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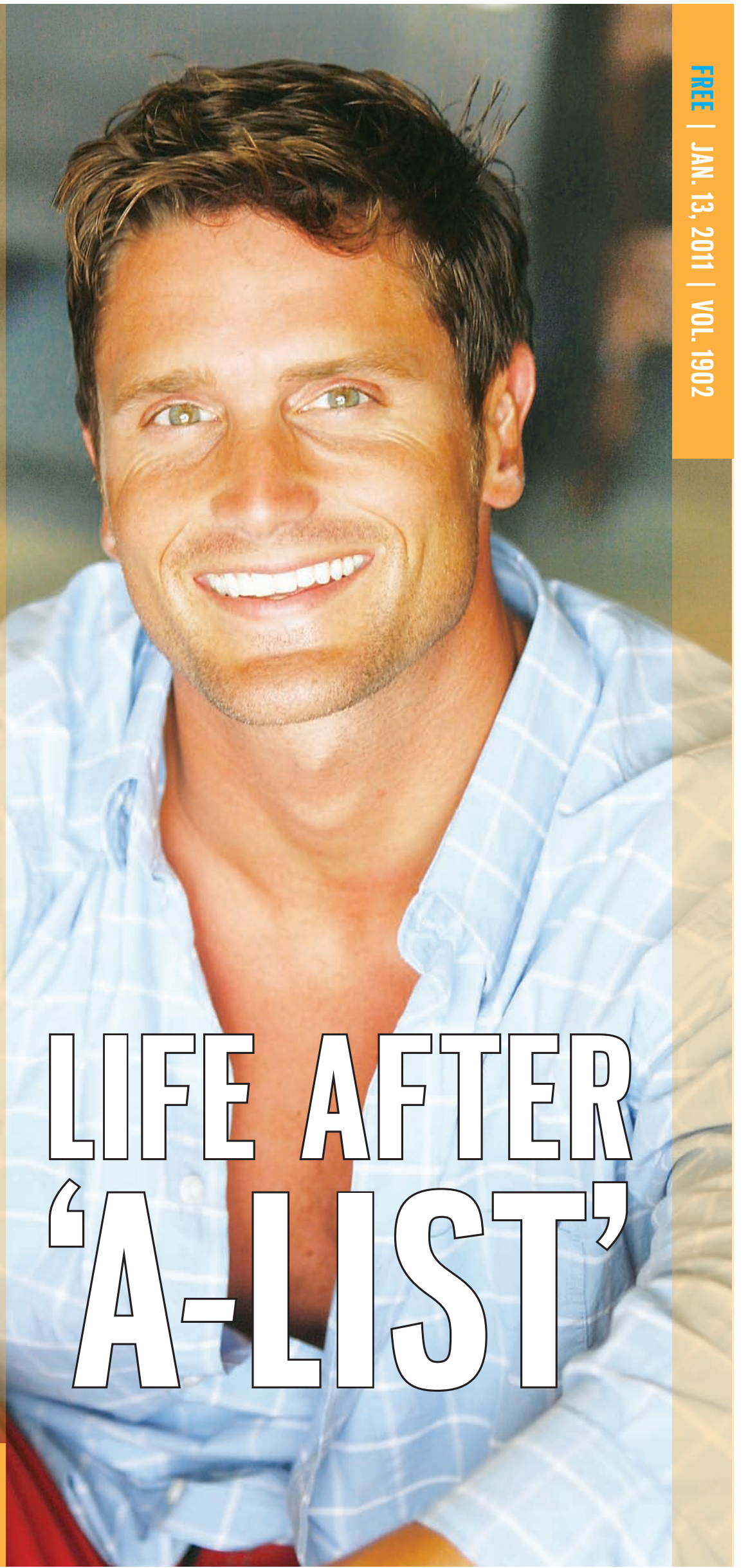
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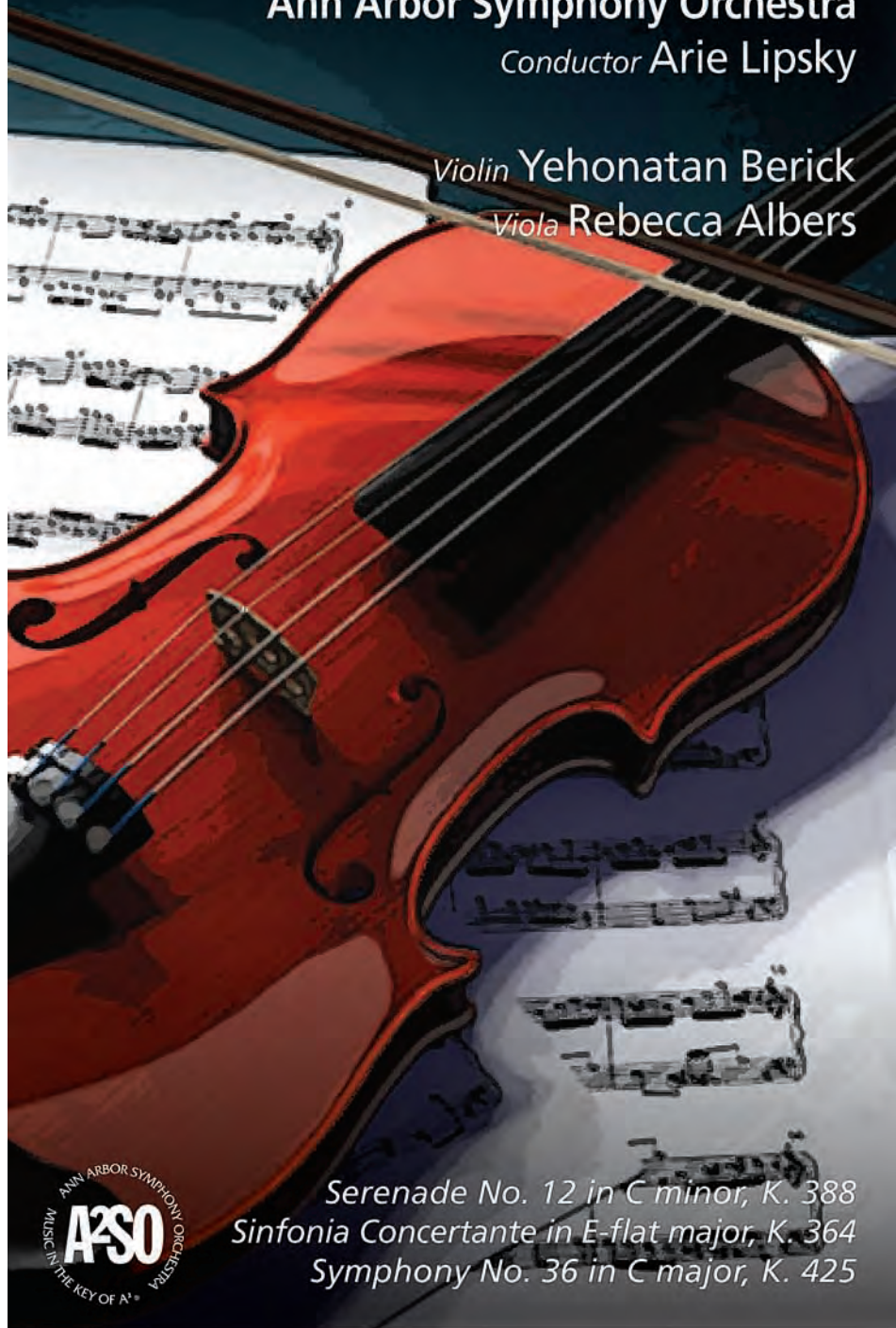
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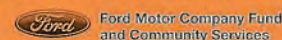


### 2011 Ford Honors Program **Renée Fleming** soprano **Hartmut Höll** piano

Sunday, January 16 | 4 PM  
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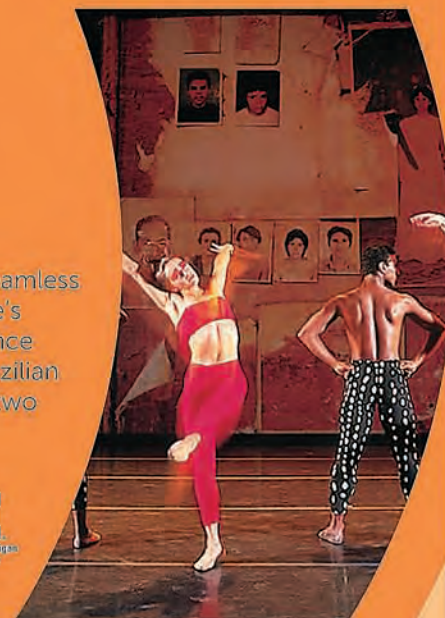
Paulo Pederneiras artistic director  
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**Alli Sheppard** is the new LGBTQA Coordinator at the University of Michigan Dearborn campus.

**1 Why is a position like yours necessary?**  
My main job is providing students with resources and support and to help train faculty and staff. It's necessary because LGBTQ students get overlooked in terms of programming and support. It's not as obvious they're in a minority. Often those students have a different set of issues they're dealing with. It's important to provide them with those resources so they can focus on their studies and be comfortable with who they are.

**2 What resources do you point students to?**

I point students who want to be allies to trainings. We have a SAFE, "student, staff and faculty for equality," training which covers what it means to be an ally and moving past tolerance towards inclusion. I refer students to counseling services, the GSA if they want to get more involved, and Affirmations and the Ruth Ellis Center if they want to do service projects.

**3 Tell us a little bit about your background.**

I did my undergrad at Eastern Michigan University in communications with a minor in sociology. Since I was 14, I've been involved in the Michigan Roundtable, working on diversity, inclusion, facilitating workshops, leading camps. I've always been really interested in LGBT issues because I feel that's left out when talking about diversity. I feel they should not be overlooked.

**4 Why did you join the Michigan Roundtable when you were so young?**

I was always interested in meeting people who were different than me. I grew up in a



"LGBTQ students get overlooked in terms of programming and support. It's not as obvious they're in a minority."

predominantly white Catholic community. I was always trying to learn more about people and different cultures. Some in my family had some cognitive impairments, so I was passionate about inclusive language. When I was seven I surprised my teacher by getting upset when she said "retarded." In high school a lot of my friends started coming out and I learned more about being LGBT. I heard about a camp put on by the Michigan Roundtable about social justice issues and I signed right up for it. It was more about self-discovery and learning about the personal biases you have and learning about discrimination ... and learning what we can do as a collective unit to advocate for people and one another. And I stayed involved since then - now, not as much as I used to be, but I'm still extremely close to them and I still do service projects.

**5 What goals do you have for your new job?**

I'm really looking forward to continuing the SAFE trainings. And also just working on getting them out and increasing promotion of those trainings, so students and new hires know they're available. I also really want to get a coming out support group. Another thing we're working on is forming classroom panels. It's hard to have programs that aren't just preaching to the choir. So we're working to make sure we reach a larger audience and that we're reaching staff and students where they're at.

You can reach Alli Sheppard by emailing her at [alshepp@umd.umich.edu](mailto:alshepp@umd.umich.edu)

*Between Ourselves is a bi-weekly feature that highlights members of Michigan's LGBT and allied community. To recommend someone for Between Ourselves, e-mail our news editor Tara Cavanaugh at [tara@pridesource.com](mailto:tara@pridesource.com).*

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*From Stork to Finish*

# New DHS director no friend of LGBT community

## Snyder's appointment affects millions of adults and children in Michigan

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

On Jan. 6 the new Gov. Rick Snyder announced the appointment of Maura Corrigan, a Michigan Supreme Court Justice, as the new director of the Department of Human Services.

This is troubling because Corrigan has a history of not supporting LGBT issues, said Marc Brewer, chair of the Michigan Democratic Party.

"Corrigan has been militantly opposed to adoption of children by gay parents and has used her power in the court system to actively oppose that," said Brewer. "She's demonstrated time and again that she is no friend of the (LGBT) community."

In a June 10, 2002 column for the Detroit Free Press, Brian Dickerson wrote that Corrigan "encouraged the chief of the Washtenaw County Circuit Court, Judge Archie Brown, to put the kibosh on gay couples who want to adopt," even though "(No) one directly affected by the practice seems inclined to challenge it."

What likely encouraged Corrigan was an article in the Lansing State Journal earlier that year about Washtenaw County's practice of allowing same-sex couples to adopt.

Dickerson said Brown, who had no authority over the other judges in the county, then ordered the Washtenaw circuit clerical staff to not accept any more adoption petitions from unmarried couples.

The result of that decision, Dickerson wrote, was that more children will have only one legal parent: "The court's refusal to grant those partners parental status simply means that the children they help raise will grow up without



"Corrigan has been militantly opposed to adoption of children by gay parents and has used her power in the court system to actively oppose that. She's demonstrated time and again that she is no friend of the (LGBT) community."

– Democratic Party Chair Marc Brewer

the medical insurance coverage, Social Security protection and other benefits children in other two-parent families enjoy."

Two years later, Jay Kaplan, a staff attorney for the ACLU of Michigan Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Project, wrote about the incident for BTL: "What is especially unusual about (it) is that Chief Justice Corrigan acted without a case properly before her – an action many would consider the hallmark of judicial activism."

Brewer said Snyder's appointment of Brian Rooney as Corrigan's deputy director will not temper her political views. Rooney is a lawyer who works in Ann Arbor for the Thomas More Law Center, whose purpose "is to be the sword and shield for people of faith, providing legal

representation without charge to defend and protect Christians and their religious beliefs in the public square," according to its Web site.

Snyder described Corrigan as "a true champion of children and families," according to the Detroit Free Press. According to her biography on the state Supreme Court Web site, Corrigan has won numerous awards for her work with children and families, including the Michigan Children's Award in 2008 and the Congressional Coalition on Adoption "Angels in Adoption" Award in 2005.

"She has long been in the judicial system an advocate on behalf of children," Brewer said. "Sadly as part of those efforts she's been adamantly opposed to allowing gay parents to adopt. I surmise that's motivating her (to take

the position). The DHS does a lot more than (adoption) and she is not qualified to administer those programs," Brewer said.

"The administration has termed her an advocate for children. I hope she is an advocate for all children, even children of LGBT parents," said Kaplan.

Gov. John Engler appointed Corrigan to the Michigan Court of Appeals in 1992. She was elected to the state Supreme Court in 1998. She served two terms as Chief Justice during her time on the state Supreme Court.

Corrigan's biography also says she is a member of the Federalist Society, which "is a group of conservatives and libertarians interested in the current state of the legal order," according to its Web site.

Corrigan's absence from the court left three Democrat and three Republican judges. Snyder announced her replacement Jan. 11: Judge Brian Zahra.

In a Michigan Democratic Party press release, Brewer denounced Zahra: "We are extremely disappointed in Governor Snyder's decision to name Brian Zahra to the Michigan Supreme Court. Governor Snyder promised to be a moderate governor interested in bipartisanship. This appointment goes against all of those promises."

"Brian Zahra is an extremist judge who will protect insurance companies and corporations on the bench. He will move this new Court even further to the right. Governor Snyder had a chance to appoint a fair, moderate judge and he chose not to do so."

# Celebrating 40 Years of Spectrum

BY CRYSTALA. PROXMIRE

In 1971, the University of Michigan became the first public university to recognize the gay community with an official office to deal with the issues of gays and lesbians on campus. Now, 40 years later, the Spectrum Center is celebrating how far the community has come.

"Spectrum has increased its ally involvement, gotten involved regionally and nationally in the work of LGBT issues on college campuses, and begun to engage its alum base with the office," said Jackie Simpson, the director of Spectrum since 2005. Spectrum has also expanded the scope of its work over the years to include sexual orientations and gender expressions of all kinds, looking at how those demographics co-exist with other labels such as race or religion. Now, Spectrum serves a whole "spectrum" of individuals.

"Students today are interested in learning about how all of their identities interact with each other. In essence, what does it mean to be gay and Christian, or to be a Latina lesbian? Single boxes and single labels are limiting to youth today. I believe this is why more and more youth identify as 'queer' than ever before ... It gives them more

options," Simpson said.

Spectrum gives students resources for feeling safe to express themselves. It also works with faculty, staff, and other schools to share information and encourage more inclusive campuses. It has a Speakers' Bureau program and an Ally Training program. Plus, the center hosts many other educational and fun events. Spectrum's ruby anniversary year kicked off with a Doin' it for 40 Years bash on Jan. 10 at the U-M Museum of Art, which featured musicians, student artwork, catering and a birthday cake. The center will also host talks with people in the film industry this year, such as Rod Gailes, who directed and produced the movie "Camouflage."

From Feb. 22-24 U-M will host the Midwest Bisexual Gay Transgender Ally College Conference, which is the largest LGBT student-organized conference in the nation. The event attracts more than 1500 students. In March there will be a professional drag show, and in November a pink carpet event for the alumni.

It will be the kind of year that the founders of the office would have only dreamed about back in 1970 when they were denied meeting space to organize a gay conference on campus.

In March 1970 the Detroit Gay Liberation

Movement inspired the gay community in Ann Arbor to start a Gay Liberation Front Chapter at U-M. According to Spectrum's website, the goals of the GLF were to "battle stereotypes of gay people, fighting homophobic prejudice, and invalidating the mental illness model of homosexuality." The GLF, along with a sister group called the Radical Lesbians, became officially recognized by the Student Government Council as legitimate student organizations.

The GLF was then denied space for a conference, and in the uproar that followed, school officials decided that a Human Sexuality Office needed to be established. It was the first of its kind in the nation.

Jim Toy of GLF and Cindy Gair of Radical Lesbians were hired at quarter-time pay to be the first employees of the office. Each was titled Human Sexuality Advocate.

One of Toy and Gair's first fights was to have "sexual orientation" included as a protected class in the University's bylaws, to protect gay individuals from discrimination in employment, educational programs and activities and admissions. Toy carried the torch of that campaign for 21 years, until finally in 1993 the Board of Regents voted 8-1 to amend the

University bylaws to protect sexual orientation.

Other successes were easier to achieve. In 1973 Toy and Gair formed their first Speakers' Bureau. In the 1980s they were allowed to say "Gay" and "Lesbian" in their title, and thus became The U-M Lesbian Gay Male Programs Office, while also expanding their focus to include bisexuals and people of color. In 1994 they added "Bisexual" to their name. In 1995 they added "Transgender," and now the four offices fall into categories of the Spectrum Center – a place where everyone is welcome.

In a press release, Michigan Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong said he plans to take part in the Spectrum celebrations this year. "The Spectrum Center is truly a place where out LGBT leaders can grow and develop. It connects students to the many resources that are around them and shows them the larger Michigan community they are a part of. If I had not found Spectrum my first week on campus, I would not have succeeded on campus the way I did."

For more information about the Doin' it for 40 Years celebrations or other Spectrum Center services and events, visit [www.spectrumcenter.umich.edu](http://www.spectrumcenter.umich.edu).

# Lansing Community College starts first LGBT scholarship

## The application deadline is Jan. 28

BY BTL STAFF

LANSING—Lansing Community College, the state's third largest community college, announced it is offering a scholarship for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. While some four-year institutions such as Michigan State University offer such scholarships, this is believed to be the first scholarship offered to the gay community at a community college in Michigan.

The scholarship is open to any member of the LGBT community who has a 2.2 or higher grade point average, is under the age of 25 and resides in the district. Applicants should also be involved in the LGBT community in some way.

The scholarship was named for Betsy Lou Robson, a member of the Lansing community. Her family determined that funding the scholarship was an excellent way to honor her. The funding is enough to last for three or four years, says Peggy Hellwig, a scholarship coordinator at LCC. As a result, she said, the LCC Foundation will continue to solicit donations to keep the scholarship running for many years.

Leaders in the LGBT community hailed the new scholarship, which has an application deadline of Jan. 28.

"It's a wonderful thing to see young, out, and proud members of the LGBT communities being recognized and helped in their educational goals. We are particularly pleased to see this start to happen on the community college level, where so many people turn for vocational

education or for a more inexpensive way to begin their college careers," said Denise Brogan-Kator, interim executive director of Equality Michigan, a statewide education and advocacy organization for the LGBT community. "Thank you, Lansing Community College, for leading the way — we hope Michigan's other community colleges will be able to join you soon in offering these crucially important scholarships to LGBT students."

Meanwhile, the Lansing Association for Human Rights, a Lansing area LGBT group, was also full of praise for the scholarship.

"We are delighted by this scholarship opportunity made available to our community. Ms. Robson's generosity and thoughtfulness is much appreciated," said Penny Gardner, president of LAHR. "We look forward to knowing who are the recipients for LAHR to honor them and the memory of Ms. Betsy Sue Robson at some future event."

Gardner said having such a scholarship available for the LGBT community was important.

"Having this LCC Betsy Lou Robson scholarship available to the LGBT community means that we are recognized as integral to LCC and to Lansing. It means in yet another way, LGBT people will have another opportunity to advance and achieve their goals. LCC was chosen because Ms. Robson lived in Lansing," said Gardner. "I wager she was familiar with the LGBT active presence in Lansing, was also familiar with those discriminating obstacles

"It's a wonderful thing to see young, out, and proud members of the LGBT communities being recognized and helped in their educational goals."

— Denise Brogan-Kator

some of us are able to negotiate and is providing assistance to individuals to negotiate them a bit easier. Further, I imagine she might have foreseen the long term effects this support will provide to our city and to groups like LAHR over time."

For more information on the scholarship — whether donating to it or applying for it — please visit the LCC Foundation website. The scholarship will fund up to four semesters for those who win the scholarship. Hellwig says the scholarship is currently funded for several years, but without further funding support, the scholarship will cease to exist.

Online: [www.lcc.edu/scholarships/foundationsscholarships](http://www.lcc.edu/scholarships/foundationsscholarships)

## New LGBT choir forms

GRAND RAPIDS—In Harmony is a new choir established by the founding artistic director of the West Michigan Gay Men's Chorus, Marty Kiefer.

The community ensemble of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and straight singers and their allies has a vision of presenting music that enriches lives and affirms equality for all people. Though based in the gay and lesbian community, In Harmony seeks to include parents, families and friends committed to musical and personal excellence. All ages and vocal abilities are welcome.

The first organizational meeting is 4 p.m. Feb. 13 at the Richard Jeffrey Salon, 1033 E. Fulton in Grand Rapids. For more information, call 616-988-8617 or e-mail [kybnman@yahoo.com](mailto:kybnman@yahoo.com).

## Survey deadline extended

FERNDALE—Affirmations' Multicultural Advisory Committee is extending the period of time in which to collect community perspectives on Affirmations' levels of racial and ethnic inclusion and to begin a series of focus groups. In total, 384 anonymous surveys were completed and included volunteers, community members, board and staff. The survey will be extended through Jan. 31, 2010 and is available on the homepage of Affirmations' website. "After an initial review of the data, we found that 90% of our anonymous community member respondents were Caucasian," said MAC member Tamara Halliburton. "In order to make the data effective, we'd like the racial breakdown to be reflective of our greater Detroit Metropolitan area." For more information, visit their website at [www.GoAffirmations.org](http://www.GoAffirmations.org).



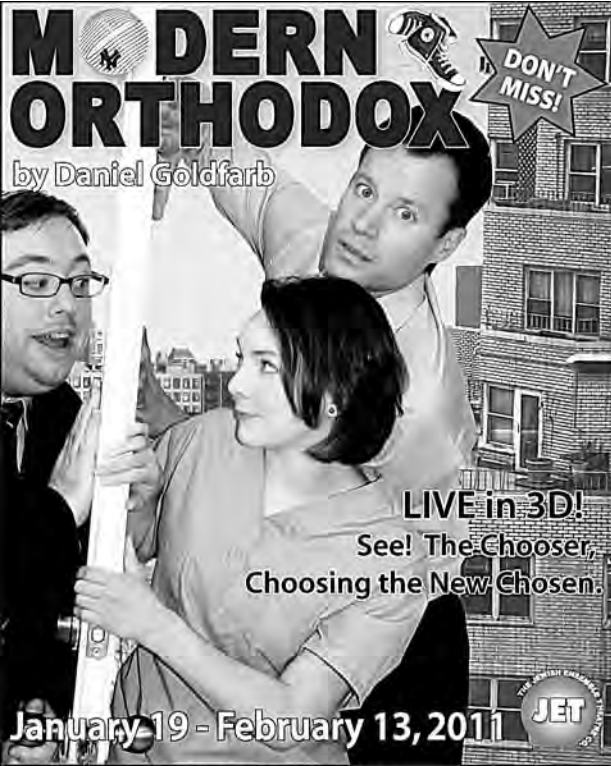
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 **Heard on Facebook**

**Do you think Sarah Palin's 'target map' influenced the Arizona shooter on Saturday?**

*Language always matters. And injecting imagery suggestive of violence doesn't help either.*

– Christine Trinh

*It's hard to say if Palin's target map directly influenced this act. But I'm sure that her "targets" helped to create an atmosphere of "us against them."*

– Brian McNitt

*Yes, along with teabaggin, rightwing radio & TV and Republican rhetoric.*

– Sam J. Cataldo

*You betcha!*

– Karen Nichols

*Until there's an investigation we won't know if the (alleged shooter Jared Lee) Loughner even KNEW OF the map, much less how much inspiration it provided. But the map and other rhetoric demonstrate the mindset of one side that violence (and images of violence) is acceptable in the public debate.*

– Alex Hardesty

*I believe it could have, considering that (Palin) also went to that district denouncing Giffords. Unfortunately, there were even more like Sharon Angle in the neighboring state, talking about using "second amendment" resolutions to get what you want. It really ticks me off when I hear Republicans criticizing the complaints as if they're being picked on. I haven't heard Democrats talking about "reloading" or using gun targets to "take out" the other party. They made their bed, let them lie in it.*

– George Borg

Comments have been edited for grammar and length.

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– *First Amendment, U.S. Constitution*

**S/he said**  
**Religion, HIV/AIDS**

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL

*"Perhaps the most important development (in 2010) is that we're zeroing in on who is at risk for HIV in America today – and why. And we're developing successful ways to help. It's critical that we do: Of the 1.2 million Americans estimated to be living with the virus, 21% don't know their status. In addition, more than 650,000 of them are not connected to care. Why is this true? Many people living with HIV in America today face a unique set of structural and lifestyle challenges, including, but not limited to: poverty, hunger; \under- or unemployment, illiteracy, racism, discrimination, immigration issues, homelessness, stigma, previous or current incarceration, sexual or domestic violence, homophobia, substance use, criminalization, addiction, and childcare and mental health issues. Much of what we have learned about fighting HIV has to be reconsidered in light of who is contracting the virus today and why."*

– Regan Hofmann, in an article titled "The POZ 100," POZ Magazine's list of 100 people it feels have whose work is having great impact on HIV/AIDS in the U.S. today, www.poz.com, December 2010.

*"Our campaign is driven from the perspective of a person living with HIV/AIDS. My life is dependent on my being optimistic. I have to believe I'm going to live. Optimism is required for people living with HIV/AIDS. Looking at HIV/AIDS through a*



**Phil Wilson**

*lens of yet another unsolvable problem in black communities is not going to help. We want to stop pathologizing HIV in a black context. We want to embrace the unbelievable history and journey of black people in America and to use that to inform how we think of HIV and how we fight the disease. This campaign is a call to action and says, 'If we were greater than all those things, we can be, we will be, we have to be greater than AIDS as well.' This campaign removes HIV/AIDS from the doom and gloom and turns it into a challenge that gives us a chance to once again be victorious."*

– Phil Wilson, CEO/founder, Black AIDS Institute, in an interview about the national AIDS awareness and testing campaign titled "Greater Than AIDS," www.poz.com, Jan/ Feb 2010 Issue.



**Rev. Emily C. Heath**

*"Recently I've been challenged... by people who feel I should transition. First and foremost, I am not male. I may have genderqueer tendencies, and I may enjoy playing in the middle of the two binary genders. It may make me masculine, but that is different than being male. ...Sometimes I feel frustrated. This may sound like sour grapes, but sometimes it feels like butches are the forgotten remnant of the queer community. Where is the same recognition for butches who also live with non-binary genders every day? This is not about transmen getting too much. This is about transmen finally starting to get the good things they deserve, and the hope that butches one day will as well."*

– Rev. Emily C. Heath, in her column titled "Claiming Butch Identity," www.bilerico.com, Jan. 05.



*"Savage: Scalia isn't gay?!? I always think the biggest homophobe in the room is clearly a c--ksucker! Lynch: Totally! The next religious person who tells you there's something wrong with being a homosexual, start the countdown. It's psychology 101—the people who are the loudest and hate it the most hate something in themselves."*

– Dan Savage (advice columnist) and Jane Lynch (actor), in an interview, asked about the possibility of an openly gay president or Supreme Court justice, www.newsweek.com, Dec. 20, 2010.



**Alberto Cutié**

*"There are so many homosexuals, both active and celibate, at all levels of clergy and Church hierarchy that the church would never be able to function if they were really to exclude all of them from ministry."*

– Alberto Cutié, former Catholic priest and now Episcopal priest, in his recently-released book titled "Dilemma: A Priest's Struggle with Faith and Love," expressing his discontent with the Catholic Church, www.miamiherald.com, Jan. 3.



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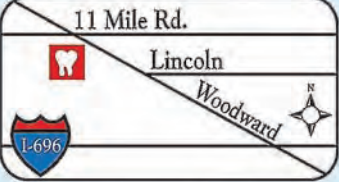
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## VIEWPOINT



## LGBT foster youth overlooked

In Detroit alone, as many as 800 homeless LGBT youth are on the streets on any given day, far more than we have the resources to handle.

## BTL EDITORIAL

## More than Palin to blame

After tragedy, people start pointing fingers. How else to understand why it happened? The Jan. 8 shooting in Arizona, that left Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords in critical condition and six dead, including a 9-year-old girl and a federal judge, is no different. No sooner had the shots been fired did we start pointing fingers at the incendiary and polarized political rhetoric – specifically Sarah Palin's map that showed gun crosshairs on 20 Democratic Congress members. Giffords was one of the politicians Palin targeted. The map has since been removed from Palin's Facebook page. Palin issued a statement that offered sympathy for the victims, and she has not commented on her target map.

But everyone else has. Countless media have offered answers to the question: Is it her fault?

The only real answer is that we don't know yet. We don't know what influenced the alleged shooter, Jared Lee Loughner. We have no idea what moved him to such violence.

We do know that he was a strange and troubled young man. He was kicked out of a community college for mental health issues. He tried to enlist in the U.S. Army, but was rejected. One of his hobbies was making anti-establishment videos on YouTube.

We also know that our political atmosphere has been increasingly inflammatory since the 2008 election, and it only continues to allow people like Palin a platform to dispense jaw-dropping, blood-boiling, misinformed or downright false statements on a regular basis.

In no way does Palin need any defending. Her idiocies are her responsibility. But if this tragedy brings to light the need for the political and media attitudes to be more reasonable, then it might be the only good that results from the violence.

We can blame the media for allowing talking heads like Palin to have platforms. We can blame the media for reporting on politics as if it were a football game, as if there were no real people affected from the point-mongering and political meandering that we have become accustomed to. We can blame the media for bias and inaccurate reporting.

We can also blame ourselves for being entertained by the news. We are not supposed to be entertained by the news; we are supposed to be informed.

We can also blame ourselves for being entertained by the news. We are not supposed to be entertained by the news; we are supposed to be informed. The fact that 24-hour news networks feel the need to fill their hours with obnoxious talking heads doesn't mean we have to watch or listen to them. The emotional high that comes from watching outrageous and fear-mongering news isn't something we have to become addicted to. We can choose to be smarter than that, even though it's not easy – especially when schools tend not to educate their students about the civic process, much less media literacy. It is a brave new world in journalism right now, and as media outlets hang on by the skin of their teeth, anything that garners Web site page views and TV ratings is what's news.

The media isn't about to correct itself, nor are politicians – no matter what they say during the aftermath of the tragedy. There will continue to be people like Palin around, as long as the media thinks there is the audience that's interested in hearing about her. It's up to us to tell the media we want fair, thoughtful news, and to tell our politicians to work towards solutions that fairly benefit us all.

We have no idea yet what propelled the unstable young man to such violence. But the collective unease we are feeling after the tragedy, whether we're a member of Congress, the media or just this country, is there for a reason: We can all do much better. And especially now, we must.

BY LAURA HUGHES

While we have made some progress in providing support and a safe environment for these young people, much more needs to be done.

One of the little-known facts about this nation's runaway and homeless youth population is that approximately 40% of those who are homeless or runaway are lesbian, gay, bi-attractional, transgender and questioning young people.

In many cases, these young people run away or become homeless after confronting a home or foster care situation that does not understand and cannot cope with the unique pressures and challenges these young people often confront.

As the only State of Michigan licensed child caring institution that specializes in LGBT youth – in fact as the only organization of our kind in the Midwest and one of three on the nation – we at the Ruth Ellis Center deal with this reality every day. In Detroit alone, as many as 800 homeless LGBT youth are on the streets on any given day, far more than we have the resources to handle. As a whole, this nation's human service network is woefully ill-prepared to deal with the unique challenges that these young people confront.

Society pays a very direct cost for this lack of an effective human service network for LGBT youth. A 2007 report from the Pew Charitable Trust and Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative determined that one in four young people will be incarcerated within two years after leaving the foster care system, and more than one-fifth will become homeless sometime after reaching 18 years of age. If considerations aren't made for LGBT youth, those statistics will only grow in the coming years.

Fortunately, some progress is being made in meeting the needs of the vulnerable segment of our youth population. In recent years, the Ruth Ellis Center has established a close working partnership with the State of

Michigan's Department of Human Services that recognizes our ability to identify the unique challenges that exist among LGBTQ youth and work with youth welfare organizations to identify appropriate and healthy living options for them.

Sadly, by the time young people are placed with us they already have experienced an average of four to five foster home placements and have been severely traumatized. When LGBTQ youth are placed in foster homes where parents don't understand their unique challenges, it puts that young person at an extreme disadvantage. The foster parent rarely receives information about resources in the LGBTQ community. Too often, the result is another run-away situation, homelessness or yet another foster home placement for the young person.

While we have made some progress in providing support and a safe environment for these young people, much more needs to be done. Comprehensive and inclusive policies need to be instituted that recognize LGBTQ youth. Staff, workers and health providers need to be trained for LGBTQ considerations. An ombudsman or work group needs to be created to review policies under an LGBTQ lens.

This is a time of hope in Michigan as a new administration has taken office dedicated to the need to reinvent our state. While much of the focus on the need for reinvention has focused on economic and job creation issues, there is a similar need for reinvention in our human service network, including programs that deal specifically with LGBTQ young people.

We are looking forward to working with the new leadership in the DHS to implement programs and policies that meet the needs of this vulnerable and significantly underserved population as we work together to build a better Michigan.

*Laura Hughes is the executive director of the Ruth Ellis Center, located in Highland Park.*



## Parting Glances Then & Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Some social scientists seem to feel that there's a higher than average number of gays who are lefties.

### !thgir ti od ,dik !yeH

I suggested to a school secretary that she might experience the frustration that a child goes through in the process of learning to write if she tried writing with her left hand. The secretary is right-handed.

To our mutual surprise we discovered that she's ambidextrous, and can write easily – rather legibly, too – with either hand. Few of us are so gifted.

The word ambidextrous really means having two right hands. Latin “dexter” means right, as in dexterity. (But not pathologically right as in the sense of the TV serial killer series. Pardon the gauche alliteration. Not very adroit.)

Latin “sinister” means left, and for centuries southpaws were considered evil. Diabolical. Joan of Arc was a lefty (and an armored crossdresser who heard voices). The devil was a lefty, too; and in some cultures the left hand is used only for toilet ministrations.

Of interest here perhaps is the psychological phenomenon known as automatic writing. Without conscious thinking on the part of the automatic writer, scribbles turn into sentences, sentences into messages. A few such mediumistic writers can use both hands, and, interestingly enough, get two separate messages, one for each hand. Unaware of both messages until read later.

When I went to Burton Elementary School way back when, my desk had an inkwell, and I used a pen with a metal tip to practice my block and cursive lettering. (Today, with computer use and TXTing, handwriting is rapidly becoming a lost means of communication.)

In my grade school if you were left-handed you were in for trouble. (Apple polishing, teacher's would-be pet or not.) Teachers often viewed these social lunkeheads as willfully obstinate. They “chose” to use the left hand.

Penalties for student southpaws included a knuckle rap with a ruler, sitting on the offending hand until numb, or having the beast with five fingers tied behind the back. Often a result of this pedagogical torture was a pronounced stammer. Actor Bruce Willis discovered that when he acted his teacher-induced stammer stopped.

(Just to keep the record, er, straight, I'm right handed. My problem as a grade schooler was talking, giggling, gum chewing. For these infractions of World War II behavior I did time in the cloakroom.)

Tennis champion Martina Navratilova, who went to school in Czechoslovakia, was luckier. As a child her teacher suggested she try using her right hand to avoid constantly ink staining her left hand fingers. It worked. No doubt this acquired talent later facilitated her aggressive net-charging style and 90 mph serve. (It did nothing for her palimony suit.)

Some social scientists seem to feel that there's a higher than average number of gays who are lefties. Alexander Hamilton, Cecil Beaton, Cary Grant, Greg Louganis, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Hans Christian Anderson, Anthony Perkins, Armistead Maupin, Melissa Etheridge, Cole Porter, Rock Hudson, George Michael, James Baldwin, John Cage, Divine, Harry Hay.

Hay, who was a co-founder of the Mattachine Society, one of the first human rights gay organizations, was forced by his father to use his right hand. His dad whipped him so hard for using his left member that Hay sustained permanent hearing loss in one ear.

As an adult Hay gave up being a conformist. He affirmed his left hand, and for a time also became a member of the Communist Party. How leftist can one get?

According to researchers, lefties can read backwards and upside down better than righties. Not that this is of any particular social advantage in gay bars. Says psychologist Dr. Lauren Harris, it indicates a higher degree of mental flexibility. “Lefties are superior in creativity, tonal memory, spacial ability, originality, and elaboration of thinking.”

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**Cindy Jacobs**

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Thanks to Fred Phelps and his Westboro Baptist thugs, everybody knows that God hates fags. But you know what else God hates? Birds and fish. Because of the fags.

At least that's what Cindy Jacobs says in a video she posted online Jan. 5.

Jacobs, along with her husband Mike, runs Generals International, a ministry "devoted to training in prayer and spiritual warfare." She calls herself a prophet and claims that people are always turning to her for insight when crazy shit happens.

Take, for instance, that whole alarming incident with the thousands of blackbirds falling dead out of the sky in Arkansas on New Year's Eve. Spooky. No one knows why it happened, or why three days later hundreds more blackbirds fell out of the sky in Louisiana. Or why a few days after that thousands of dead fish washed up on an Arkansas shore. But Jacobs has a good theory: the gays.

Not that the gays themselves killed the birds and fish, but that God killed the birds and fish because God was pissed off about gays, specifically the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell."

Jacobs says God killed the birds and fish because God was pissed off about gays, specifically the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell."

"According to biblical principles, marriage is between a man and a woman, so we have to say, 'What happens when a nation makes a decision that's against God's principles?'" she asks while wearing a purple leopard-print jacket. "Well, often what happens is that nature itself will begin to talk to us. And you know there are actually some patterns that you can see where a nation will make a decision that is contrary to the principles of God and after that there is some kind of answer that God gives – being the God of creation, the God who created nature."

The problem, however, is that "we don't always understand what he's saying." Which is where Jacobs comes in: to sort it all out for us and come to the sanest possible conclusion. Did I mention she calls herself a prophet?

"Let's talk about this Arkansas pattern and say, could it be a pattern? We're going to watch and see," she continues. "But the blackbirds fell to the ground in Beebe, Arkansas. Well the Governor of Arkansas' name is Beebe. And also, there was something put out of Arkansas called 'don't ask, don't tell' by a former Governor ... Bill Clinton."

She then asks if there could be a connection between the Hosea 4 in the Bible, where God gets pissed at folks in Israel who are killing and stealing and sleeping around and declares that everyone there is going to waste away and die along with all of the animals, including "the birds of the air" and "the fish of the sea."

"And so," Jacobs asks, "could there be a connection between (Hosea 4) and now that we've had the repeal of the 'don't ask, don't tell,' where people now legally in the United States have broken restraints with the Scripture because the Scripture says in Romans 1 that homosexuality is not allowed?"

Huh, could there be? Hey, I don't know, lady. You're the prophet.

"It could be because we have said it's okay for people who commit these kinds of acts to be recognized in our military for the first time in our history there is a potential that there is something that actually happened in the land where a hundred thousand drum fish died and also where these birds just fell out of the air," she says.

Sure. Because it totally makes sense that God would be all, "I don't want homos in the United States military! I am so pissed off I could kill a few thousand birds and some more thousand fish to teach those gays a lesson." And then school children could look on in horror and vow to never become gay soldiers. Amen.

**9th Circuit punts Prop 8 case to California Supremes**

BY REX WOCKNER

The federal case against California's Proposition 8 took an odd turn Jan. 4 when the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals punted the case to the California Supreme Court.

The federal court pronounced itself confused about whether the people who put Prop 8 on the ballot have legal "standing" to be at the federal appeals court defending Prop 8. The judges asked California's top court to take a look at state law and opine on that question.

The actual defendants in the case – the governor, attorney general, two county clerks and state health-department officials – have refused to defend the voter-passed constitutional amendment that re-banned same-sex marriage in California in 2008.

If the people who put Prop 8 on the ballot do not have a legal right to defend it before the 9th Circuit, then the federal District Court ruling that overturned Prop 8 last August likely would be allowed to take effect, bringing same-sex marriage back to California.

In its "Order Certifying a Question to the Supreme Court of California," the 9th Circuit judges explained: "Because we cannot consider this important constitutional question unless the appellants before us have standing to raise it ... it is critical that we be advised of the rights under California law of the official proponents of an initiative measure to defend the constitutionality of that measure upon its adoption by the

If the people who put Prop 8 on the ballot do not have a legal right to defend it before the 9th Circuit, then the federal District Court ruling that overturned Prop 8 last August likely would be allowed to take effect, bringing same-sex marriage back to California.

People when the state officers charged with the laws' enforcement, including the Attorney General, refuse to provide such a defense or appeal a judgment declaring the measure unconstitutional. As we are aware of no controlling state precedent on this precise question, we respectfully ask the Supreme Court of California to exercise its discretion to accept and decide the ... question."

The California Supreme Court is not required to answer the question or otherwise help the 9th Circuit judges be less confused, but may well opt to do so.

Also on Jan. 4, the 9th Circuit blocked Imperial County's attempt to intervene in the federal Prop 8 case as a defendant.

Lambda Legal said the 9th Circuit's attempt to punt the case to the California Supreme Court made sense.

"We hope the California Supreme Court takes up this procedural question

about initiatives and believe the federal court's action was entirely reasonable," said Lambda's National Marriage Project director, Jennifer Pizer.

Pizer said Lambda does not believe the people who put Prop 8 on the ballot should be allowed to appeal the District Court decision that struck it down.

"We do not believe California law does or should allow initiative proponents special power to drive litigation about measures they have supported," she said. "Prop 8's proponents are not personally affected by that initiative as none of them wants to marry a same-sex partner. And state law up to this point has never authorized political activists to usurp the role of the state's chief executive and top lawyer if the activists disagree with those duly elected officials' decision not to prolong litigation of a particular court case."

Same-sex marriage also is legal in Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Vermont and Washington, D.C.

**Marriage law threatened in New Hampshire**

BY REX WOCKNER

Even as Rhode Island legislators introduced a bill to legalize same-sex marriage on Jan. 6, fears are mounting that New Hampshire may be preparing to repeal its same-sex marriage law.

In the November elections, Republicans took control of both houses of the New Hampshire Legislature and they have enough seats to override vetoes by Democratic Gov. John Lynch.

Bills have been filed to repeal the

marriage-equality law and to amend the state constitution to prohibit same-sex couples from marrying.

"Republicans now have a veto-proof majority in the Legislature, and the newly elected House speaker, state Rep. Bill O'Brien, is a staunch opponent of marriage equality," said Lee Swislow, executive director of Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders.

Four Republican senators or 32 Republican house members would need to join every Democrat in one or the other

chamber to uphold a gubernatorial veto of any bill ending same-sex marriage. The Senate has 24 members, of whom 19 now are Republican, and the House has 400 members, of whom 298 are Republican.

The previous Legislature legalized same-sex marriage in June 2009 and the law took effect Jan. 1, 2010.

Same-sex marriage also is legal in Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Vermont and Washington, D.C.

**Activists to push Anchorage rights ordinance**

BY REX WOCKNER

Alaska's Equality Works coalition will attempt to pass a gay and transgender rights ordinance through the Anchorage Municipal Assembly this year.

The proposed law would ban discrimination based on sexual

orientation and gender identity in housing, employment and public accommodations.

Should the measure become law, anti-gay forces have vowed to attempt to repeal it via a ballot initiative.

Should the ordinance fail to pass the Assembly, LGBT activists will work to put it on the ballot in 2012 for approval

by voters.

A version of the ordinance passed the Assembly 7-4 in 2009 but was vetoed by Mayor Dan Sullivan, who said he wasn't convinced anti-gay discrimination exists.

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# Ugandan court rules for gays in outing case

Uganda's Kampala High Court ruled Jan. 3 that media outlets cannot out gays or urge that they be hanged.

The case stemmed from an October 2010 article in Uganda's Rolling Stone newspaper (no relation to the American publication of the same name) that published photos of 100 alleged homosexuals and suggested that gays could be hanged to discourage alleged recruitment of children.

The newspaper wrote: "The mighty Rolling Stone is glad to reveal some of the most horrible secrets in gay community, which is bent on recruiting at least one million members by 2012. Dishearteningly, gays are after young kids, who are easily brainwashed towards bisexual orientation ... The leaked pictures of Uganda's top homosexuals and lesbians have renewed calls for the strengthening of the war against the rampage that threatens the future of our generation by hanging gays. 'Unless government takes a bold step by hanging dozens of homosexuals, the vice will continue eating up

the moral fiber and culture of our great nation,' ... said a radical church leader who preferred anonymity."

Three people who were named sued the newspaper.

The High Court determined that the three suffered violations of their constitutional rights to life and to privacy of the person and the home.

"(P)ublishing the identities of the applicants and exposing their homes coupled with the explicit call to hang them because 'they are after our kids,' the respondents extracted the applicants from the other members of the community who are regarded as worthy, in equal measure, of human dignity and who ought to be treated as worthy of dignity and respect," the court said. "Clearly the call to hang gays in dozens tends to tremendously threaten their right to human dignity ... (T)he exposure, of the identities of the persons and homes of the applicants for the purposes of fighting gayism and the activities of gays, as can easily be seen

"Clearly the call to hang gays in dozens tends to tremendously threaten their right to human dignity ..."

— Uganda High Court

from the general outlook of the impugned publication, threaten the rights of the applicants to privacy of the person and their homes."

The court issued an injunction prohibiting publication of the identities and addresses

of homosexuals and awarded each plaintiff 1.5 million shillings (\$643) in damages, and payment of their court costs.

The Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law in Uganda "applaud(ed)" the decision "as a landmark in the struggle for the protection of human dignity and the right to privacy."

The group said the newspaper's behavior was no doubt influenced by the "climate of fear" created by the pending "Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2009" in Uganda's parliament.

The legislation would imprison for life anyone convicted of "the offense of homosexuality," punish "aggravated homosexuality" (repeat offenses, or having gay sex while being HIV-positive) with the death penalty, forbid "promotion of homosexuality" and incarcerate gay-rights defenders, and jail individuals in positions of authority for up to three years if they fail to report within 24 hours the existence of all LGBT people or sympathizers known to them.

## Married Mexican gay couples granted spousal health coverage

A Mexico City lesbian, married under the city's same-sex marriage law, won the right to insure her wife in the national health-care system.

In 2010, a judge ordered that Lol Kin Castañeda could register Judith Vázquez as her wife with the Mexican Institute of Social Security, the national health-care system.

The Secretariat of Labor and Social Security appealed the order several weeks ago, then reversed course this month and dropped the appeal.

The agency said its final determination in the matter also applies to other same-sex couples married in Mexico City, the only place in the nation where same-sex marriage has been legalized.

Gay couples married in Mexico City also are supposed to be recognized as married by all of Mexico's 31 states, in accord with a 2010 federal Supreme Court ruling, though the decision remains untested in most locations.

## Chilean court to rule on same-sex marriage

Following a referral from the Santiago Court of Appeals, Chile's Constitutional Court will take up a same-sex marriage case this week.

The court will consider a protection demand from MOVILH, the Homosexual Integration and Liberation Movement, and three same-sex couples who want the nation's opposite-

sex definition of marriage struck down on constitutional grounds.

The plaintiffs also seek to negate a law that blocks recognition of same-sex marriages entered into abroad.

MOVILH President Rolando Jiménez called the case a historic before-and-after moment for Chile's LGBT movement.

All three plaintiff couples seek to marry in Chile. In addition, one couple seeks recognition of their legal Canadian marriage, and another seek recognition of their legal Argentine marriage. The couples attempted to marry in Chile but were turned away by civil registry officials.

The lawsuit claims that Chile's ban on same-sex marriage and its refusal to recognize foreign same-sex marriages infringe a constitutional promise that all people "are born free and equal in dignity and rights" and a constitutional guarantee of "equal protection of the law in the exercise of rights," among other violations.

Should the Constitutional Court rule against same-sex marriage, activists plan to appeal to the Supreme Court and, if necessary, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

## Irish civil-partnership law comes into force

Ireland's new same-sex civil-partnership law took effect Jan. 1.

Couples can unite before a registrar after giving three months' notice of their intention to tie the knot.

Civil partners receive marriage rights and obligations in matters such as taxes, pensions, property, tenancy, inheritance, alimony, immigration and social benefits.

To end a partnership, a couple will go before a court and prove they've not lived together for two of the last three years.

The law also recognizes foreign same-sex unions and provides some rights for unregistered

couples who have lived together for at least five years.

Justice Minister Dermot Ahern called the law "one of the most important pieces of civil rights legislation to be enacted since independence."

"Persons in committed gay relationships who wish to share duties and responsibilities now have the choice to register their partnership and become part of a legal regime that fully protects them in the course of that partnership and, if necessary, on its termination," he said. "The new law recognizes and supports diversity."

An informational booklet on the registration process is available at [www.groireland.ie](http://www.groireland.ie).

## Top Russian judge insults Euro court ruling on gays

The chairman of Russia's Constitutional Court, Valery Zorkin, said Dec. 23 that the recent European Court of Human Rights decision that struck down Moscow City Hall's annual bans of gay pride celebrations disrespected Russian sensitivities, especially those of predominantly Islamic republics within the Russian Federation.

Zorkin accused the Euro court judges of sitting in a "glass building and throwing stones."

In a group of cases brought by Moscow Pride founder Nikolai Alekseev, the court determined that Moscow's pride bans violated guarantees of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the areas of freedom of assembly and association, right to an effective remedy and prohibition of discrimination.

Russia was ordered to pay Alekseev 12,000 euros (\$15,928) in damages and 17,510 euros in costs and expenses.

The ruling has not yet come into force, but will be finalized before next summer's sixth attempted Moscow pride parade. It is unknown if the city will accede to the decision.

## Malta fights trans marriage

Malta's attorney general is appealing a ruling that transgender woman Joanne Cassar must be allowed to marry her boyfriend.

The constitutional arm of the First Hall of the Civil Court had ruled that European Law and European Court of Human Rights decisions establish the right of post-operative transgender people to enter into an opposite-sex marriage as a member of their new sex.

Cassar is no longer engaged but will continue to pursue the case.

## UK to expunge gay sex 'crimes'

The United Kingdom is preparing legislation to expunge the "crimes" of adult men who were prosecuted for having consensual sex with adult men in earlier eras.

The slate will be wiped clean for men whose partners were at least 16 years old.

At present, such "crimes" must be disclosed when applying for certain jobs or volunteer positions.

England and Wales decriminalized gay sex in 1967 for people over age 21, lowered the age to 18 in 1994 and lowered it to 16, the age that applies to heterosexual sex, in 2000.

Scotland and Northern Ireland decriminalized gay sex in the early 1980s. The subsequent age reductions applied to all four UK political entities.

The slate will be wiped clean for men whose partners were at least 16 years old.

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# Reichen Lehmkuhl candidly talks reality TV regrets, DADT and ex Lance Bass' career copycats

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Some people had a hard time sitting through “The A-List: New York,” Logo’s tawdry teledoc about a gay gaggle that got eye-roll reactions from viewers who couldn’t completely look away. Imagine starring in it.

Reichen Lehmkuhl, the show’s punching bag for nasty names, looks back with regret that you didn’t see him like you should have. But he’s learned to get on with his life and focus his attention on the future – one that includes a film based on his first book (a follow-up to 2006’s “Here’s What We’ll Say: Growing Up, Coming Out, and the U.S. Air Force” is in the works) and exploring other avenues of his bottomless ambition as a political activist, model, musician and jeweler (seriously: he has his own line).

Before heading to Ice Nightclub in Hamtramck on Jan. 15 with his beau Rodiney Santiago, who also starred in “A-List,” Lehmkuhl caught up with *Between The Lines*. The 37-year-old got personal about his hurt feelings, how the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” affected him, his book-turned-movie, and his take on ex-boyfriend Lance Bass seemingly copying his career.

## What goes down at these club appearances you make?

I sign some autographs and I basically just talk to people; that’s my favorite thing to do. I hug everybody and say thanks for supporting me. Everyone always has a story or something to say, and it’s nice to hear how they relate to you. And it’s face-to-face, not the cowardly stuff that goes on in blogs.

## People’s balls get significantly smaller in person.

It’s amazing how cruel a human being can become when they’re anonymous. I pretty much live my life without saying anything mean about anybody, and I marvel at what it must be like to sit down and just find someone you don’t know and say the meanest things you possibly can. I can’t even imagine what it must feel like to be that kind of person.

## Do you look online for buzz about you?

I used to. I used to care, and after a few years you realize it doesn’t matter and that it’s just a handful of people who are negative that are actually drawn to those kinds of blogs and websites. The majority of people are normal.

## When you make public appearances, what do people ask you most?

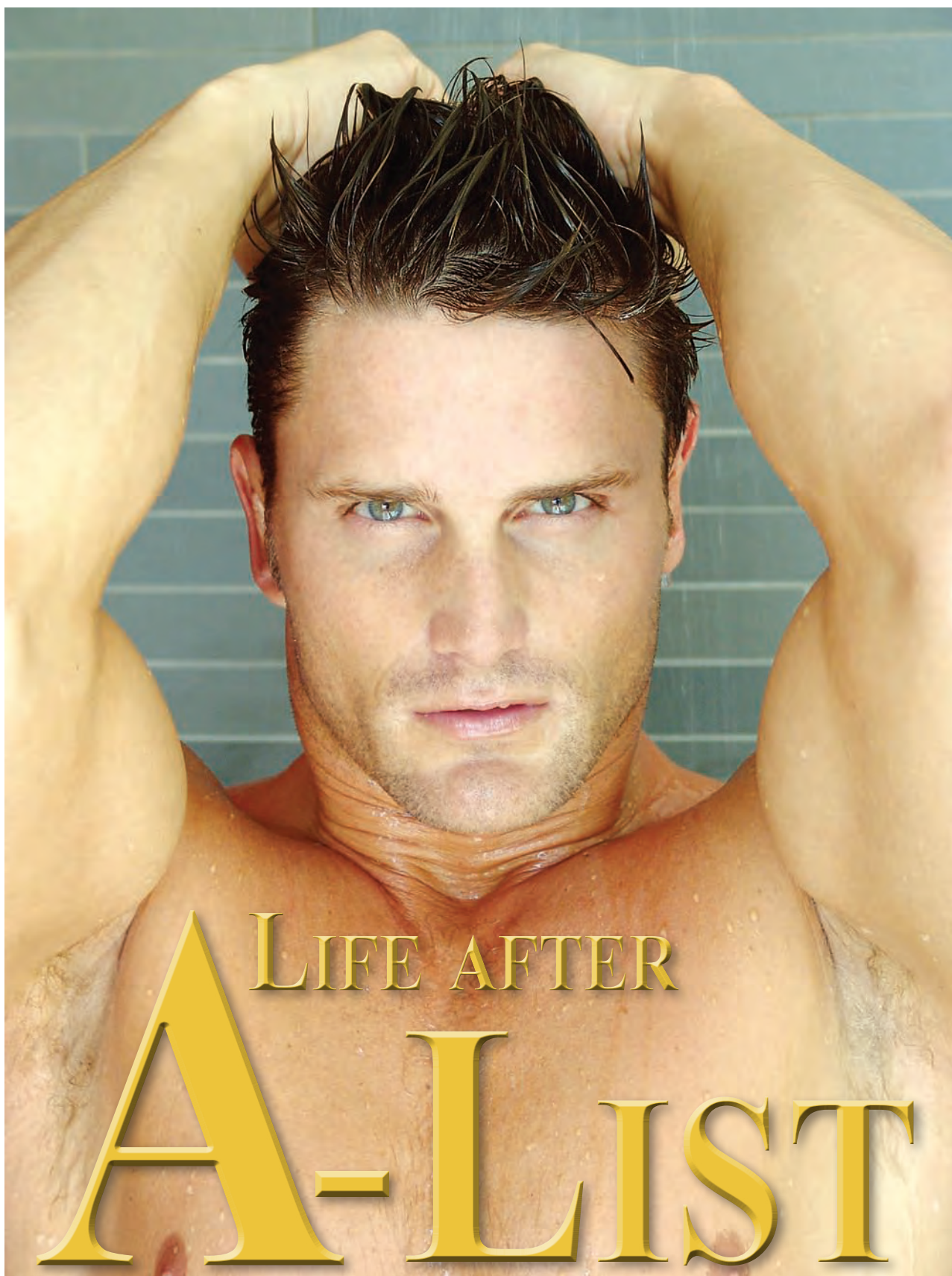
A lot of people ask me about my book, because it has an ending that kind of leaves a lot of questions up in the air – and I did that because I wanted to write a second book, which I’m working on now. Lots of people ask me, if they’ve read the book, “What actually happens to these characters?”

Other than that, I get a lot of political people, which I love because I’m a pretty political guy, so I love when people ask me about “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” And then some people just say, “I’ve met you before,” or “My mom’s met you.” (Laughs)

## As someone personally affected by “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” how did you feel when you heard it was repealed?

There are no words to describe how I felt. It was 3:30 on the East Coast on Dec. 18, and I’ll never forget it: I had a few friends over here, we were watching C-SPAN like it was the Super Bowl.

The verdict really lit a new fire under me for the integration of LGBTQ people in the military, because now we have ground to stand on to get this done, and I feel like it’s just the beginning of integration. Now it’s really up to our community to really watch like hawks these people who are integrating the military and to make sure they do it correctly; if they do it too slowly, if they do it right and if they don’t enforce it the way it should be enforced,



we need to watch for that. We really need to be careful not to say, “Oh, that’s all done,” and wash our hands of it.

## If this repeal had taken place while you were serving in the military, how do you think it would’ve affected you?

Oh man – at this point, if I were still in, I would be so anxious about when I could come out, and I think I would probably be leading the barrage to get every service-member who is gay to come out now. The more people who come out, the bigger problem they have with keeping us in.

There’s an estimated 60,000 to 70,000 LGBT troops serving right now, and that’s just people who’ve admitted it on survey forms. If all those people came out, it would send really big waves through the squadrons and it would just normalize everything. It would say, “Hey, we’re here, everything’s cool. I’m the same guy you’ve known, but if you ask what I did this past weekend you’re going to hear the truth rather than a lie.”

I really wish I could go back in right now. I don’t know if it was a moment of insanity or a moment of nostalgia, but I thought, “I wonder if I could investigate what it would be like for me to go back into the military and serve again.” But then I

thought I would be a captain still, because I got out as a captain, and I would be 10 years older than all the other captains. That might be a little weird, but the thought’s crossed my mind.

## Regarding Obama, you’ve said he’s failed you. Does the repeal of DADT restore your faith in him?

No, because he didn’t do anything to make it happen. And the thing is, when President Obama had his justice department appeal the decision of the court ruling to end the ban, which he was under no obligation to do, he risked having this policy maybe another two years, maybe another six years if we didn’t get it passed just now.

If there wasn’t so much hype from everybody who was screaming – from me to all my friends on Twitter to all these huge organizations that we’ve spent entirely too much money to support because of this crap and this horrible ban – and if that hadn’t happened in the lame-duck session, we would be screwed.

So yeah, I still have no faith in him, because he brought us to that point. I hear all these excuses being made for him, but I’m not going to apologize for him because I’m a Democrat.

See Reichen, page 22

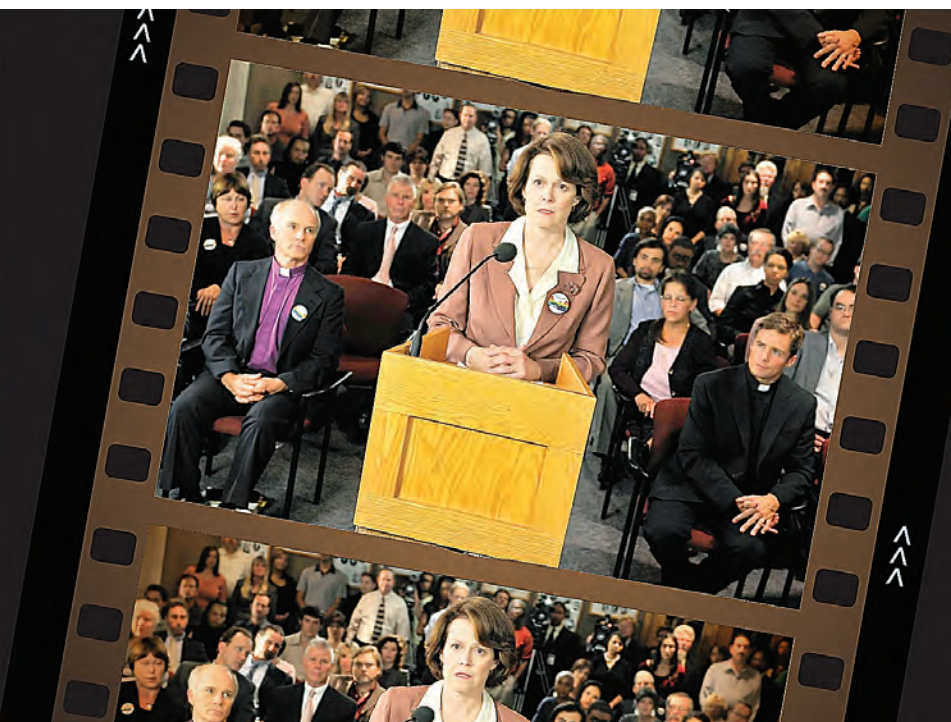
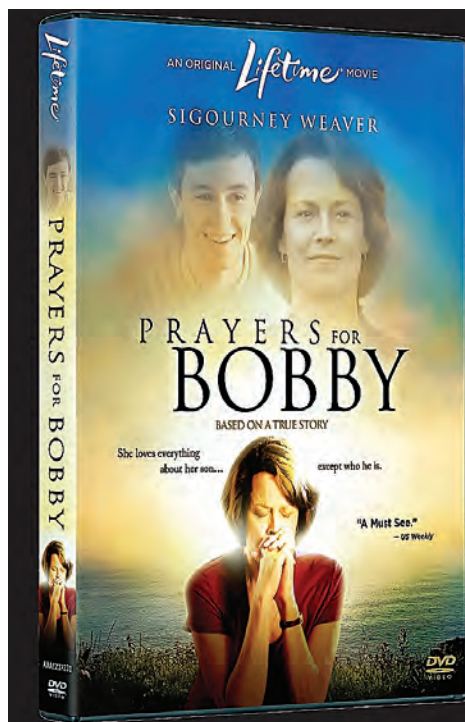
# 'Prayers for Bobby' + 'Easy A' = Two for tolerance

## 'Prayers for Bobby'

The harrowing book-turned-biopic about a gay teen's struggle for acceptance that led to his tragic suicide was heartbreaking on its own. But then Bobby's story became a reality for kids everywhere, as a string of them took their own lives last year, soon after the film aired on Lifetime in January (it was shot in parts of metro Detroit in 2008).

"Prayers for Bobby," based on Leroy Aarons' 1996 book set 17 years earlier, is a brutal retelling of a gay teenager (a commendable Ryan Kelley) driven to suicide by his narrow-minded, overprotective, devout Catholic mother. In the Emmy-nominated role is Sigourney Weaver, who plays Mary Griffith with an arresting rawness that devastates, angers and ultimately inspires. She's relentlessly stubborn over Bobby's homosexuality, pushing him to butch up, seek therapy and pray away the gay. When he can't, he throws himself off a highway overpass, sending Mary into a tailspin that's gut-wrenchingly real.

She sees her dead son in dreams, sobs in a bathroom stall, stares blankly into still air – every one of those scenes, meant to tug hard at the heartstrings, is powerfully played in one of the strongest performances of Weaver's career. But like many made-for-TV movies, "Prayers for Bobby" doesn't go



deep enough; it's a rather simplistic portrayal of one life's harshest realities, ending in a turnaround that seems almost too easy. But its message is clear and heartfelt – so even if it's not a perfect film, "Prayers for Bobby"

is an important one. Moreover, there's an intriguing pool of **EXTRAS**, especially for local Detroiters: a behind-the-scenes feature, taking us back to Royal Oak for the pivotal parade scene; cast interviews, including

Weaver talking on-set about the role and her gay friends whom offered insight into coming out; and a few minutes with the real-life Mary Griffith.

See DVD Low-down, page 22

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# 'Cell 13' – tale of an unhokey pokey

BY JOHN QUINN

Literature is full of egotistical smarty pants amateurs who can solve mysteries on brain power alone. Best known are Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and Edgar Allen Poe's C. Auguste Dupin, who cleared up the mystery of the murders in the Rue Morgue. Less well known is Professor Augustus S. F. X. Van Dusen, the "Thinking Machine," brainchild of American writer Jacques Futrelle. That's a pity, since Futrelle is as interesting a character as his literary creation. His career was cut short at 37 when he went down with the Titanic. Futrelle was one of the heroes who refused a seat on the lifeboats in the gentlemanly tradition of "women and children first."

Broadway Onstage in Eastpointe is mounting an original adaptation of one of Futrelle's most gripping stories, "The Problem of Cell 13." When Charles

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Ransome (Donald Couture), warden of Chisholm Prison, debunks the professor's claim that nothing is impossible through the power of the mind, our petulant hero bets he can break out of the prison's Death Row in a week. He succeeds. It wouldn't be much of a story if he didn't, right? In this instance, getting there is MORE than half the fun!

John Arden McClure was inspired to bring Futrelle to the stage and gets the opportunity to play his own hero, Van



Patrick O'Lear as Fielding, John Arden McClure as Professor S.F.X. Van Dusen and Donald Couture as Warden Ransome in "The Problem of Cell 13." Photo: Broadway Onstage

Dusen. Under the capable direction of company founder Dennis Wickline, this combination actually works. McClure's love for the character shines through in his performance.

To read the complete review, log on to ... [www.EncoreMichigan.com](http://www.EncoreMichigan.com) or [PrideSource.com](http://PrideSource.com)

# Pigeon Creek makes merry with Shakespeare

BY BRIDGETTE M. REDMAN

In the hands of the indifferent, Shakespeare's comedies can be dreadfully dull.

In the hands of the passionate, however, they shine with a magnificence beyond compare.

The Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company falls firmly in the category of the passionate. A professional touring ensemble, they are taking "The Merry Wives of Windsor" to several performance venues on the west side of the state from now through the end of February.

Their opening night in Grand Rapids Thursday celebrated all the raucous joy that a Shakespearean comedy can engender. The ensemble arrived prepared and fully committed. The cast's unity created an on-stage chemistry where every particle synthesized according to plan, adapting instantly to the inevitable variations found in live performances.

While there may be an infinite number of stories and interpretations in each of

**R E V I E W**

**'The Merry Wives of Windsor'**

Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company at Dog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. Thursday-Sunday through Jan. 16. \$12. [www.dogstorytheater.com](http://www.dogstorytheater.com)

Shakespeare's plays, throwing too many variations into the alchemical mix corrupts the lead and veils the gold. Pigeon Creek elected instead to perform in accord, harmonizing brilliantly so that each actor was committed to telling the same story. Even in those few spots where there were line bobbles, all on stage worked together to rescue each other and keep the story barreling along at the pre-determined madcap pace.

Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company performs under the philosophy of "original practices." In their hands, "original



Actors Katherine Mayberry, Scott Wright and Kathleen Bode in "The Merry Wives of Windsor." Photo: Joel L. Schindlbeck.

practices" represented an authentic philosophy, not merely an attempt to do Shakespeare on the cheap. Rather they challenged each of the practices and found ways to make it work so that the practices enlightened the story rather than forcing the story to mold to the philosophy.

To read the complete review, log on to ... [www.EncoreMichigan.com](http://www.EncoreMichigan.com) or [PrideSource.com](http://PrideSource.com)

# MBT's '39 Steps' has its ups and downs

BY JENN MCKEE

At the start of "The 39 Steps" – now having its Michigan premiere at Meadow Brook Theatre – the main character, Richard Hannay (Rusty Mewha), is briskly rolled onto the stage in an armchair and soon declares that he plans to battle his boredom by going to the theater.

Of course, he says this to a crowd of theatergoers, who seek the very same escape from reality. But do they get it? Well, in the spirit of "Steps," John Buchan's novel that was made into an on-screen suspense classic by Alfred Hitchcock, you'll just have to keep reading to find out.

Hannay's tale of intrigue begins at the theater, where he meets, and takes home, a

**R E V I E W**

**'The 39 Steps'**

Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Wednesday-Sunday through Jan. 30. \$30-\$39. 248-377-3300. [www.mbtheatre.com](http://www.mbtheatre.com)

mysterious woman (Stephanie Wahl) with a thick accent and top secret information. When she dies in Hannay's arms, he flees to Scotland to follow her instructions and clear his name. But this only sends Hannay further down this underworld rabbit hole.

But the stage version of "Steps" never takes itself too seriously. Constantly drawing attention to its theatrical artifice

– through self-conscious gestures (like the actors turning a door around to connote being inside a place rather than outside it), gags, and three actors playing multiple roles – the show means to be a silly romp.

And director Travis W. Walter stages certain parts of the show very well. A train scene, for example, pretty much has everything you could want: Hannay kissing a stranger in an attempt to hide his identity; a pantomimed, fun, train car-straddling chase; and several cleverly orchestrated, on-stage changes by the show's primary character chameleons, Kevin Young and Rob Pantano.

To read the complete review, log on to ... [www.EncoreMichigan.com](http://www.EncoreMichigan.com) or [PrideSource.com](http://PrideSource.com)

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► Reichen

Continued from p. 17

**How is it balancing serious stances on issues like DADT and then doing a reality show like "A-List"?**

(Laughs) It's really hard, because with a show like "A-List" the cameras are on us for five months – 3,600 hours over the summer just of me – and you probably saw, over 10 episodes, maybe three hours. Imagine what they can do.

I tell people, "Don't talk to me about editing until you've done a reality TV show, because you don't know what you're talking about." Out of 3,600 hours, you take three hours of that and you make a person whatever you want them to be. A show like "A-List" doesn't want to show anything that's boring and not what people are tuning in for. They want the things that are sensationalized, and we understand. We signed up for this and we understand what they're going to do. I wish I could just tell people, "That's not the way it is." But you look even more stupid sticking up for yourself, so I've learned to just let it go.

**You were called lots of nasty names for your behavior on the show. How do you feel about the way Logo cast you?**

It hurts. If it didn't hurt, I think there'd be something wrong with me. I see myself differently. Clearly when I look at my life I see myself being raised in a trailer park and breaking into a successful military career, serving my country and graduating from the Air Force Academy.

After getting out and writing a book that sticks up for our entire community and cries out for help from everyone to get rid of a policy that's going to help a lot of other anti-gay policies fall, to see anyone in the community turn around and call me a douche bag, it just makes me say, "Wow." I watch "A-List" with different eyes, I'm sure. I guess if I were watching the show from those people's eyes, maybe I would think I was a douche bag, too.

**You said you're surprised by some of the reactions, but you also said you knew what you were getting into. Do you have regrets about doing the show? Would you do a second season?**

Umm... I don't know. They haven't even said yet if there will be a second season, so we haven't really thought about it yet. I think that there are definitely some regrets. There are moments when I think, "Wow, we shouldn't have even given them that." A show can make you look like you're hitting on someone in a club, but the



editing doesn't let you see that it's your friend of 13 years. (Laughs) Suddenly, you're hitting on someone in the club because you're having a conversation and saying it's too bad someone's leaving the next day. That's terrible, and it's hard.

Even doing my song ("Up to the Sky," a DADT protest tune), the show showed the one moment where I really screwed up, and anyone who's a singer screws up. They took that and ran it over and over and over, and it ruined any credibility that I had to sing or to have a song or to try to do something good. You see the tragic part, and that's it.

Had I known it was going to be so negative, I wouldn't have done any of that on camera. I would've kept it as a very private part of my life and just released a song on my own, because now a lot of people won't even download the

song. They're judging it based on what they saw on the TV show.

**Would you like to continue to pursue music?**

Um, yeah. I think I'd love to record more songs. I play the guitar all the time. I've been playing the guitar since I was 7, but the show makes it look like I am 7. (Laughs) If I did record more songs, I would never ever do it on the show. It was a humiliating experience for me when I set out for it to be really great project from the heart and to make a difference.

**Your book's being turned into a film, and names like Chace Crawford and Taylor Lautner are allegedly being considered for the lead. Who would you want to play you?**

You know what, it's not my call. I want

**The A-List Party**

with Reichen and Rodiney

Doors 10 p.m. Jan. 15  
Ice Nightclub, 11425 Joseph Campau St.,  
Hamtramck, 313-365-1446  
www.icedetroit.net

whomever the casting director says should play me. Those are names that were on the shortlist and that are on a list, and there are a lot of other great names –

**Like who?**

Well, that's the thing. That's not something I'm going to talk about yet, because it's pointless. I'm not going to give names of people who aren't even going to be involved in the project.

**My vote's for Taylor Lautner. He has your abs.**

(Laughs) It would be interesting. All the people that casting has lined up are great actors or up-and-coming actors who I would love to see play a gay role.

**Whomever plays you, it must just be cool to have a movie made about your life.**

I don't even think about it being made about my life. The main character is not named Reichen, it's not like that. It's a story based on my life, and the lead of the movie is going to represent what happened to every gay cadet that was in the Air Force Academy.

**I'm wondering how you feel about certain people also making movies about their lives. And, you know, taking over a role that was once yours in a play called "My Big Gay Italian Wedding."**

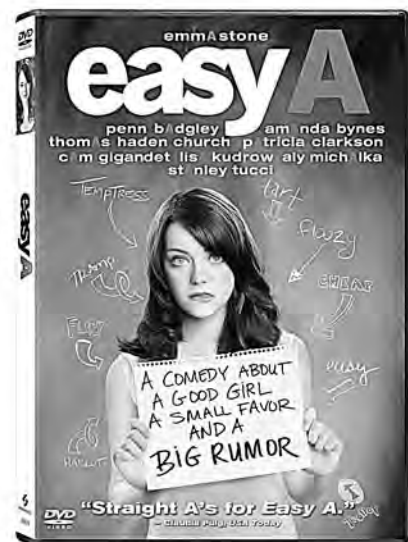
(Coyly laughing) Um. You know, I don't even care. I just don't care. I hear chatter, and I wish Lance very well.

**Will you see his movie when it comes out?**

(Laughs) Maybe if I'm invited I'll go see it. I mean, I'm not against it. I have no ill-will toward him.

**But didn't you at one point?**

I think when people break up they break up for a reason. Usually those reasons are confined to personal space, and we were in a more public situation – so things got out and made it look like more than it was. Our relationship was a couple of months, and it was so long ago. "A-List" made it look like we just dated; it's ridiculous. That's ancient history.



► DVD Low-down

Continued from p. 18

**'Easy A'**

Being gay in high school is hard, but not with someone like Olive around. From invisible student to super slut, she's on the fast lane to popularity after she fibs about losing her virginity and it goes viral. Now she's open for business, and her first customer is the teased queer kid. So Olive (Emma Stone, Golden Globe-nominated for her role) fake sleeps with him. Soon she's the school's best (non) lay who's giving it up to all the outcasts and collecting some gift cards in the process.

It's a star-making vehicle for Stone ("Superbad," "Zombieland"), a salty presence who's easy... and easy to fall in love with. She's got wit to spare, priceless scheming, irresistible charm and the kind of played-up innocence that propels her wannabe antics into outlandish hilarity (in reality she's smart, nerdy and has a penchant for pop music – even though she tries to deny it).

From bedding Brandon, the gay kid who you know has no chance in hell of achieving heterosexual status (one long joke during the pretend put-out), to wickedly mocking her school's good Christian girl (Amanda Bynes) who turns against Olive to spite her "slutiness," the laughs linger long after the scenes wrap. Even her freewheeling parents, played by Stanley Tucci and Patricia Clarkson, crank up the cackles

every time they're onscreen, either jesting their daughter for having a gay boyfriend or, in her father's case, admitting he was once gay (this probably isn't news to Mom; she slept with "mostly men" in school).

As teen comedies go, "Easy A" is right up there with "Clueless" and "Mean Girls." It's not only funny, but it's also sharp, gayed-up, fresh despite its obvious '80s influences, and an interesting twist on tolerance and self-actualization. And, best of all, it stars Stone, who's on her way to becoming the Molly Ringwald of the 21st century. On the EXTRAS, she proves even more likable with a commentary she shares with director Will Gluck. There are also bloopers and some audition footage – from Stone's bed. Hey, did we mention how much we love this chick?

## EDITOR'S PICK

At only 26, Johnny Weir has led anything but a boring life. His impressive abilities on the ice and his passion for fashion have made him a household name. He's judged on "Skating with the Stars," taught Kathy Griffin how to skate on her hit TV show and raised funds and awareness for the Trevor Project during the height of 2010's gay teen suicides. He even has a hit reality show of his own on Logo. In short, he's a gay icon.

Now he tells all in his recently released autobiography, "Welcome to My World." On Jan. 17, Weir will appear at the E. Liberty location of Borders in Ann Arbor at 5 p.m. and at Schuler Books and Music in Lansing at 8 p.m. to sign copies of the book. Visit [figureskatersonline.com/johnnyweir](http://figureskatersonline.com/johnnyweir) for more information.



## OUTINGS

### Wednesday, Jan. 12

**TransCend**, 6:30 p.m. Open to persons 18 and older. Younger are welcome with parent or guardian permission. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer Street, **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. [tracy@kgllrc.org](mailto:tracy@kgllrc.org)

### Thursday, Jan. 13

**The Caregiver Support Group**, 6 p.m. For more information please call or E-mail. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer Street, **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. [tracy@kgllrc.org](mailto:tracy@kgllrc.org)

**Meet 'n Greet**, 7 p.m. A meeting for LGBT and allied people ages 18-33 for dinner, drinks and conversation. 20 Somethings, 222 E. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. [the20somethings.org](http://the20somethings.org)

### Friday, Jan. 14

**Living Positive**, 6:30 p.m. A documentary and dialogue on women living with HIV. RSVP by phone. Michigan Woman and AIDS Committee, 24760 W. Seven Mile Road, **Detroit**. 313-876-0980. [robersonan@detroitmi.gov](mailto:robersonan@detroitmi.gov)

**Womyn's Film Night**, 7 p.m. Film: Guardians of the Frontier. College students Alja, Simona and Zana go on a canoe trip down the Kolpa River in this edgy thriller billed as a female version of Deliverance. Affirmations, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org)

### Saturday, Jan. 15

**Pancake Breakfast**, 10 a.m. Breakfast followed by AA meeting with open speaker. Tickets: \$8. Together We Can, 2441 Pinecrest, **Ferndale**. [twcdetroit.com](http://twcdetroit.com)

**Partnerships in Parenting**, 1 p.m. Promoting the importance of relationship and family development for LGBTQ parents and their children. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 734-574-5953. [ky.intimates@gmail.com](mailto:ky.intimates@gmail.com). [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org)

### Sunday, Jan. 16

**PFLAG Support Group Meeting**, Chris Armstrong, Student Body Assembly President at U of M, will be speaking. St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 306 N. Division, **Ann Arbor**. 734-641-0659. [www.pflagaa.org](http://www.pflagaa.org)

### Tuesday, Jan. 18

**Transgender Partner Support Group**, 6 p.m. A support group for partners. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer Street, **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. [kgllrc.org](http://kgllrc.org)

### Wednesday, Jan. 19

**Interactive Social Group**, 5:15 p.m. +18 social group, meeting for conversation, speakers, and game nights. LGBT In the Park, Nine Mile Road and John R Road, **Hazel Park**. 248-460-3251. [jfryoliver@yahoo.com](mailto:jfryoliver@yahoo.com)

### Friday, Jan. 21

**Womyn's Film Night**, 7 p.m. Film: Gaudi Afternoon. Cassandra, a solitary writer in Barcelona (a US ex-pat) gets a call for help from a stranger--a stylish woman named Frankie--who wants Cassandra to find her husband. Affirmations, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org)

### Saturday, Jan. 22

**Metro Detroit LGBT Softball League**, "MDSL Softball Party" Monthly party. Karaoke, drinks, food. Everyone is welcome to attend. Sneakers Pub 22628 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. 586-945-4029. [cchwarren@aol.com](mailto:cchwarren@aol.com)

### Friday, Jan. 28

**Womyn's Film Night**, 7 p.m. Film: Desi's Looking for a New Girl. When Desi's lover moves out of their apartment after falling for another woman, heartbroken Desi can't make a connection with any woman she meets. Affirmations, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org)

### Friday, Feb. 4

**Bisexual Peer Group**, 7 p.m. Bisexual social group. All are welcome. Bisexual Peer Group, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734 6782478. [BiPrideAnnArbor@gmail.com](mailto:BiPrideAnnArbor@gmail.com)

### Wednesday, Feb. 9

**TransCend**, 6:30 p.m. Open to persons 18 and older. Younger are welcome with parent or guardian permission. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer Street, **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. [tracy@kgllrc.org](mailto:tracy@kgllrc.org)

### Saturday, Feb. 12

**Partner Yoga**: A Romantic Workshop for Couples to Celebrate Valentine's Day, 2:30 p.m. No Yoga experience necessary. Diversity honored: all couples, ages & skill levels welcomed. Tickets: \$60 per couple; \$5 discount if registered by Feb. 5. Register by phone or e-mail. Partner Yoga, 220 S Main St, **Ann Arbor**. 248-981-6858. [annarborterneryoga@gmail.com](mailto:annarborterneryoga@gmail.com)

## MUSIC & MORE

### CLASSICAL

**The Whiting** "Moscow Festival Ballet: Swan Lake" Tickets: \$17-\$39 The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley, Flint 8 p.m. Jan. 15. 810-237-7333. [TheWhiting.com](http://TheWhiting.com)

**The Whiting** "Colin Mochrie & Brad Sherwood" Tickets: \$25-\$50 The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley, Flint 8 p.m. Jan. 22. 8102377333. [TheWhiting.com](http://TheWhiting.com)

**Flint Symphony Orchestra** "From the Eternal City" Performing works by Corelli, Verdi and Mahler. Tickets: \$8-\$55. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley, Flint 8 p.m. Jan. 29. 810-238-1350. [themif.org](http://themif.org)

**UMMA "Kafka Fragments"** Professors Freda Hersheth, and Andrew Jennings, present György Kurtá's 1986 Kafka Fragments. Apse, 525 South State Street, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Jan. 22. 734-763-UMMA. [umma.umich.edu](http://umma.umich.edu)

### CONCERTS

**Olympia Entertainment** "Rain" A tribute to the Beatles, part of the My Foxtown Theater Series. Tickets: \$30-75. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 7-Jan. 22. [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

**Motor City Casino "Macy Gray"** Tickets \$35-\$50. Motor City Casino's Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave, Detroit. 8 p.m. Jan. 28. 866-752-9622. [motorcitycasino.com/eventdetail.aspx?contentid=1592](http://motorcitycasino.com/eventdetail.aspx?contentid=1592)

**Olympia Entertainment** "New Jack Swing" Starring Heads of State, En Vogue, Tony! Toni! Toné!, Sisters With Voices. Tickets: \$49-79. Fox Theater, 2211 Woodward, Detroit. 8 p.m. Jan. 29. 313-471-6611. [olympiaentertainment.com](http://olympiaentertainment.com)

### DANCE

**Eisenhower Dance Ensemble** "NewDANCEfest IX" An evening of contemporary dance. Tickets: \$8-\$16. Troy Center for the Performing Arts, 4777 Northfield Parkway, Troy. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 14. 248-559-2095. [ede-dance.org](http://ede-dance.org)

### FILM & VIDEO

**Olympia Entertainment** "Our Vietnam Generation" Film Premiere" Tickets: \$25-\$35. Fox Theater, 2211 Woodward, Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 28. 313-471-6611. [olympiaentertainment.com/events/eventDetail.jsp?id=4204](http://olympiaentertainment.com/events/eventDetail.jsp?id=4204)

**Sundance Film Festival U.S.A.** "Sundance Film Festival Encore" Nine filmmakers and their films will be dispatched from Park City to cities across America. Tickets: \$15. Michigan Theater, 603 E Liberty Street, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Jan. 27. 734-668-TIME. [michtheater.org](http://michtheater.org)

### OTHER

**Detroit Derby Girls** "Detroit Derby Girls" Tickets \$15-20 Cobo Arena, 301 Civic Center Drive, Detroit. Dec. 18-April 16. 313-471-6606. [detroitderbygirls.com](http://detroitderbygirls.com)

**North American International Auto Show** "North American International Auto Show" Experience the next generation of transportation at the 2011 North American International Auto Show. Tickets: \$6-\$12 Cobo Center, Washington Blvd, Detroit. Jan. 15-Jan. 23. 313-877-8777. [naiaas.com](http://naiaas.com)

## THEATER

### CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

**1940's Radio Hour** \$17. The Village Players, 34660 Woodward Ave., Birmingham. Jan. 21-Feb. 6. 248-644-2075. [birminghamvillageplayers.com](http://birminghamvillageplayers.com)

**Ain't Misbehavin'** \$18-\$22. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Parish Theatre, 426 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo. Jan. 14-Jan. 30. 269-343-1313. [kazooicivic.com](http://kazooicivic.com)

**Almost, Maine** \$14. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Jan. 13-23. 517-482-5700. [riverwalktheatre.com](http://riverwalktheatre.com)

**Canton One Acts Festival** \$10. TLC Productions at The Village Theatre at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Rd., Canton. Jan. 21-23. 734-394-5300. [tlcprod.wordpress.com](http://tlcprod.wordpress.com)

**See How They Run** \$15. Players Guild of Dearborn, 21730 Madison Street, Dearborn. Jan. 14-30. 313-561-TKTS. [playersguildofdearborn.org](http://playersguildofdearborn.org)

**Wait Until Dark** \$16-\$18. Stagecrafters, Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Jan. 14-30. 248-541-6430. [stagecrafters.org](http://stagecrafters.org)

### COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY THEATER

**Night Blooming** \$15. Eastern Michigan University Theatre, Quirk Dramatic Arts Building, E. Circle Drive & Best Hall, Ypsilanti. Jan. 19-23. 734-487-2282. [emich.edu/emutheatre](http://emich.edu/emutheatre)

### PROFESSIONAL THEATER

**3 Guys, 1 Jar** A Late Night show. \$10. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff Street, Hamtramck. Through Jan. 22. 313-365-4948. [planetant.com](http://planetant.com)

**A Lesson Before Dying** \$017-\$20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Jan. 13-March 20. 313-868-1347. [detroitreptheatre.com](http://detroitreptheatre.com)

**Colin Mochrie & Brad Sherwood** \$25-\$50. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley Street, Flint. 8 p.m. Jan. 22. 810-237-7333. [thewhiting.com](http://thewhiting.com)

**Corktown** Previews Jan. 20-23 & 26-27 (\$20-\$30). \$25-\$40. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park Street, Chelsea. Jan. 20-March 5. 734-433-7673. [purplerosetheatre.org](http://purplerosetheatre.org)

**Delusion** \$18 and above. University Musical Society at Power Center for the Performing Arts, 121 Fletcher Street, Ann Arbor. Jan. 14-Jan. 15. 734-764-2538. [ums.org](http://ums.org)

**Fridays and Saturdays at Go Comedy!** Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. [gocomedy.net](http://gocomedy.net)

**Guys On Ice** \$28-\$30. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady Street, Northville. Through Jan. 15. 248-347-0003. [tippingpointtheatre.com](http://tippingpointtheatre.com)

**Jersey Show**-Season 1 (Abridged) Every Thursday. \$10. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. 9 Mile Rd., Ferndale. Through Feb. 24. 248-327-0575. [gocomedy.net](http://gocomedy.net)

**Modern Orthodox** Previews Jan. 19, 20 & 22. Tickets \$32-\$41. Jewish Ensemble Theatre at Aaron DeRoy Theatre at the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Rd., West Bloomfield. Jan. 19-Feb. 13. 248-788-2900. [jettheatre.org](http://jettheatre.org)

**My Mother's Italian, My Father's Jewish & I'm in Therapy** \$30-\$35; dinner & show packages \$79.95-\$89.95. Andiamo Novi Theatre, 42705 Grand River Ave., Novi. Through Jan. 23. 248-348-4448. [andiamoitalia.com/novi](http://andiamoitalia.com/novi)

**Of Mice and Men** Plays in rotating repertory. \$25-\$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Feb. 5. 313-577-2972. [wsushows.com](http://wsushows.com)

**Put the Nuns in Charge** \$18-\$24. Stormfield Theatre, 201 Morgan Lane, Lansing. Jan. 13-23. 517-372-0945. [stormfieldtheatre.org](http://stormfieldtheatre.org)

**Richard III** Plays in rotating repertory. \$25-\$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Feb. 25. 313-577-2972. [hilberry.com](http://hilberry.com)

**Stomp** \$25-\$45. Wharton Center for Performing Arts, Cobb Great Hall, Bogue Street & Wilson Street, East Lansing. Jan. 21-23. 517-432-2000. [whartoncenter.com](http://whartoncenter.com)

**Sundays at Go Comedy!** \$5-\$7. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. [gocomedy.net](http://gocomedy.net)

**The 39 Steps** \$30-\$39. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Through Jan. 30. 248-377-3300. [mbtheatre.com](http://mbtheatre.com)

**The Agony & The Agony** \$18. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company at 1515 Broadway, 1515 Broadway Street, Detroit. Jan. 14-Feb. 5. 313-408-7269. [magentagiraffe.org](http://magentagiraffe.org)

**The House of Blue Leaves** \$10-\$20. Who Wants Cake Theatre at The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Jan. 14-31. 248-545-5545. [whowantscaketheatre.com](http://whowantscaketheatre.com)

**The Merry Wives of Windsor** \$12. Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company at Dog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. Through Jan. 16. [dogstorytheater.com](http://dogstorytheater.com)

**The Mix New Reading Series** Admission determined by the roll of a single die, ranging from \$1 to \$6. The New Theatre Projec at The Mix, 130 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti. Mondays through Jan. 31. [thenewtheatreproject.org](http://thenewtheatreproject.org)

**The Problem of Cell** \$13-\$16. Broadway Onstage Live Theatre, 21517 Kelly Rd., Eastpointe. Through Feb. 5. 586-771-6333. [broadwayonstage.com](http://broadwayonstage.com)

**The War Since Eve** Previews Jan. 13-16 & 20 (\$10-\$32). \$25-\$41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron Street, Ann Arbor. Jan. 13-Feb. 13. 734-663-0681. [performancenetwork.org](http://performancenetwork.org)

**The Water Coolers** \$35. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culvers Street, Saugatuck. 8 p.m. Jan. 21. 269-857-2399. [sc4a.org](http://sc4a.org)

**Thursdays at Go Comedy!** \$5-\$10. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. [gocomedy.net](http://gocomedy.net)

**Tweet Surrender** \$10. Crawlspace Eviction at Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Jan. 14-15. 269-599-7390. [crawlspace.com](http://crawlspace.com)

**Wednesdays at Go Comedy!** \$5-\$7. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. [gocomedy.net](http://gocomedy.net)

**Welcome to the Moon** \$15. Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. 9 Mile Rd., Ferndale. Jan. 21-Feb. 5. 877-636-3320. [michiganactorsstudio.com](http://michiganactorsstudio.com)

**West Moon Street** A staged reading. \$5. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley Street, Flint. 6 p.m. Jan. 16. 810-237-1530. [flintyouththeatre.org](http://flintyouththeatre.org)

**What Can You Do With Lincoln's Corpse?** \$20. Blackbird Theatre, 325 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. Jan. 20-30. 734-332-3848. [blackbirdtheatre.tix.com](http://blackbirdtheatre.tix.com)

## ART'N' AROUND

**Ann Arbor Art Center "Moving Ground"** features the works of fiber artist Lois Bryant and photographer/sculptor John Cynar who explore the parallels of man-made and naturally occurring patterns. 117 West Liberty Street, Ann Arbor. Jan. 14-Feb. 6. 734-994-8004. [annarbortartcenter.org](http://annarbortartcenter.org)

**Detroit Institute of Arts** "An Intuitive Eye: Andre Kertesz Photographs, 1914-1969" The photographic achievements of Andre Kertesz who originated a style that combined the "snapshot" compositions of photojournalism with the aesthetic sensibilities of early twentieth-century modernism. 5200 Woodward Ave, Detroit. Nov. 24-April 10. 313-833-7900. [dia.org](http://dia.org)

**Falun Dafa Asso. Oriental Culture Asso.** "Shen Yun Performing Arts" visuals of blossoming landscapes and celestial palaces appearing on animated backdrops. Detroit Opera House, Detroit. 6:30 p.m. Jan. 20. 888-880-4110. [detshows.com](http://detshows.com)

**Lawrence Street Gallery** "The Best of 2010" Twelve prizewinning artists from the gallery's four annual juried shows (printmaking, figurative, photography and small works) will be given space to exhibit a larger selection of their work. 22620 Woodward, Ferndale. Jan. 12-Jan. 28. 248-544-0394. [lawrencestreetgallery.com](http://lawrencestreetgallery.com)

**Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum** "Artists Portray Artists" An exhibition of 35 portraits and self-portraits. 7400 Bay Road, Saginaw. Oct. 1-Jan. 29. 989-964-7096. [marshallfredericks.org](http://marshallfredericks.org)

**Sherry Washington Gallery** "Free Radicals", paintings by Senghor Reid" 1274 Library St, Detroit. Nov. 20-Jan. 22. 313-961-4500. [sherrywashingtongallery.com](http://sherrywashingtongallery.com)

**Grand Rapids Art Museum** "Diana, A Celebration" An exhibit with personal objects of Princess Diana, including dresses, home movies and more. Tickets: \$20 adults, \$18 seniors and college students, \$15 youth. 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. Nov. 9-Feb. 16. [artmuseumgr.org](http://artmuseumgr.org)

**The Henry Ford** "George Washington Carver" An exhibit celebrating the work and life of the extraordinary American. Admission: \$15 adults, \$14 seniors, \$11 youth. The Henry Ford Museum, 20900 Oakwood, Dearborn. Nov. 1-Feb. 27. 313-982-6001. [thehenryford.org](http://thehenryford.org)

**Toledo Museum of Art** "Voices That Taught Me How to Sing" Two- and three-dimensional works by Ohio artist Aminah Robinson. Toledo Museum of Art, 2445 Monroe Street, Toledo. Nov. 19-Feb. 27. 419-255-8000. [toledomuseum.org](http://toledomuseum.org)

**University of Michigan Museum of Art** "Simon Dybbroe Moller" Sculptures and other works by the Danish-born artist. UMMA, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor. Nov. 6-Jan. 30. 734-763-UMMA. [umma.umich.edu](http://umma.umich.edu)

Add your events to next week's issue!

<http://www.pridesource.com/calendar.html>

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BY FREDERICK KNOTT

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## Rear View DEAR JODY



**Got problems?** Send letters to: "Dear Jody," C/O Between The Lines, 11920 Farmington Road, Livonia, MI 48150. E-mail her at DearJodyValley@hotmail.com

### So do I have a brother?

**Q.** I just got back from spending the holidays with my folks who live in another state. I had a good time – until News Year's Eve when my parents had a party inviting family and friends, sort of in honor of my being home. I had not been home for the holidays in 10 years. Since my boyfriend and I broke up, I figured it might be a good time to spend time with family. Now, I'm sorry that I did that.

The night of the party, my uncle "Ernie" was drinking pretty heavily. I don't know why, but he decided to tell me that my dad (his brother) had had an affair several years ago with this woman "Sandra" (a friend of the family) who was at the party. Sandra is quite a bit younger than my dad.

Sandra was, and still is, married and had her husband at the party. OK, that's bad enough, in my eyes, that my dad would have an affair, but Uncle Ernie said that Sandra's little boy is really my dad's child, not Sandra's husband's child, so that would make the little boy "Jack" my brother!

I asked if my mother knew about this. Uncle Ernie said that she knew about the affair, but not about the boy being my dad's. If all this is true, and given the time frame of the affair, I don't know why she wouldn't suspect that Jack was my dad's son – though Jack looks a lot like his mother. Frankly, I couldn't see any resemblance of either my dad or Sandra's husband in Jack.

I was trying to absorb all this, then Uncle Ernie said that he was afraid that my father has "spawned" another little fag – tossing me a dig – since the "kid was a little light on his feet."

That's when I left the party.

My parents were upset with me for leaving the party early, since it was supposed to be for people to come and see me. Finally, I told them that I wasn't feeling well, but I could tell that they knew it was a

lie. I didn't say anything about what Uncle Ernie said to me. I was scheduled to leave the next day, and I did.

Now, I'm left with all this to deal with, not sure what's true and what's not, and the nasty comment from my uncle.

I just don't know what to do. Was Uncle Ernie telling me the truth – or was it just drunk talk? Ask my parents – mother or dad or both – about this? Talk to Sandra? Punch Uncle Ernie for what he called Jack and me? Or maybe just buy my "half-brother" a belated Christmas present?

*A Can of Worms*

My parents were upset with me for leaving the party early. Finally, I told them that I wasn't feeling well, but I could tell that they knew it was a lie.

**A.** The question is, if all this is true, what do you think you will accomplish by opening the can of worms? If all is now well, or healed, between your parents, going to them would be pricking an old wound. Your mother may suspect that Jack is your dad's child, but not want to really know that he is.

Jack is either your biological half-brother or not. Again, what would be the cost to each and everyone involved in this situation for you to know for certain? Would Jack appreciate knowing that the man he thought

was dad is not dad? (And really, being a dad is less about biology than about being there for a child.) It sounds like Jack is pretty young. What would that do to him and his family?

I understand that this information – or misinformation – is very disturbing to you; however, it could get worse by your need-to-know.

If you decide that you are not going to let it go, and are determined to find out, take your father aside and ask him.

As for your Uncle Ernie, you might want to write him a note and let him know how inappropriate he was, and that you didn't enjoy his homophobic remark.

*Jody Valley spent 12 years as a clinical social worker. The "Dear Jody" column appears weekly. Visit her on Facebook (Dear Jody Valley), or send an email to DearJodyValley@hotmail.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.*

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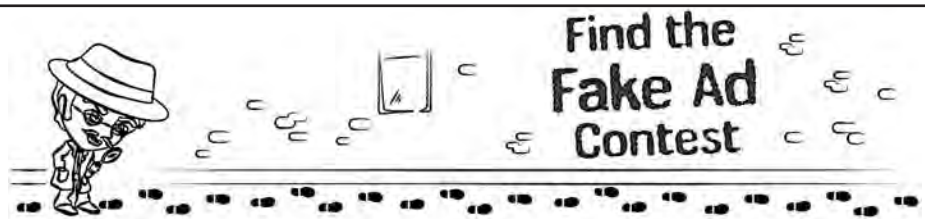
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1. Search this issue of Between The Lines for the one ad that is the fake ad. Here's a clue: the fake ad will include the line "between the sheets" somewhere within the text of the ad.
2. Go online at [www.Pridesource.com](http://www.Pridesource.com) and click where it says "Click here to win!"
3. Scroll down to the entry form for the fake ad contest and enter your name, etc.
4. In the notes field, put the date of the BTL issue, page number where you found the fake ad and the name of the fake advertiser.



# Take up the tough issues, Leo!

BY JACK FERTIG

*Mars is very happy in Capricorn where the planet of energy and action is focused productively. Aspecting Uranus and Jupiter in Pisces, and Neptune in Aquarius, he can lose focus, but if you can stay on track while examining your process you can find new purpose and methods to strengthen your efforts.*

**ARIES (March 20 – April 19):** If you can focus (and there's the challenge!), you can achieve great things. Meditation can help tame that unruly, dreamy mind and draw inspiration. Friends who want your time can be a distraction, or you can enlist them to help!

**TAURUS (April 20 – May 20):** Ideas brewing in your head need a release. Getting yourself heard could help or hurt you at work. Discussing those notions with a friend first can help you improve them and see best where and how to air them.

**GEMINI (May 21- June 20):** Explore your fantasies and bring them into your real-life lovemaking. Well, at least consider them carefully. Some of those dreams may need safety checks and adaptations to be performed in the physical world.

**CANCER (June 21- July 22):** Your fancy notions could shock or titillate your partner. A discussion of limits may be in order. Even out of the sack, your sweetheart can help you with reality checks to help you figure out which of your dreams can come true.

**LEO (July 23 – August 22):** Every relationship takes work. Take up the tough issues now while it's a little easier. You might be surprised at what problems can be resolved in the bedroom. That might not solve everything, but it will at least help!

**VIRGO (August 23 – September 22):** Your intuition is especially clear now. With some practice you can learn to use it to better purpose in any kind of teamwork, practical or romantic. Trust those hunches in healing any kind of relationship – or finding one.

**LIBRA (September 23 – October 22):** As onerous as family or community duties may feel, you can accomplish a lot and gain great influence. You're creative enough to find

a positive approach. Once you start there will be no stopping you!

**SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21):** What you have to say is too important to be wasted. Polish those gems and be careful to share them where they are appreciated. A little imaginative probing can reveal family secrets or community scandals.

**SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20):** Discuss your financial worries with a trustworthy friend, or a parent or sibling. You may stumble on solutions or just realize that things aren't as bad as you think. Clear your head of worry to think clearly about resources at hand.

**CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19):** Your sign improves most with age, but exercising the body and mind are important for staying sharp. Advice from friends should be heard, but not necessarily followed. It could open your mind to even better possibilities.

**AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18):** Self-criticism can be very helpful if you don't take it to extremes. There's always room for improvement, and an honest assessment of your virtues and your flaws will make you clearer on what you have to offer.

**PISCES (February 19 – March 19):** You have to be very careful not to give too much of yourself. Have a long talk with a friend you can count on to be ruthlessly honest about your limits and how you should set them.

*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](http://www.starjack.com), and by e-mail at [QScopes@qsyndicate.com](mailto:QScopes@qsyndicate.com).*

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Solution to puzzle from page 26

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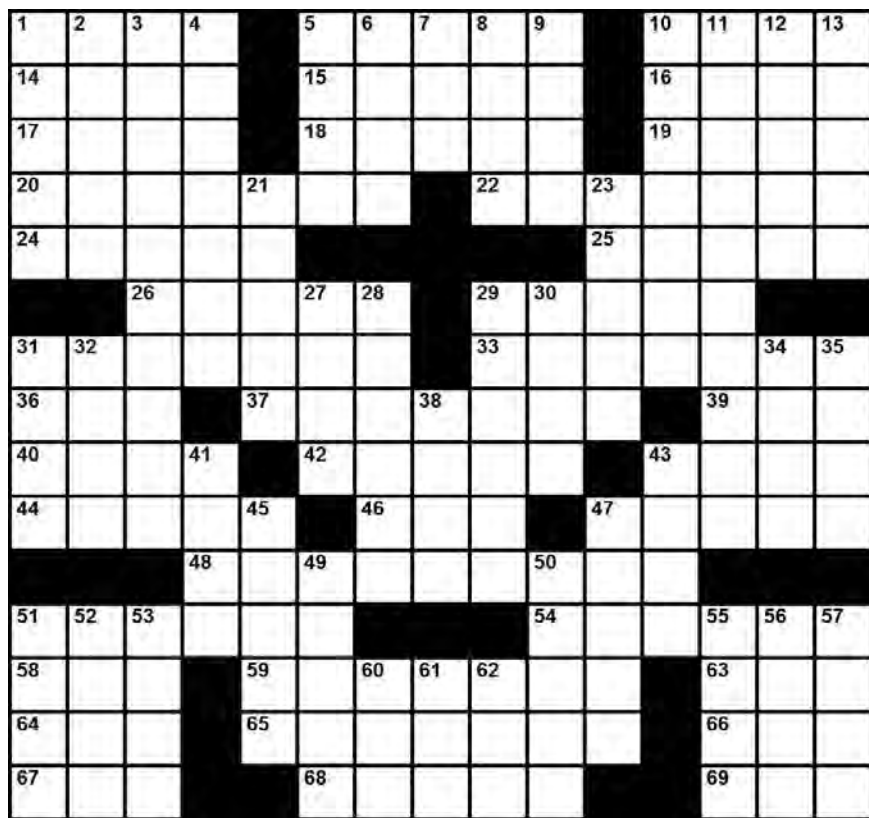
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**Q U I Z** Recently out

**Across**

- 1 Judy's daughter
- 5 Screen siren Garbo
- 10 In need of some South Beach rays
- 14 Carbon compound
- 15 Looks at a hottie in a bar
- 16 Jannings of old films
- 17 Where to look, in "Misty"
- 18 Haunting
- 19 Aid's partner
- 20 Take off your shorts?
- 22 McKellen's "X-Men" role
- 24 Narrow cuts
- 25 One of the Great Lakes
- 26 Catcher of phallic fish
- 29 Path through leaves of grass
- 31 Richard Chamberlain's Dr. role
- 33 Sexy buns?
- 36 Doc's org.
- 37 Results of screwing up

**Down**

- 39 Taxing mo.
- 40 Omar in "The Mod Squad"
- 42 Crotchety sorts
- 43 De Matteo of "Desperate Housewives"
- 44 Stop with
- 46 Tigers of the NCAA
- 47 One to hang with
- 48 With 59-Across, movie of 11-Down
- 51 Derek of "Breaking the Code"
- 54 Stands next to O'Keeffe
- 58 "Put \_\_\_ Happy Face"
- 59 See 48-Across
- 63 Brewing tank
- 64 Wilde's tongue, for short
- 65 Stamp of "Priscilla"
- 66 Just make, with "out"
- 67 Jason of "Chasing Amy"
- 68 Persian Gulf port
- 69 Log Cabin member, for short

**Down**

- 1 Heads up
- 2 Pentium producer
- 3 Movie of 11-Down
- 4 Gave a heads-up to
- 5 Club head?
- 6 Where a sailor may hit bottom
- 7 Suffix with musket
- 8 Like a muscle Mary's waist
- 9 Cruising
- 10 Goobers
- 11 Recently out actress
- 12 Try to deceive
- 13 John of "Aida" fame
- 21 Muslim faith
- 23 Indian mountain passes
- 27 Actor McCormack
- 28 Fix a sneaker, maybe
- 29 "Zip it!"
- 30 Trials and tribulations
- 31 Bucks
- 32 Top's betting phrase?

- 34 Acted like
- 35 Carhop's carrier
- 38 Leonardo's thing
- 41 R.E.M. neck attachment
- 43 Cost of belonging
- 45 Where they sing "Hello Dalai"?
- 47 Ho-hum
- 49 Put the kibosh on
- 50 Joe who played gay in "JFK"
- 51 "Cabaret" actor Grey
- 52 A girl named Frank
- 53 "La \_\_\_ aux Folles"
- 55 Green beginner?
- 56 Placid, for example
- 57 From A to B, to Debussy
- 60 Aetna rival, for short
- 61 "Gone With the Wind" extra
- 62 Bambi character that wasn't horny?

Solution on 25

**Pet of the Week**

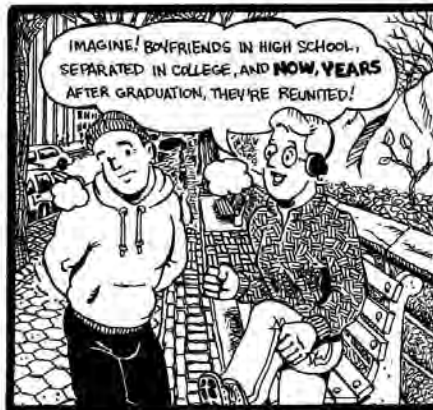


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bitter girl



**106 ANNOUNCEMENTS - GROUPS**

**Social Club**  
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**109 ANNOUNCEMENTS - ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**LGBT Artists**  
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# U and Ur Hand

I really need...sex. Yes, I've been trying this celibacy bit for the last nine months, but I'm going to be the first to admit – it sucks, and not in a good way. It sucks to the point where I can't get the word "sex" out of my head. Literally. I turn everything into a sexual innuendo, to the point where last week, when a friend said his Christmas tree was dying and "it sucks," I suggested he drill a hole in the bark and take full advantage of it.

Yes, I'm that guy. I don't feel cleansed. In fact, I feel dirtier than ever. And that's not a good place to be when you have to go to work and be professional. So daily, I sit in front of a computer, typing this and that while thinking about love in the key of getting on my knees.

To add insult to injury, I'm dating my ex-partner, and it's going really well, except I told him I don't want to have sex, because I don't want to rush and complicate things. I want him to put up a fight. Yes, I really, really want him to tease me, because I'm pursuing him this time. Therefore, when he pulls away, I have to pretend I'm OK with it. I have to smile pretty for the camera, even though I'm suffering from hot flashes of anger, resulting in two bar fights in the last month. Yes, two weeks ago I was literally carried out of a nightclub by the neck for telling off some Jersey Shore asshole. And before that,

I made a drag queen cry, telling him I was going to rip his face off for calling my friend a whore. But honestly, I'm usually a sweet guy. What's wrong with me?

"Your body is detoxing. You just need to breeeeeeaaaathe," my friend Jon tells me.

"But I'm horny!" I cry. "What am I going to do?"

"Are you masturbating?"

"Um, yeah, readily."

"But are you doing it right?"

"Is there a wrong way?"

Apparently so. It seems I had been misled. Jon tells me that masturbating should be more like a cleansing of the soul and that I have to make it more of an "experience." I mean, burying my face in my boyfriend's dirty briefs and jacking off – that's so primitive. According to Rob, I'm supposed to light tea candles, gather herbs, set the night to music, touch my dick (just a smidge), and then turn myself down.

"Huh?"

"You know, tease yourself. Don't give in. That's your problem. You're making it too easy."

"Wait. Let me get this right. I'm supposed to cock-block myself?"

"Exactly," Jon says, becoming my confidante regarding the fine art of abstinence. And I find his stance a nice change, when most of my other friends feel I need to shut up and "fuck my way to happy." And oh, how they love to rub the wound, texting me about their awesome sex lives on a daily basis. Oh, I got nailed. Oh, he was so big. Oh, my butt hurts. Oh, I got it several

times today. Who needs toilet paper when you have a penis to clean you out? Wink. Wink. Wink.

Thank god Jon is able to ground me, helping me understand there's more to life than sex, that we're spiritual beings having a human experience. Well, until the holidays hit.

"You'd be so proud of me. I haven't spanked all week," I inform him.

"God, I wish I had your willpower," he replies.

"What? You gave in?"

"Yeah, I had a moment of weakness."

It appears, while home for New Year's Eve, he found an intriguing Bear-4-Bear porn site and got naked at the stroke of midnight on his mom's computer. Initially, he thought the entire affair would remain a secret, except his mom had spyware installed on the computer, which transmits all of the Internet data to her pastor, who's serving as her marriage counselor and oversees all web activity because her boyfriend has a cyber porn problem. Hence now, the pastor thinks her boyfriend is gay, which might be the root of their problem altogether.

"My mom's livid!" Jon exclaims.

"Why? Because her pastor has an issue with her boyfriend being queer? Big deal. Aren't most pastors gay anyway?"

"No. That's priests!" he snaps. And now, he's back to college, and I'm back to the drawing board, getting a hard-on every time my boyfriend comes within five feet of me.

It's pathetic, really. I can't touch myself. I can't touch him. Who am I supposed to touch?

Yes, I'm that guy. I don't feel cleansed. In fact, I feel dirtier than ever.

"What's the matter? You're acting crazy," my boyfriend exclaims, later that night when I freak out over the fact he's not reciprocating my advances.

"I need passion!" I say, gathering my keys and heading out the door. "I can't wait anymore. I don't want us to become one of those sexless couples who beat off on the Internet."

"Huh? Why would we become that?" he asks. Meanwhile, I'm jogging down the driveway, rattling my keys. "Hold on," he calls. "I don't get it. One minute you want sex. The next minute you don't. What do you want?"

And breathless, I turn and stare at him silently, unsure of what to say. There are so many things I want, really. To feel safe, to feel beautiful, to feel loved, and I'm placing all that on him, because as my boyfriend, he's the one who's supposed to provide me that. I don't look for it from outside forces, and it's hard to find it inside myself when I'm consumed with making him happy. So to answer his question, plain and simple, I tell him, honestly, that I want to stop thinking about having sex with him so I can focus on loving myself.

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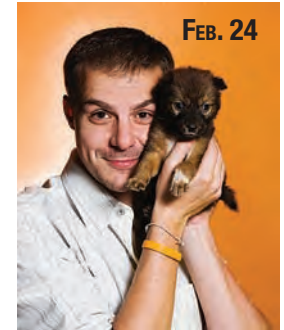
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# Keelin Godsey has a hammer

As a high school student in Palmer, Colo., Keelin Godsey dabbled in track's throwing events. Shot put and discus were OK; soccer, basketball and softball were much more interesting.

Heading east to college, Keelin planned to play basketball. But Maine's Bates College offered a strong track and field program, and Keelin suddenly found enjoyment in throwing.

Bates helped Keelin discover something else: "My sexuality had always been undefined. I'd just felt wrong. I'd read about lesbian history, but that was all I knew." A freshman seminar introduced Keelin to the concept of "transgender." Books by Leslie Feinberg and Kate Bornstein helped Keelin figure out that a binary definition of sexuality does not work for everyone.

"I'd always been classified as a butch lesbian," says Keelin. "I hated that. I never thought of myself that way." It was harder for Keelin to identify as lesbian than as transgender.

"I am who I am," Keelin says.

It was, surprisingly, very easy to identify as an athlete. Erica Rand, who teaches courses on contemporary culture – with particular attention to sexuality, race and gender – helped Keelin talk to coaches and athletic administrators. Keelin calls Rand's help "crucial to how smoothly everything went."

Track and field coach Jennifer "Jay" Hartshorn was brand new to Bates, Keelin notes, and had "every right to worry" about a

transgender athlete.

But, Keelin says, "she was awesome. She asked all kinds of questions about how she could support me. She made sure I didn't have to deal with any intrusions. She helped me talk to the team, and always stood up for me."

And, Keelin adds, "she never messed up my pronouns."

Keelin began referring to himself as "he" in the summer of 2005, prior to his senior year at Bates. However, without going through hormone treatment or gender reassignment surgery, Keelin is still biologically female – and thus competes as a woman, not a man.

Keelin attributes Hartshorn's instinctive, from-the-get-go support to the simple fact that "that's who she is: an open, understanding person." And, Keelin laughs, "she got her coaching degree at Smith."

Opponents were not always so kind. Keelin was occasionally called "she-male" and "tranny girl." Keelin shrugged them off, saying, "People are afraid of what they don't know." Generally, though, Bates made sure "I didn't hear about any drama."

A track and field website posted something about the trans athlete. "They said I was cheating and wanted to have everything. People are entitled to their opinions. I just tried to prove I'm a good competitor. Just had to keep doing what I was doing."

Keelin found it harder to come out in the trans community than in the athletic world. "This

is my experience – I can't speak for anyone else – but because I didn't plan on transitioning, trans people didn't understand my choices. I just wanted to concentrate on my sport. I focused my attention on athletics, and I still do."

It was a difficult decision. "I can't look the way I want to look," Keelin says. "I can't do what I want to do."

The focus on training paid off. Keelin is a two-time NCAA national hammer champion, and placed seventh at the 2008 Olympic trials. Last year, at the USA Track & Field championship, Keelin took fifth.

Throwing the hammer takes tremendous patience ("like being trans," Keelin points out). It's an extremely technical event. Strength is important – and Keelin spends hours in the weight room, working on speed and explosiveness – but so is technique.

In the post-college track and field world, Keelin's sexuality is "rarely mentioned. I assume a lot of people know. People think I'm cheating and taking hormones, but I'm not."

Keelin wants one more shot at the Olympics. The next Games are set for 2012. Before that, the world championships loom. Keelin says, "I want to go as far as I can competitively. It's a hard choice not to transition. Once I stop competing, we'll see what happens."

Training and competing is only part of Keelin's day. The rest is spent as a physical therapist in the Berkshire Mountains of New England. Keelin also helps coach hammer and

"I want to go as far as I can competitively. It's a hard choice not to transition. Once I stop competing, we'll see what happens." – Keelin Godsey

discus throwers.

Yet thoughts of sexuality – even of physical therapy – are secondary. For now, Keelin concentrates on track and field. The structure of each day, the physical exertion and the mental preparation provide an important outlet.

But, sexuality aside, Keelin is no different from any elite-level athlete. Competition is key.

"When I have a bad day at practice, I do question why I'm doing this," Keelin says. "But after a good day, I know why."

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

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