. Oct. 8. 313-832-6622. www.mocadetroit.com

Scarab Club "Primary Colors" A masquerade ball fundraiser, with entertainment, food and a silent auction. Tickets: \$65 in advance, \$75 at the door. Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 16. 313-831-1250. www.scarabclub.org

St. Joseph Mercy Oakland "Fall Spectacular" A fundraiser for the hospital, honoring former Detroit Lions head coach Rick Forzano. Dinner and dessert included. Townsend Hotel, 100 Townsend, Birmingham. 6 p.m. Oct. 7. www.sjmercyhealth.org

The Henry Ford "Hallowe'en" With trick-or-treating, walk through "Sleepy Hollow" and dinner packages available. Tickets: \$12.75 members, \$15 non-members. Greenfield Village, 20900 Oakwood, Dearborn. Oct. 8 - Oct. 24. 313-982-6001. www.thehenryford.org

Two Creeks Organics "Dine on the Farm" Locally grown food, local music and more to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. Two Creeks Organics, 13290 Tracey Road, Manchester. 3 p.m. Oct. 10. 734-678-1984. www.twocreeksorganics.com

Wayne County "Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration" A dinner celebrating Latino educational empowerment and achievement, with keynote speaker Dr. Carlos Lopez. Free. El Kiosko Banquet Hall, 7271 Dix Street, Detroit. 6 p.m. Oct. 14. 313-833-3438.

CLASSICAL

Arab American National Museum "Riad Abdel-Gawad" A performance by the composer and violinist. Tickets: \$10, or \$9 for museum members. Arab American

National Museum, 13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. 5:30 p.m. Oct. 7. 313-582-2266. www.arabamericanmuseum.org

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Cirque de la Symphonie" Featuring live acrobatics accompanied by the "greatest hits" of the orchestral repertoire. Tickets: \$12-40. Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 8 p.m. Oct. 15. 517-487-5001. www.lansingsymphony.org

MSU College of Music "MSU-China V Student Concert" An evening of arias, duets, and student ensemble performances by students from MSU and China. Tickets: \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, free for students. Music Building Auditorium, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 8 p.m. Oct. 8. 517-353-5340. www.music.msu.edu

MSU College of Music "Guest Artist Recital" A performance by the Atlantic Ensemble Chamber Group. Tickets: \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, free for students. Music Building Auditorium, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 3 p.m. Oct. 10. 517-353-5340. www.music.msu.edu

MSU College of Music "Musique 21" Music by Schwanter and Schoenberg. Free. Music Building Auditorium, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 11. 517-353-5340. www.music.msu.edu

Plymouth Canton Symphony Orchestra "Flute Fantastique" With flutist Eric Lamb. Tickets: \$25 adults, \$20 seniors, \$10 students. Village Theater, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 9. 734-451-2112. www.plymouthsymphony.org

Pro Musica Society of Detroit "ETA3" The opening of Pro Musica's 84th season. Tickets: \$45. Music Box at Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8:30 p.m. Oct. 15. 313-886-9074. www.promusicadetroit.org

University Musical Society "Mariinsky Orchestra" With Denis Matsuev on piano, performing works by Rachmaninoff and Mahler. Tickets start at \$10. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University, Ann Arbor. 4 p.m. Oct. 10. www.ums.org

University Musical Society "Schubert Song Cycle Concert" A performance by the Takacs Quartet. Tickets start at \$24. Rackham Auditorium, 915 E. Washington, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 14. www.ums.org

CONCERTS

Kerrytown Concert House "A Toast to Nat King Cole" A concert with the Paul Keller Trio. Tickets: \$15-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 8. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kerrytown Concert House "William Bolcom and Joan Morris" A performance by the internationally renowned husband and wife pianist-soprano duo. Tickets: \$10-35. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Oct. 9. 9 p.m. Oct. 9. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kerrytown Concert House "All About the Trio" Jazz with the Ellen Rowe Trio. Tickets: \$5-25. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 2 p.m. Oct. 10. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kerrytown Concert House "Mikolaj Trzaska Duo" With Steve Swell on trombone. Tickets: \$5-25. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 14. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kerrytown Concert House "Tahir Hendlman Trio" A jazz concert with the award-winning pianist. Tickets: \$15-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 15. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Lager House "All-Girl Boys Choir" With special guests Peelerander Z and The Birthday Suits. Lager House, 1254 Michigan Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Oct. 15. www.pjslagerhouse.com

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Lansing Symphony Big Band" Performing hits by Cole Porter, Count Basie, George Gershwin and more. Tickets: \$15 adults, \$10 students. Dart Auditorium, Lansing Community College, Lansing. 3 p.m. Oct. 10. 517-487-5001. www.lansingsymphony.org

Olympia Entertainment "Godsmack" With special guests Drowning Pool and Five Finger Death Punch. Tickets: \$25-45. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 16. www.ticketmaster.com

Olympia Entertainment "Lade Antebellum" The "Need You Now 2010 Tour." Tickets: \$29.50-39.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 10. www.ticketmaster.com

Olympia Entertainment "Mary J. Blige" With Jazmine Sullivan, and special guests El DeBarge and Miguel. Tickets: \$59.75-99.75. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 15. www.ticketmaster.com

Olympia Entertainment "Championship of Hip Hop" An old school vs. new school face-off, with Snoop Dogg, Ice Cube, Young Jeezy, Plies, Fat Joe, Yo-Yo, The Game and Trina. Tickets: \$58-98. Joe Louis Arena, 600 Civic Center Drive, Detroit. 7 p.m. Oct. 16. www.ticketmaster.com

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Joan Baez" A performance by the iconic singer/songwriter. Tickets: \$50. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver, Saugatuck. 8 p.m. Oct. 12. 269-857-2399. www.sc4a.org

The Magic Bag "Alejandro Escovedo" With his band, The Sensitive Boys. Tickets: \$20. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 8 p.m. Oct. 14. 248-544-1991. www.themagicbag.com



Mary J. Blige will team up with up-and-coming singer Jazmine Sullivan once again for a fall tour that will bring her to Detroit's Fox Theatre at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 15.

Blige, a nine-time Grammy Award recipient, will be performing songs from her 2009 release "Stronger with Each Tear," as well as hits from her decades-spanning career, including "Real Love," "Not Gon' Cry," "Be Without You" and more. Blige has called Sullivan, who is releasing her second studio album, "Love Me Back," on Nov. 30, "one of the most amazing female singers out right now in this generation." The R&B songstresses will be joined on tour by special guests El DeBarge and Miguel.

Tickets for the show are \$59.75-99.75 and can be purchased at any Ticketmaster outlet, or online at www.ticketmaster.com.

DANCE

Detroit Opera House "Paul Taylor Dance Company" Presented in collaboration with the University Musical Society. Tickets: \$18-46. Power Center, 121 Fletcher, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 7, 8 p.m. Oct. 8, 8 p.m. Oct. 9. www.motopera.org

FILM & VIDEO

Detroit Waldorf School "Detroit Waldorf School Film Festival" A film festival with the theme of making a difference in the life of a child, a family or a community. Films include "Grown in Detroit," "Play it Again," "Garbage!" and others. Tickets: \$10-15 per day. Detroit Waldorf School, 2555 Burns Ave., Detroit. 6 p.m. Oct. 8, 10 a.m. Oct. 9. 313-822-0300. www.detroitwaldorf.org

Friends of the Penn "Dracula" Part of the Shocktober Thursday Classics series. Tickets: \$3. Penn Theatre, 760 Penniman Ave., Plymouth. 7 p.m. Oct. 7. 734-453-0870. www.penntheatre.com

Friends of the Penn "The Invisible Man" Part of the Shocktober Thursday Classics series. Tickets: \$3. Penn Theatre, 760 Penniman Ave., Plymouth. 7 p.m. Oct. 14. 734-453-0870. www.penntheatre.com

Michigan Theater "Answer This!" A sneak preview of the Michigan-made movie. Tickets: \$10, or \$8 for Michigan Theater members. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 8. www.michtheater.org

Michigan Theater "Grease Sing-Along" With costume parade, goodie bags, on-screen lyrics and more. Tickets: \$12 adults, \$10 students, seniors and veterans. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 14, 5 p.m. Oct. 17. www.michtheater.org

OTHER

Ann Arbor Antiques Market "Ann Arbor Antiques Market" Reuse, recycle, buy vintage! Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor. 7 a.m. Oct. 16. 734-662-0496. www.annarborantiquesmarket.com

Ann Arbor District Library "Wildlife and Travel Lecture" A discussion about Kenya and Tanzania and the Great Serengeti Migration. Downtown Library, 343 S. Fifth Ave., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Oct. 7. 734-327-4555.

Leon & Lulu "Books & Authors" An event celebrating local authors, with over 40 writers and their books. Free. Leon & Lulu, 96 W. 14 Mile Road, Clawson. 11 a.m. Oct. 10. www.leonandlulu.com

National Kidney Foundation "Personal Action Toward Health Class" A free class to help individuals learn how to manage long-term health conditions. Pre-registration required. Royal Oak Township Recreation Department, 21272 Mendota, Ferndale. Sep. 17 - Oct. 22. 734-222-9800. www.nkfm.org

United Health Organization "Project Healthy Living" A day of free and low-cost health care services. Registration recommended. Baker College, 4500 Enterprise Drive, Allen Park. 10 a.m. Oct. 11. 313-581-8913. www.projecthealthyliving.net

United Health Organization "Project Healthy Living" A day of free and low-cost health care services. Registration recommended. Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. 9 a.m. Oct. 8. 313-581-8913. www.projecthealthyliving.net

United Health Organization "Project Healthy Living" A day of free and low-cost health care services. Registration recommended. Macomb Mall, 32233 Gatoit Ave., Roseville. Sep. 16 - Oct. 16. 313-531-9108. www.projecthealthyliving.net

SHOWS

MotorCity Casino "Nephew Tommy" A stand-up performance by the comedian and regular on the "Steve Harvey Morning Show." Tickets: \$30-37. Sound Board Theater, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Oct. 8. www.motorcitycasino.com Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

THEATER

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

84 Charing Cross Road \$12. SRO Productions at SRO Theater, 26060 Berg Rd., Southfield. Through Oct. 17. 248-796-4645. www.srotheater.org

A Night in the Theatre \$12. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at Ann Arbor Civic Studio Theatre, 322 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor. Oct. 15 - 24. 734-971-2228. www.a2ct.com

Fortinbras \$12. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. Through Oct. 10. 517-482-5700. www.riverwalktheatre.com

Godspell \$10-\$22. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 South Park St., Kalamazoo. Through Oct. 10. 269-343-1313. www.kazooicivic.com

Leaving Iowa \$13-\$15. The Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. Through Oct. 17. 248-553-2955. www.farmingtonplayers.org

Mindgame \$16. Barefoot Productions, Barefoot Productions Theatre, 240 North Main St., Plymouth. Oct. 8 - 24. 734-560-1493. www.justgobarefoot.com

Starry Night Dinner served at 6:30 p.m.; reservations required. \$33; show-only: \$18. Starlight Theatre, Waverly East Cafeterium, 3131 W. Michigan, Lansing. Through Oct. 9. 517-243-6040. www.starlightdinnertheatre.com

Tartuffe \$18-\$22. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Parish Theatre, 426 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Oct. 8 - 23. 269-343-1313. www.kazooicivic.com

The Great American Songbook from Tin Pan Alley and Beyond \$15. Spotlight Players at The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Rd., Canton. Oct. 15 - 16. 734-394-5300. www.canton-mi.org/village theater

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY THEATER

Company \$17. Oakland University Dept. of Music, Theatre and Dance at Varner Studio Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Oct. 7 - 17. 248-370-3013. www.oakland.edu/mtd

Pentecost \$24. U-M Department of Theatre & Drama at Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin Ave., Ann Arbor. Oct. 7 - 16. 734-764-2538. www.music.umich.edu

Take Me Out \$20. The University Theatre, Gilmore Theatre Complex's Williams Theatre, 2200 Auditorium Dr., Kalamazoo. Oct. 7 - 17. 269-387-6222.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle \$15. Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 15 - 24. 313-577-2972. www.bonstelle.com

PROFESSIONAL

A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline \$25-\$29. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Through Oct. 10. 269-343-2727. www.farmersalleytheatre.com

A Midsummer Night's Dream \$12. The Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company at Dog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. Oct. 15 - 17. www.dogstorytheater.com

Among Friends Performed in the newly refurbished building in Frandor Shopping Center. \$25. Stormfield Theatre, 201 Morgan Ln., Lansing. Oct. 7 - 31. 517-372-0945. www.stormfieldtheatre.org

An Evening with Jeff Daniels \$12-\$35. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 8 p.m. Oct. 8. 810-237-7333. www.TheWhiting.com

An Evening with Jeff Daniels \$20-\$50. The Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Rd., Clinton Township. 8 p.m. Oct. 9. 586-286-2222. www.macombcenter.com

Best of Friends Previews Oct. 14-17 & 20-21 (\$20-\$30.) \$25-\$40. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Oct. 14 - Dec. 18. 734-433-7673. www.purplerosetheatre.org

Blue Door \$15-\$24. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Rd., Williamston. Through Oct. 17. 517-655-7469. www.

williamstontheatre.org

boom \$15-\$20. Breathe Art Theatre Project at The Furniture Factory, 4126 Third St., Detroit. Oct. 1 - Oct. 17. 248-982-4121. www.breathearttheatre.com

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof \$15. Matrix Theatre Company at YMCA Boll Family Theatre, 1401 Broadway, Detroit. Oct. 15 - Nov. 14. 313-967-0599. www.matrixtheatre.org

Damn Yankees \$28. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Oct. 7 - 24. 734-268-6200. http://theencoretheatre.org

Don't Be Cruel - The Life and Times of the King \$25-\$35; Dinner and show packages available Wednesday, Thursday & Sunday for \$69.95 per couple. Andiamo Novi Theatre, 42705 Grand River Ave., Novi. Through Nov. 28. 248-348-4448.

Dracula: A Rock Opera Previews Oct. 6-8 (\$24). \$30-\$39. Meadow Brook Theatre, 220 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Oct. 6 - 31. 248-377-3300. www.mbtheatre.com

Escanaba in da Moonlight \$26. Tibbits Opera House, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. Oct. 15 - 16. 517-278-6029. www.tibbits.org

Evil Dead: The Musical \$30 general admission; \$35 reserved "splatter" seats. Who Wants Cake Theatre at the City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave, Detroit. Oct. 8 - 31. 1-800-745-3000. www.whowantscaketheatre.com

FAT Bottoms Up \$10. Crawlspace Eviction at Farmers Alley Theatre, 211 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Oct. 15 - 16. 269-599-7390. www.crawlspace theatre.com

Fiddler on the Roof \$30.50-\$60.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 6 - 7. 313-471-6611. www.olympiaentertainment.com

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

Hay Fever Plays in rotating repertory. \$20-\$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Oct. 1 - Dec. 4. 313-577-2972. www.wsushows.com

Hedwig and the Angry Inch Preceded by a preview of "Anima Animus," a new musical. \$10 advance, \$15 at the door. Circus Earth Productions at The Crofoot Ballroom, 1 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. 9 p.m. Oct. 15. 248-858-9333. www.thecrofoot.com

Keely & Du \$18. UDM Theatre Company, Marygrove College Theatre, 8425 W. McNichols Rd., Detroit. Through Oct. 10. 313-993-3270. www.theatre.udmercy.edu

Last of the Red Hot Lovers \$28-\$30. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St. Northville. Through Oct. 16. 248-347-0003. www.tippingpointtheatre.com

Legally Blonde The Musical \$25-\$53. Miller Auditorium, 2200 Auditorium Dr., Kalamazoo. Oct. 14 - 15. 269-387-2300. www.millerauditorium.com

Nightmare Box Previews Oct. 14 (\$10). \$20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. Oct. 14 - Nov. 6. 313.365.4948. www.planetant.com

Pearls of Wisdom Free. African Renaissance Theater Company at N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art, 52 E Forest St., Detroit. 8 p.m. Oct. 9. 313-831-8700.

Play It Again, Sam \$18. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company, 1515 Broadway, 1515 Broadway St., Detroit. Through Oct. 17. 313-408-7269. www.magentagiraffe.org

Shining City Tickets:\$10-\$20. Who Wants Cake, The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Oct. 16 - Nov. 8. 248-545-5545. www.whowantscaketheatre.com

Sonia Flew A co-production with The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company. \$22-\$41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Oct. 17. 734-663-0681. www.performance network.org

Sundays at Go Comedy! \$7 for the



If you ever traveled on a family road trip, then "Leaving Iowa" at the Farmington Players Barn Theater may just steal your heart. It takes a humorous look at family vacations in which bickering kids and their parents are trapped for endless hours in the station wagon, far from the comforts of home.

Don Browning, a journalist in Boston, returns home to Winterset, Iowa for a family baptism. Don winds up using his Dad's old travel guide to navigate the Midwest, while searching for a final resting place for his father's ashes. Don narrates the tale, recalling summer road trips from his childhood when he, Sis, Mom and Dad zipped through America's heartland.

Performances are at 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday through Oct. 17. Tickets are available at the box office by calling 248-553-2955.

The Farmington Players Barn is located at 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills.

evening. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

The God of Isaac Previews Oct. 6, 7 & 9. \$32-\$41. Jewish Ensemble Theatre at the Aaron DeRoy Theatre, 6600 West Maple Rd., West Bloomfield. Oct. 6 - 31. 248-788-2900. www.jettheatre.org

The Great Game Show Fiasco \$19; \$36 for Oct. 23 performance (includes buffet dinner served at 6:30 p.m.). Van Buren Street Theatre, 701 N Van Buren St., Bay City. Through Oct. 30. 989-893-9399. www.vanburenstreettheatre.com

The Judy Show \$15. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Oct. 7. 269-756-3879. www.acorntheater.com

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

The Merchants of Bollywood \$25-\$65. Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, 350 Madison St., Detroit. Oct. 7 - 9. 1-800-745-3000. www.music hall.org

The Mikado \$29-\$121. Michigan Opera Theatre at The Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit. Oct. 16 - 24. 313-237-7464. www.michiganopera.org

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

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

West Side Story \$39-\$89 (includes parking and facility fees). Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Through Oct. 16. 1-800-982-2787. www.broadwayindetroit.com

Women in Love \$15-\$25. Blackbird Theatre, 325 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. Through Oct. 16. 734-332-3848. www.blackbirdtheatre.org

THEATER FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Banana for Turtle \$10 adult, \$5 child. PuppetART, Detroit Puppet Theatre, 25 E Grand River Ave., Detroit. Oct. 2 - Oct. 23. 313-961-7777. www.puppetart.org

Beyond a Child \$16-\$18 adult, \$14-\$16 teen & senior, \$12-\$14 child. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Oct. 8 - 23. 810-237-1530. www.flintyouththeatre.org

Disney on Ice presents Disney Classics \$15 and above. The Palace of Auburn Hills, 6 Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. Oct. 13 - 17. 1-800-734-5000. www.ticketmaster.com

ART 'N' AROUND

323East Gallery "RIDGID" An exhibit by cPOP founder Tom Thewes. Opening reception held 6-11 p.m. Oct. 9. 323East Gallery, 323 E. Fourth Street, Royal Oak. Oct. 9 - Nov. 4. 248-246-9544. www.323east.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

Detroit Institute of Arts "In Your Dreams" 500 years of imaginary prints from Europe and America. Museum admission: \$8 adults, \$6 seniors, \$4 youth. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sept. 8 - Jan. 2. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Downriver Council for the Arts "The Soul of New Orleans" Photographs of music and life by Joe Crachiola. Wyandotte Arts Center, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Sept. 17 - Oct. 8. www.downriverarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Unbroken Ties" Dialogues in Cuban Art, presenting works of artists who have remained in Cuba alongside works by those who have left the country. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley, Flint. Sept. 9 - Dec. 7. 810-234-1695. www.flintarts.org

Gallery Project "Politics of Fear" A multimedia exhibit of works by 35 artists visualizing fear in American society. The Gallery Project, 215 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Sept. 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. Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. Sept. 2 - Oct. 14. 248-432-5579. www.jccdet.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 "Cycles" An exhibition of works by multi-media artist McCabe Ash. Opening reception held 5-7 p.m. Oct. 13. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Sept. 27 - Oct. 25. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kresge Art Museum "2010 Faculty Biennial Exhibition" Featuring works by MSU faculty. Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing. Sept. 10 - Oct. 10. www.artmuseum.msu.edu

Kresge Art Museum "Designing Women of Postwar Britain" Their art and the modern interior. Free. Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing. Oct. 16 - Dec. 17. 517-884-0659. www.artmuseum.msu.edu

Lawrence Street Gallery "Glenn 'Fuzz' Corey and Gary Van Gorp" An exhibition of new works by the resident artists, including drawings and paintings. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Sept. 29 - Oct. 30. 248-544-0394. www.lawrencestreetgallery.com

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum "Artists Portray Artists" An exhibition of 35 portraits and self-portraits. Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, 7400 Bay Road, Saginaw. Oct. 1 - Jan. 29. 989-964-7096. www.marshallfredericks.org

Riverside Arts Center "On the Wild Side - Art of Nature" Presenting the artwork of Lisa Ramlow, Marie Rust and Lori Taylor. Riverside Arts Center, 76 N. Huron, Ypsilanti. Sept. 30 - Oct. 30. www.riversidearts.org

The Butcher's Daughter Gallery "Paycheck to Paycheck, part two" A group exhibition in two parts, each running for the length of a worker's pay cycle. The Butcher's Daughter Gallery, 22747 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Sept. 25 - Oct. 9. 248-890-6536. www.thebutchersdaughtergallery.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. 34-763-UMMA. www.umma.umich.edu

Rhonda L. Kobold, D.O. and
Becky J. Smith, D.O., PC



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MI 48150. E-mail her at DearJodyValley@hotmail.com

He has to know everything **Come on out**

Q: "Daryl" and I have been seeing each other for almost a year. Since about the third month of our relationship, he has to know where I am and what I'm doing, almost all the time. Actually, as I think of it, it's gotten worse as time has gone on.

For example: He calls me before I go to work, wants to know my schedule, when I can expect to get home, where I went, and on and on. Believe me, Jody, it's not all that interesting. If something at work is interesting or funny, I tell him. It's not that I don't share my day. And, for the most part, what I have done during the day doesn't make much sense out of the context of my work, especially for those who don't know my job, like him.

Daryl wants to know who everyone is and whether he's cute. I ask him why he wants to know, and he says that he wants to know his "competition." That's so ridiculous since no one I work with is gay, plus if they were, why would they be "his" competition?

Daryl is nosy even when I go see my family. He has to know every little word that is said about most anything, but especially about him. (He has met some of my family, not all.) I haven't done a formal "bringing him home to meet the family" thing. I'm beginning to think that maybe I don't want to bring him home to meet the family. That seems to me to be a very commitment-type thing to do, and I'm just not ready or maybe not sure.

Do you think that Daryl will stop needing to know all this stuff as time goes by or, if I make more of a commitment to him, will it make him feel more secure?

Living with Snoopy

A: Daryl's behavior is very controlling, and I'm sure it feels that way to you. Unless Daryl himself deals with this controlling (and insecure) behavior of his, nothing will change, and more than likely, it will get worse. I suggest you talk to Daryl about this. Start with how it feels to you when he has to know about everything. If he's not willing to deal with it, I don't see it getting better. (Often, this kind of controlling behavior leads to or is associated with physical abuse.)

Q: My girlfriend "Sam" is a football nut. That's why I've learned to hate fall; I used to love it. Now, when I ask her to go somewhere to enjoy the weather and be outside, all she can think to say is, "Do you have tickets to a football game?" Of course she knows that that is not what I want, but she thinks that's funny, and then goes back to the game on TV. I would like to go for a walk, hike, or ride our bikes – do anything that allows us to enjoy the last of the good weather before winter weather sets in. Up until the first football game of the season, Sam is a very active person, and we enjoy the outdoors time together. Then, after that, I feel abandoned. Am I being unreasonable to ask her for some time to be outside with me?

Football Widow

A: It sounds like "some time" is the issue here; like how much time? Is she totally not willing to do anything with you during football season, or are you asking her to completely give up football? From your e-mail it's hard to tell. Have you tried compromising, finding a middle ground? That's where I would start. See if you can come up with how much football? How much outdoor time? Besides that, perhaps you could find someone else who likes and would like to share outdoor activities with you. In relationships, one person shouldn't be required to fulfill every need of the other person.

Readers: I'd love to hear from you. Go to Facebook/ Dear Jody Valley to see what's happening and check out discussion groups. I'd like to know what you're thinking!

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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Here's how to play BTL's Fake Ad Contest

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*FIND THE
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CONTEST*



by Jack Fertig

Click those slippers, Cancer!

Venus retrograding across Mars in Scorpio offers a chance to repeat or correct romantic and erotic errors. Stress from Jupiter and Uranus push it toward errors of comic proportions. Keep your sense of humor. A solar aspect from Libra promises that with small effort, grace and aplomb will get you through anything.

ARIES (March 20 – April 19):

When it comes to sexual activity and sexual fulfillment, quality isn't as easy to get as quantity. Focus on the relationship you have (or the one you want), and be honest about where your sexual needs aren't being met.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20):

Your plans with your friends may be far-fetched, even utterly impractical. Don't push too hard; be open to trimming your sails to a steadier process and a more reliable goal. Share your opinions, but let others take the lead.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20):

You will be noticed; don't worry about that! Trying to get noticed will only make you look like a grandstanding egomaniac. Play it cool; focus on your work. Innovative approaches modestly advanced will get you the attention you want.

CANCER (June 21- July 22):

Hey, Dorothy, click those slippers and take care of business at home! Wanderlust and the search for novelties are mostly counter-productive distractions, but they might inspire playful ways to pep up your domestic life.

LEO (July 23 – August 22):

Are you out to your family? Raise issues that need to be discussed with them. Still, be careful not to spill too much info. Meaningful relationships deserve openness; tawdry adventures and intimate details are nobody else's business.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22):

Don't shy away from the tough issues with your partner, but be careful not to be too provocative, smug or self-righteous. It's not about you. Keep the focus on what's really important.

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22):

Retail therapy is just an enabling term for "shopaholic." Step away from the counter and get a realistic handle on your accounts. Yes, you are entitled to a birthday treat, but shouldn't your friends and family be covering that?

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21):

It's not all about you. On the other hand acting as if it were could unlock creative potential. Still, there is a time and a place for indulging in rampant egomania. Keep it where it belongs, and dig for those deep inner truths.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20):

Reaching for the future may be more comfortable than resolving erupting issues from the past, but the latter is your foundation so make sure you deal with that. Friends offer perspective and distraction. Be careful to distinguish between the two.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19):

Two paths ahead of you: One is bright and brilliant and offers lots of amazing thrills at considerable risk. The other is much duller and leads through hard work toward success. You know which road to take.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18):

Your ability to collaborate and bring together diverse ideas is what will get you favorably noticed. Resist the temptation to show off your sense of economy and resourcefulness. That will just blow up in your face.

PISCES (February 19 – March 19):

Being your own brilliantly spiritual self will probably confuse people and maybe even scare some. Whether you actually win arguments, you may terrify your opposition. Channel that energy into quiet study. Cultivating an air of serene mystery will convey powerful sexiness.

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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Solution to puzzle from page 30

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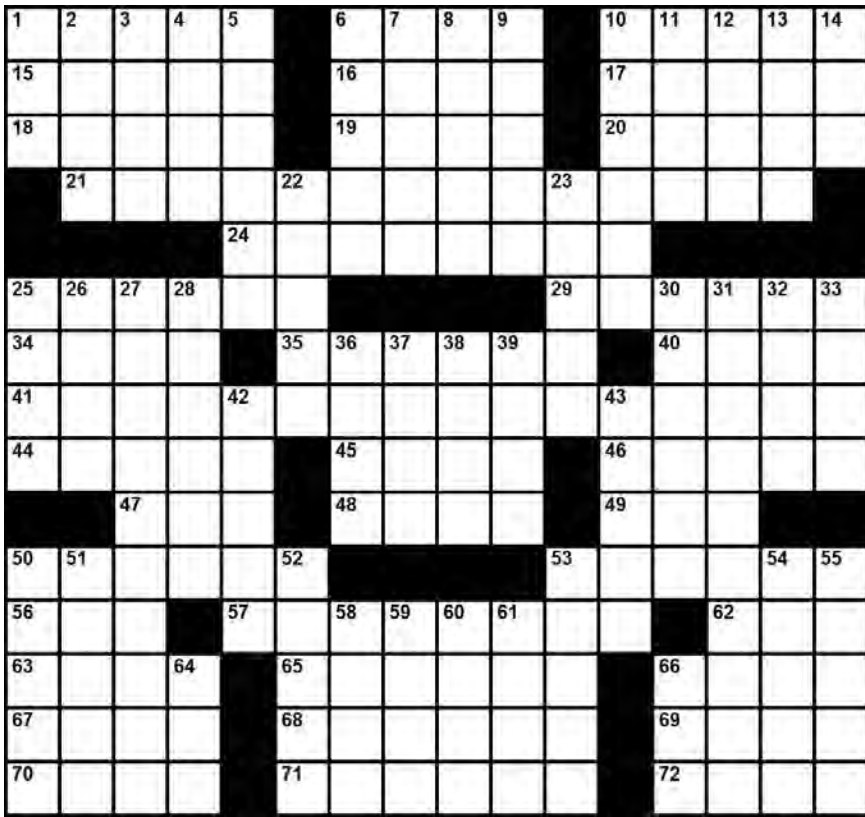
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Solution on 29

Q U I Z Can I Have Your Number?

Across

- 1 Story of Greeks that busted some Trojans
- 6 All-night bash
- 10 She played with Sherman on "The Jeffersons"
- 15 Brando's last one was in Paris
- 16 Zip
- 17 Standard of excellence
- 18 Charlize Theron's "Monster" award
- 19 Patriot's place
- 20 Suffix with Beatle
- 21 Edward Albee play of 1991
- 24 Saviors
- 25 Require a bottom?
- 29 Dines at home
- 34 Crowds around
- 35 Susan Feniger main dish
- 40 "Otello" villain
- 41 Jane Bowles novel of 1943
- 44 Muscle Mary's pride
- 45 Sea food?

- 46 Last inning, usually
- 47 Preposition for Byron
- 48 Tempting location
- 49 Where to find gay.com, with "the"
- 50 "Our" in a crime name
- 53 Lip service?
- 56 Appropriate
- 57 Rita Mae Brown novel of 1978
- 62 Mate in Montreal
- 63 Abound (with)
- 65 Reserved
- 66 "___ ever so humble ..."
- 67 Peril for Patty Sheehan
- 68 Hard stuff in your mouth
- 69 Climactic start
- 70 Uses the tongue too much
- 71 Most in need of BenGay
- 72 Org.

Down

- 1 Simpson trial judge Lance
- 2 Avoid premature ejacu-

- lation
- 3 Nothing to brag about
- 4 Tutti-frutti ingredient
- 5 "The Sound of Music" song
- 6 Takes five
- 7 Box to Vidal
- 8 "Grease" singer Frankie
- 9 ___ Gay
- 10 Brunch cocktail
- 11 Sandler of "I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry"
- 12 Surrealist Magritte
- 13 Reclined
- 14 Home st. of Harper Lee
- 22 Conger catcher
- 23 Cart part
- 25 Respondents to 911
- 26 "___ lay me ..."
- 27 Choice piece of meat
- 28 State with conviction
- 30 Cleans (up)
- 31 "Samson et Dalila" composer
- 32 Response to a joke, with "it"

- 33 Enjoy some ladyfingers, e.g.
- 36 Winged goddess
- 37 ___ the line (conformed)
- 38 Queens do this
- 39 Where to see sweaty athletes
- 42 They have big mouths
- 43 She got her gun
- 50 Like a metrosexual
- 51 Type of queen
- 52 Nurses' assistants
- 53 Went down on a body part
- 54 What a guy does nocturnally
- 55 Use your butt to demonstrate
- 58 Alien introduction
- 59 Nicky, in "Funny Girl"
- 60 See red
- 61 Shaft output
- 64 Soldier cops
- 66 Ewe said it!

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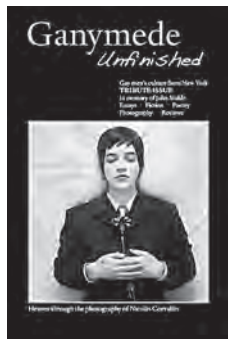
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"Ganymede Unfinished: Gay Men's Culture from New York," edited by Bryan Borland. Sibling Rivalry Press, 294 pages, \$18 paper, \$12 e-book.



This anthology, says editor Borland in his introduction, is "a love letter to a man and a publication."

That would be to John Stahle, who died this year, and to the seven issues of his exquisite journal, "Ganymede." The "unfinished" of the title encompasses the collection's last 44 pages, unedited text and art slated for Issues 8 and 9 of the journal. But the preceding 250 pages constitute an impressive homage. Sixteen poets are represented, among them Jeff Mann, Jee Leong Koh and Borland. Gay activist pioneer Perry Brass writes about the pioneering queer journal, "Mouth of the Dragon." Jorgen Lien muses about "Hustlers and Boybands," and Philip F. Clark remembers the late editor in "John Stahle and the Art of the Eye." Among these gems, two works sparkle – and startle: Charlie Vazquez's "El Baile Divino/The Divine Dance" is a haunting story about eyes and evil; Scott Alexander Hess' "Diary of a Sex Addict" – the title says it all – is relentlessly erotic and divinely written. Stahle would have savored it – and this respectful remembrance, too.

Featured Excerpt

If Jesus were gay,/ would you tattoo him to your body?/ hang him from your chest?/ pray to him and worship the Son of Man?/ Would you still praise him after dying for your sins?/ If it was revealed Jesus kissed another man,/ but not on the cheek,/ would you still beg him for forgiveness?/ ask him for miracles?/ hope your loved ones get to meet him in heaven?/ If Jesus were gay,/ and still loved by God and Mary/ because he was their child after all/ hailed by all angels and feared by demons,/would you still long to be healed by him?/ take him into your home and comfort him?/ heal his wounds and break bread with him?

–from "Inferno (A Poet's Novel)," by Eileen Myles

"If Jesus Were Gay & Other Poems," by Emanuel Xavier. Queer Mojo, 136 pages, \$14.95 paper; **"Slut Machine,"** by Shane Allison. Queer Mojo, 130 pages, \$13.95 paper.

There's much more than lust, sex and a celebration of the erotic in these two super-charged collections – but that's definitely, and defiantly, a quality they share. Xavier's poems encompass childhood abuse, hustling, race and religion – themes running through all his work. But the poems that really pop are the wistful ones about not-quite romances and absent passions: "We are the same, hopeless romantics/ this time with reason," one poem opens; "I long for your caress/ I try to remember the smell of your hair," says another; and, "I just need to know you think of me sometimes." A thread of longing runs through Allison's collection, too, but he's more raw about sex – in "Sestina for Twenty-Six Boys," Ulysses "with

his legs spread is ready for my mouth" – and his titles are infused with sex-charged bluntness: "If You Find Me Dead in a Bathhouse," "Robert Mapplethorpe's Fist," "White Boys That Have Been Up My Ass." Both collections are intense and personal, with Xavier a master of the sacred and Allison rocking the profane.

"Room," by Emma Donoghue. Little, Brown, 336 pages, \$24.99 hardcover.

The horrific is rendered unsettlingly normal – even hauntingly innocent – in lesbian author Donoghue's mesmerizing (and mainstream-straight) novel about 5-year-old Jack and his young mother, held captive in a tarted-up garden shed by a sexual pervert. "Ma," as she is known for most of the novel, was kidnapped at age 19, and knows there is a world outside their four spartan walls. But for Jack, born inside the windowless room, the world is compressed into Rocker and Wardrobe, Lamp and Bed, five children's books, and a few channels on Television – which for the boy is in no way a representation of reality. His mother – who still breastfeeds – has consciously raised him in the cocoon of a self-contained universe; he doesn't know that an "outside" exists. For the boy, their hell is a perverse paradise. Narrated entirely and endearingly in Jack's voice, the story of their self-contained isolation – ruptured weekly when their captor, Old Nick (Jack's father), enters the shed for sex with Ma – is nonetheless never claustrophobic, a testament to Donoghue's amazing, always-credible imagination.



"Thiefing Sugar: Eroticism Between Women in Caribbean Literature," by Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley. Duke University Press, 296 pages, \$23.95 paper.

Queer scholarship explores neglected but rewarding territory here, as Tinsley excavates erotic relations between women as

represented in Caribbean poetry and prose. Two of the subjects are surely familiar to literate lesbian readers: essays consider Dionne Brand's "No Language is Neutral" and Michelle Cliff's "No Telephone to Heaven." The real discoveries are names not known: Ida Faubert, French-educated daughter of a Haitian president, whose first poems appeared in 1912, and who after, she returned to Paris, started to write "erotic poems to women"; Mayotte Capecia (born Lucette Ceranus) from Martinique, whose 1948 novel "I Am a Martinican Woman" focuses on a washerwoman "who luxuriates in watching laundresses swim nude"; Eliot Bliss (born Eileen), a white Jamaican whose autobiographical second novel, "Luminous Isle," is about its protagonist's "roving desire for many women" and her recurring love for one; and, in the most fascinating chapter, the same-sex traditions of Surinamese oral poetry. Tinsley's survey of the region's literature is always lucid; more than a critical study, though, this work, in abundant ways, knits together a literary past and the political present with lyrical acuity.

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Sacha Baron Cohen as Brüno. Photo: Universal Pictures

'Glee' gets closer to 'Rocky'

It's full steam ahead for the televised mashup machine that is "Glee." The appropriation of every single music reference of the past several decades – well, the ones they can get the rights too anyway, a task that's getting easier and easier with each passing moment – has become the show's real star. And now it's "The Rocky Horror Picture Show"'s turn to become... family friendly? Yes, the transgendered, pansexual, orgy-in-a-swimming-pool, "Time Warp"-line-dancing template for weirdo queer culture will be introduced to a new generation of Gleeeks and their moms as "Hairspray" director, choreographer and "So You Think You Can Dance" judge

Adam Shankman takes over directing duties for "Glee"'s all-"Rocky" episode, coming this season. Guesting so far? Barry Bostwick and Meat Loaf. Tim Curry said no. But how much do you want to bet that "Susan Sarandon" is game?

Baron Cohen to play killer Queen Mercury

"Borat" proved that Sacha Baron Cohen could grow a killer mustache; "Brüno" showed us he was comfortable with on-screen flamboyant gay excess; and "Sweeney Todd" revealed that he could sing. So now Baron Cohen is putting all three of those things together to play

Freddie Mercury, the legendary lead singer of Queen, in what promises to be a memorable biopic. Mercury's own story is a fascinating one – born of Parsi Iranians and raised in Zanzibar and India, he became one of the world's leading rock vocalists; when Mercury became HIV-positive, he kept it a secret from the media, despite being visibly worn down by AIDS complications. Only 24 hours before his death in 1991 did Mercury go public about his condition. The film, which will be written by Peter Morgan ("The Queen," "Frost/Nixon"), will focus on Queen's preparations for Live Aid in 1985. Shooting starts next year, which should give Cohen time to work on his high notes.

'Pushing Daisies' creator brings 'Pinocchio' back to life

In recent years, no one has done darkly magical whimsy like Bryan Fuller, the gay TV creator behind the cult series "Wonderfalls" (inanimate objects give important advice to cynical slacker) and "Pushing Daisies" (pie-maker can reanimate the dead, but only for a minute). While neither show got the viewership it deserved, they both captured Fuller's bizarre sense of the otherworldly, which contrasts with a wonderfully weird candy-colored visual sense. All of which is to say that Romeo is very excited to see what Fuller does with a live-action version of "Pinocchio," which he's currently writing for gay producer Dan Jinks ("American Beauty").

Unlike the creepy man-child vibe that Roberto Benigni (remember him?) brought to his recent take on the Carlo Collodi tale, Fuller's version promises to be both dark and eye-popping, and sweet without being sappy. Look for the puppet boy to come clomping into theaters in 2012.

Cher, starring someone else as Cher

Andy Fickman, gay director of the new comedy "You Again," isn't waiting around for his next job. He's hard at work on a theatrical piece based on the life and career of Oscar-winning actress and pop-music icon Cher. Now, stop for a minute and think about what that's going to mean. All those songs. All those costumes. All those wigs, headdresses and chainmail. All that career drama, Sonny drama, Gregg Allman drama. All that roller disco. And don't forget Chastity/Chaz. It practically writes itself. But who, WHO, will they find to even come close to approximating the one-of-a-kindness that Cherilyn Sarkisian, the single most powerful Armenian woman in the world, has brought to the last four decades of entertainment? It's going to be a tall order. But there has to be a singing, dancing actress out there with the impersonation skills necessary to pull it off. Right? This can only get more interesting as it develops.

Romeo San Vicente used to watch the "If I Could Turn Back Time" video just for the sailors. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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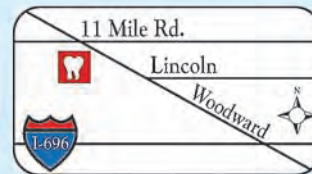
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