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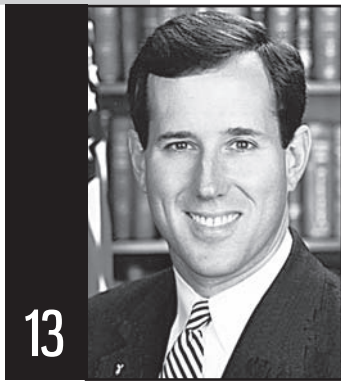
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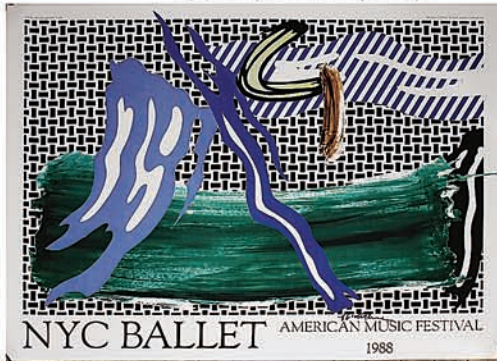
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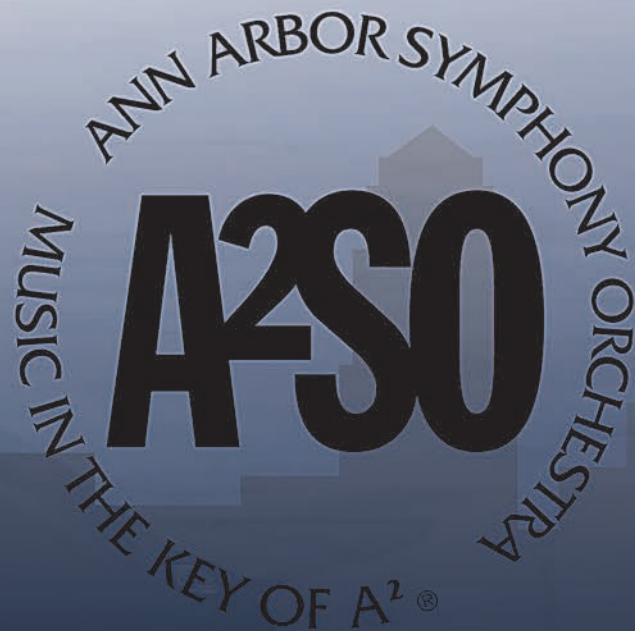
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**Mike Wallace** is a member of the AmeriCorps / AIDS United Team Detroit. As part of his AmeriCorps service, he works at the HIV/AIDS Resource Center in Ypsilanti as a prevention specialist.

**1 What do you do as a prevention specialist at HARC?**

I do counseling, testing, referrals, one-on-one consultations, health fairs, and I'm on the social media team.

**2 How do you use social media to get your message out?**

For the Team Detroit Facebook page, I'll post news articles on HIV updates or if there are any health fairs happening in the area. At HARC in Ypsilanti we have a Facebook, Twitter and YouTube account. It's a lot of networking. So if there's an agency in the area that we work with that's having an event we'll go ahead and post that to our page as well, to spread the word.

**3 What advice would you give to another agency that's thinking about using social media?**

You have to get a team together and you have to have a strategy. What do you want to let the public know? What information do you want to put in their hands? You have to focus on that. You can't try to do everything at once. Social media is one of those things that is changing constantly. You have to look at ways to change the way you're giving information to the public. You can't keep saying, "come to our health fair." You have to go into the public's homes and put information in their hands.

**4 What's one of the biggest benefits of using social media?**

It's a great opportunity because a lot of it is free. All we needed to pay for at HARC was a Flip video camera. And there's no better way to raise awareness and prevent a whole epidemic from expanding than to do it free.

**5 Do you think you'll keep doing work like this in the future?**

I pretty much fell in love with this kind of work in the first couple of months I got involved. What really helps is my teammates. It shouldn't just be me in this interview, because all of us put in the same amount of effort.



You have to look at ways to change the way you're giving information to the public. You can't keep saying, "come to our health fair." You have to go into the public's homes and put information in their hands.

The whole team, and everyone in this field really, they put their heart into it. You kind of have to in this field if you're working with HIV/AIDS. You have to stay involved. You have to love what you do even though you hate what you're battling.

*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.*

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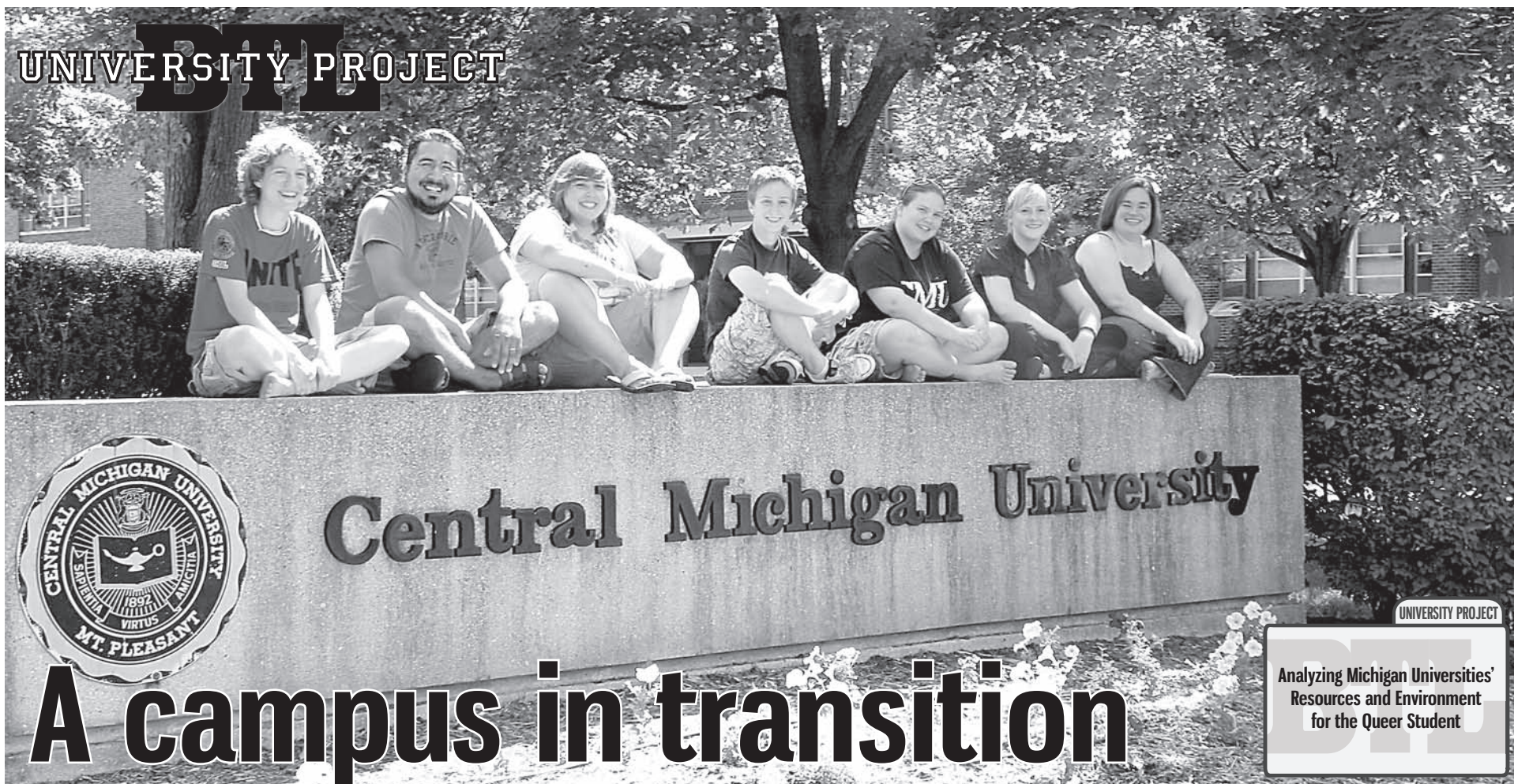
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UNIVERSITY PROJECT

Analyzing Michigan Universities' Resources and Environment for the Queer Student

# A campus in transition

Members of the Gay and Lesbian Program Office make CMU's campus more welcoming. Photo supplied by Shannon Joliff

## Progressive, conservative views clash at CMU

BY BENJAMIN JENKINS

LGBT students at Central Michigan University walk a fine line between acceptance and rejection. While they know they can take solace in supportive student organizations, they're also wary of a vocal opposition that sometimes lashes out against progressive groups.

Last year, CMU's lesbian and gay student organization Spectrum put together a unique event for its Coming Out Week in October. "Many statistics estimated that ten percent of the American population identified as LGBT," said Sarah Winchester, political chair of Spectrum. "So we determined how many students would be LGBT on campus, and put a flag out in front of the CMU library for every one of those students."

The flags caused some students to speak out against them, some even expressing their opinions with chalk on campus sidewalks. The First Amendment protects these responses, but the chalk was washed away after one day. Winchester said no one in Spectrum was involved, but another student organization cleaned the pathways and wished to remain anonymous.

While Spectrum focuses on addressing issues for gay and lesbian students, another newly-formed group, Transcend, advocates for transgendered students and provides a support group for those who are transitioning. Kylee Meade, a two-year member of Transcend, explains that the two organizations serve different purposes.

"Transcend is trying to solidify the distinction between gender identity and sexual orientation," Meade said. "I think that people view the two as one in the same. But they're very different ways of identifying oneself."

Meade, currently in the early stages of transition, said the organization offers plenty of benefits for its members.



"Campus has changed in my four years here. I didn't feel comfortable four years ago."

– Sarah Winchester

"When we first started the group, none of us were in hormone therapy, none of us had been fully dressing as the identity we wanted to present ourselves," Meade said. "Four of us have started the physical process now, which is a huge breakthrough. For me, it wasn't until I got the support from Transcend that I started the process. The whole coming out process is a huge obstacle that most of us overcame because of Transcend."

Meade also said support from Shannon Joliff, the director of the Office of Gay and Lesbian Programs, helped him start the transition process.

Joliff's office is one of six units of CMU's Office of Institutional Diversity. The OID's goal is to create a more accepting and inclusive campus.

CMU seems to take Joliff's position more seriously now than it did previously. Before Joliff was hired in 2008, the position was only part-time. Joliff's title is now a salaried, full-time position that offers her and her partner benefits (CMU has a "plus one" option for their staff). She has two student assistants and two interns on staff.

Joliff has planned events for Pride Week, Coming Out Day and Transgender Day of Remembrance. She also brings panels into classrooms and residential halls to provide information about LGBT students and to tackle

discrimination.

Joliff's office also supports Spectrum and Transcend, and the three organizations sometimes band together around a cause. In 2010, a few housing staff members proposed a gender-neutral housing option. Now, Transcend, Spectrum, and the Office of Gay and Lesbian Programs are working together to create an LGBT or gender-neutral floor in the residence halls.

The initial proposal was denied. "A policy change in the middle of Michigan, in the middle of nowhere – it wasn't taken very well," Winchester said. Students from both organizations created petitions, wrote letters, and utilized social media to argue a case for LGBT-friendly housing and applications. They collected 700 student and staff signatures, in hopes of convincing the administration.

For now, the university's housing administration and residence life are willing to work with transgender students on a case-by-case basis, as is the policy of most colleges.

CMU also has a non-discrimination policy that protects LGBT students. The university added the phrase "sexual orientation" to its policy in 1999 and "gender identity and expression" in 2009, according to the university's independent student-run newspaper, Central Michigan Life.

Overall, Winchester argues that Central is doing well and the student body is supportive, despite the conservative influence of Mt. Pleasant and the state of Michigan (which supplies very little protection to LGBT Michigander).

"Campus has changed in my four years here. I didn't feel comfortable four years ago," Winchester said. "I've seen many freshmen come out to their roommates this year. I've seen those roommates then turn around and say 'Yeah, my roommate is gay, I don't really care.' I think that is so exciting to see. I am really happy for incoming students that will be coming to a campus much better off than the one I came to four years ago."

**BTL Rating: 3.8**

### CENTRAL AT A GLANCE



- Office of Gay and Lesbian Programs, two student organizations, and tentative plans for "Queer Persons of Color" organization.
- Counseling Services staff thoroughly trained in LGBT issues.
- Immediate response to gay teen suicides, reaching approx. 350 students on campus.
- Though a supportive campus for gay and lesbian students, cases of harassment and ignorance towards transgendered students.
- No gender-neutral housing or facility options on campus.

RATING  
★★★★☆

# Republicans seek to reverse benefits for non-married partners of state employees

## Reversal likely to happen this week

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

Senate Republicans have begun the process of reversing the decision by the Michigan Civil Service Commission to offer benefits to partners of state employees.

The MCSC made the 3-1 ruling in January to offer one "other eligible adult" of state employees benefits. The OEA has to live with the employee, share finances, and not be a tenant. The OEA's dependents are also eligible.

Republicans need a supermajority of support to overturn the MCSC ruling. State Senator Rebekah Warren, D-18, said it will be easy for Republicans to get a supermajority in the state Senate, where they outnumber Democrats 26-12, but she said it might be more difficult to pass it in the state House, where Republicans hold a 63-47 majority.

"The elections were pretty hard on Democrats," Warren said. "We certainly have less allies this year than we've had in a long time. So I'd be nervous that they'd be able to get the vote."

The Senate and the House will vote on overturning the MCSC decision this week.

"I have concerns about stepping in to reverse something that the independent commission put forward," Warren said. She said she does not know of any other instance where the state legislature overturned a MCSC decision.

"I think the appropriate place to handle something like this is at the bargaining table," said Ray Holman, the legislative liaison for the UAW Local 6,000, the biggest union of Michigan state employees. "This was negotiated. We deal with the office of state employer who speaks with the governor and the MCSC, and it's not really appropriate for the legislature to try to overturn the civil service commission."

The MCSC is a state constitution-created entity of four officials that administers civil services and human resource services. It was formed in 1908.

Even though the MCSC decision does not only offer benefits for same-sex partners, it was celebrated by the LGBT community. It was also decried by many state Republicans as wasteful spending. Gov. Rick Snyder said he was "frustrated and disappointed" at the additional cost.

Debbie Drick, spokesperson for Sen. Mark Jansen, R-28, said Jansen believes that "we can't afford what we have, so it just makes no sense to add more widespread debt."

The biggest problem, Drick said, is that the "Other Eligible Adult" label is unstructured, so it seems that nearly anyone could access the

"We certainly have less allies this year than we've had in a long time. So I'd be nervous that they'd be able to get the vote."

— Sen. Rebekah Warren, D-18

benefits. "There's no distinction between partner or roommate or a person off the street," she said, adding that the argument against the benefits has nothing to do with social issues: "It's all about money."

Estimates on the cost vary. Some Republican leaders have projected the cost could be as high as \$20 million. Warren said that she's heard estimates that the benefits could cost up to \$6 million, but "it all depends on how many of our workers choose to participate. We just don't know."

"But we do know when our workers have good health care, there's less absenteeism," Warren continued, "and if you have a sick partner or child that's another leading cause of absenteeism in workers."

Holman doesn't think the cost would go as high as Republicans think. "I know that other institutions and businesses have similar benefit programs and it's not running them into the ground," he said.

Offering OEA benefits does cost more than just offering same-sex partner benefits, Holman said, because more people are eligible for OEA benefits. In order to make the benefits legal in Michigan, the offer had to be expanded to more than just same-sex partners.

Prior to the MCSC's decision in January, former Gov. Jennifer Granholm negotiated same-sex partner benefits with the state employee unions. But in 2008, the state Supreme Court ruled that such benefits, called "domestic partner benefits" or "same-sex partner benefits," were illegal because marriage, and any benefits attached to it, is restricted to one man and one woman, due to a law voted on by Michigan citizens in 2004.

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## Peace Prom March 19

JACKSON – The second annual Peace Prom, a dance for LGBTQ youth in southeast Michigan, will take place Saturday, March 19 from 8-11:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5 each and are available at the door. The theme for this year's event is "Masquerade!" Masks will be provided to those who need them.

The prom, held at the Commonwealth Center at 209 East Washington Ave. in Jackson, is open for those as young as high school freshmen and as old as age 20.

For more information, contact organizer Cylor Fagan at cylvorsrainbow@hotmail.com.

## HUD gives 1.2 million to fight housing discrimination in MI

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development March 3 awarded more than \$1.2 million to fair housing organizations and non-profit agencies in Michigan to educate the public and combat housing and lending discrimination.

The Ann Arbor Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan, The Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit, Legal Services of Eastern Michigan in Flint and the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan in Grand Rapids will benefit from the HUD grants.

"Ending housing discrimination takes more than the efforts of Washington," said John Trasvina, HUD's assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity. "These grants enable community groups all over the nation to help HUD enforce the Fair Housing Act, make the public more aware of their fair housing rights and ensure that housing providers understand their responsibilities under the law."

## Unitarian church votes to welcome LGBT community

GROSSE POINTE – The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church, the only church located within the borders of the city of Grosse Pointe, voted on March 6 to be recognized as a "welcoming congregation." This designation defines the church as openly welcoming all people regardless of their sexual orientation.

The church's bylaws will now have an additional paragraph with fully inclusive language: "The congregation declares and affirms its special responsibility to promote the full participation of persons in all of its endeavors without regard to race, color, gender, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin."

The church is located at 17150 Maumee in Grosse Pointe. Sunday services begin at 10:30a.m.

# 'Queer & Career' conference addresses workplace hurdles

## April 2 conference takes place at MSU

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

LANSING – Michigan State University's LGBT Resource Center and Career Service Network will hold a "Queer & Career" conference on Saturday, April 2 from 12:30 to 6.

The conference will help "prepare LGBT persons for what they might experience in the workforce," said Deanna Hurlbert, MSU's LGBT liaison. "Although the focus population is students, almost everything will be applicable to every LGBT person in the workforce."

Hurlbert said the conference was just announced on March 3 and it's already attracted an "unbelievable amount interest." She has received e-mail inquiries from people from other states who want to attend and speak, and said the conference is now seeking sponsors in order to raise more money to accommodate more attendees.

Hurlbert thinks the conference has become so popular because it addresses the tough issues LGBTs face on the job. "They have additional stresses that perhaps their heterosexual or cisgender counterparts wouldn't have," she said. There are no federal or state laws that protect LGBTs from being harassed or fired in the workplace due to their sexual

or gender identity.

The conference will feature keynote speaker Ronald Moore, a MSU alum who was the director of Hewlett-Packard's human resources for 23 years. Moore, who is also gay man and African American, is recognized as a "world class diversity and issues expert," Hurlbert said. Riley Folds of Out for Work will also speak about coming out in the workplace.

"Figuring out a place you can work in line with your personal values is really hard."

– Sarah Glassman

Hurlbert said the conference also features workshops and panel discussions on gender identity in the workforce, LGBT advocacy as a career, queer persons of color, and the "less friendly" professions such as childcare, K-12 education, police, fire and military. The sessions will be followed by a "light

and informal" networking session, but Hurlbert stressed that the conference is not a career fair.

Sarah Glassman, a graduate student who is also the conference coordinator, said having these kinds of discussions is particularly important on campus.


"For a lot of students, the first time they come out is in college, and it's been a really supportive environment," she said, "so whether they want to come out on the job is the big question. Figuring out a place you can work in line with your personal values is really hard. And students are already feeling pressure to find a job in the first place."

"Graduating students find they have to totally renegotiate identity when they leave campus," Hurlbert said. "Whether or not they're willing to move for a job may depend on if they can get married or adopt in that state."

"They really are faced with a major existential crisis in deciding how to negotiate their identity when they're trying to keep a roof over their head and feed themselves," she said.

Conference registration will be available online March 11. Until then, those interested in attending, speaking or sponsoring may contact Glassman at glassm10@msu.edu.

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# Metal art with heart

## AIDS Team Detroit seeks donations for unique statue

BY JACK VANHECKE

Why build a silly RoboCop statue when you can create a piece of art with a lasting message?

The AmeriCorps/National AIDS Fund Team Detroit members are raising money to make an HIV/AIDS awareness statue in the Heidelberg Project in Detroit. Detroit is one of only eight cities nationwide that has an AmeriCorps team specifically focused on assisting non-profit agencies with HIV/AIDS programs.

"HIV/AIDS need to be back in the conversation," said Sarah Dettloff, AmeriCorps member and co-leader of the initiative. "We feel the statue will have a positive public health effect in the community."

The statue would be constructed of reclaimed parts from scrapped cars welded together in the form of an AIDS awareness ribbon. Dettloff said that by using scrapped auto parts, the statue echoes the art made of found objects that are already in the Heidelberg Project.

Tyree Guyton created the Heidelberg Project 25 years ago. In two blocks on Detroit's Eastside, Guyton has used found objects, such as doors, shoes and abandoned buildings to make art that calls attention to urban abandonment but also offers hope for the future. The project, which has gained both international fame and local controversy, was featured on the Oprah Winfrey Show and the Today Show and also in Time and Essence magazines. Even though the city of Detroit leveled many of the works with bulldozers in the 1990s, it attracts nearly 300,000 visitors every year. Some of its exhibits have traveled to Harvard and Venice.

Dettloff said that Guyton welcomed the concept of the AIDS awareness statue in the Heidelberg Project. Just as the Heidelberg Project calls attention to urban abandonment, but also offers solutions, the statue would be a symbol of the epidemic and also the need for awareness, testing and treatment, she said.

The statue, which the team hopes to unveil on June 15, would also have a plaque which would include more than just donors' names: it would give information about getting HIV testing.

Local metal worker Carlos Neilbock, of C.A.N Art Handworks, Inc., agreed to fabricate

the parts into a fifteen-foot tall AIDS memorial ribbon. Dettloff said she hopes volunteers want to "get their hands dirty" and help Neilbock build the statue.

The team started planning the AIDS awareness statue in December 2010, but the recent popularity of a RoboCop statue (in honor of the 1987 movie of the same name that took place in Detroit) sparked Team Detroit to go viral and use Facebook to rally support.

"HIV/AIDS need to be back in the conversation."

— Sarah Dettloff

In just six days of fundraising, the proponents of the RoboCop statue surpassed their \$50,000 goal, helped by a \$25,000 donation from Peter Hottel, owner of Omni Consumer Products. Hottel's company is named for the firm in the movie that built RoboCop. In real life, Hottel's Omni Consumer Products creates licensed products from television and film, such as Stay Puft Marshmallows, Tru Blood, and Sex Panther Cologne.

The total project budget for the AIDS ribbon statue is \$56,000, most of which is for artists' fees, fabrication and installation costs. So far, the team has raised \$12,000, and is facing a big problem: If it team doesn't raise enough money by April 1, the statue may never be made.

Dettloff said private individuals have donated, but so far no corporate or foundation sponsors have given money to the cause. "We sent sponsorship packages to between 75 and 100 potential sponsors," Dettloff said.

For those interested in sponsorship, Team Detroit is conducting tours of the Heidelberg Project for potential sponsors. For those interested in donating, Team Detroit can be contacted via e-mail at [acaidsunitedteamd@gmail.com](mailto:acaidsunitedteamd@gmail.com) or through Team Detroit's Facebook event page (search Facebook for "HIV/AIDS Awareness Sculpture for Detroit").

## Affirmations annual gala supports LGBT community

FERNDALE—Equal rights supporters across metro Detroit will enjoy a unique and theatrical experience at the area's largest fundraising event for LGBTs on Saturday, March 19th. Affirmations' 12th annual Big Bash has a reputation for creating an unusual and bold experience, and this year's Cirque du Soiree will not disappoint.

Guests will enjoy aerial performances by the Detroit Fly House, dinner, music and dancing. The Big Bash takes place at the Suburban Collection Showplace (formerly known as the Rock Financial Showplace) in Novi from 6 p.m. to midnight.

"This event is a really great way to have fun while helping to support an important cause,"

says Lea Brown, Big Bash organizer. "The funds raised at The Big Bash allow Affirmations to continue providing support, education and a safe space for LGBT people across the metro Detroit."

For the first time, the event includes an after-party from 10 p.m. to midnight, with an alternative ticket option offered for just \$35 that includes the silent auction, dancing and an aerial performance. Tickets for the fundraiser can be purchased at [www.thebigbash.org](http://www.thebigbash.org).

For more information about tickets or sponsorship, contact Jeannine Simpson at 248-398-7105.

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 **Heard on Facebook**

**What do you think of the Supreme Court ruling in favor of the Westboro Baptist Church? It says the WBC's protests at soldiers' funerals are protected speech.**

*I hate the Westboro Baptist Church as much as the next guy, but if I am allowed to say hateful, degrading things toward them, then they should have the right to say what they want to me as well. "Hate" speech is still speech. People need to take it as the nonsensical ramblings of deranged sociopaths and quit freaking out so much. Let them wallow in their hate. If you don't like what they have to say, ignore them, or refute them by saying something hateful in return. I love America because our speech is so free. Censorship in any form is stupid.*

—Jay Topham

*They have NO right to disturb ANYONE'S funeral. Free speech does not give them an excuse to cause the deceased's family and friends even more grief. I will bet my bottom dollar if we showed up at Westboro's front door with all manner of Pride signs we would be arrested on the spot. The Supreme Court justices should be ashamed of themselves — once again. And yes, I am gay — I am also a retired veteran of 24 years of service to this country.*

—Jack Miller

*Jack, actually the U.S. constitution says otherwise and this is why the court ruled in their favor. While I find their "protests" distasteful and disgraceful, it does not change the fact that they have the right to exercise their right to free speech and peaceful assembly.*

—Shannon DuBey

*I know the judges ruled according to the Constitution, but it just seems so damn unfair to the families and friends. I do hope the dudes on motorcycles gather with them!*

—Jack Miller

Comments may be edited for grammar and length.

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**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.**

— *First Amendment, U.S. Constitution*

# S/he said Propaganda and Rights

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL



**Matt Kiley**

*"In far too many instances, the press goes after these words as if they were gold — and in a way, they are, if you want to sensationalize your news and get as much traffic as possible to your site. We live in an era in which news sources of all kinds are competing for views. And we also live in an era in which the general public is obsessed with trans people. They can't get enough of us — on reality shows, talk shows, and in sensationalized news headlines. Because the culture seems so completely enamored of us, at least news-wise, we (and particularly trans women) tend to show up in headlines when being trans has absolutely nothing to do with the story. The trans part is just there to get readers, viewers, or clicks."*

— Matt Kailey, in his blog titled "Rep. Chris Lee: When Trans in a Headline Matters," tranifesto.com, Mar. 3.



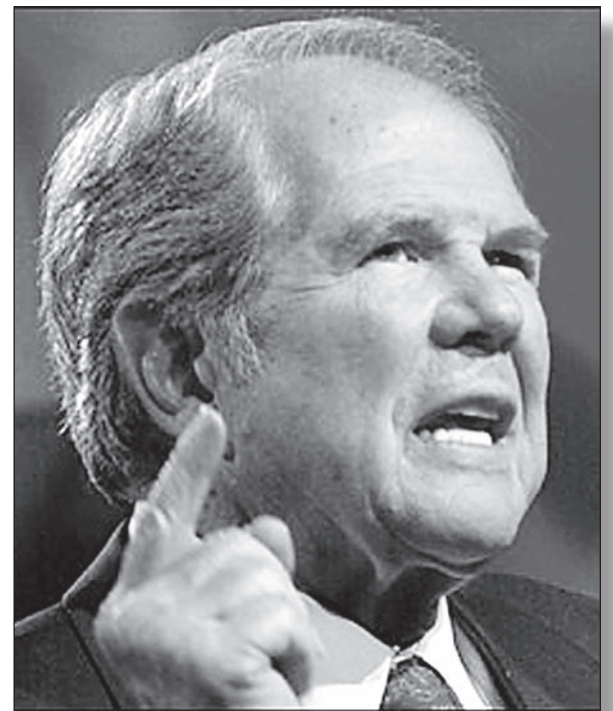
**Ineke Mushovic**

*"We've seen a tremendous amount of progress in the last week and the last couple of years in LGBT rights gains, but we're also facing a political climate where change will be more difficult. Bottom line, if we want to continue to advance equality and to resist opponents' efforts to pull back those advances, we really do need to give to LGBT organizations."*

— Ineke Mushovic, executive director of the Movement Advancement Project, about its new study on the financial health of the nation's LGBT organizations, advocate.com, Mar. 2. MPA is an independent think tank that provides research for LGBT equality.

*"President Barack Obama's decision to no longer defend marriage and federal law is a threat to the common good and must be opposed. He is relentlessly dismantling the moral order and fiber of America. Every civilization until now has understood marriage as the union of one man and one woman for the purpose of procreation and education of children. Traditional marriage is the foundation of the family."*

— Jeremy Strondt, in a letter to the editor of the Detroit Free Press, about the Obama administration's announcement that it would no longer defend the Defense of Marriage Act, freep.com, March 4.



*"Some of these radical gay groups are willing to do anything in the world to have their way of doing sex legitimized by this country. They'll tear down any institution in order to have their way."*

— Pat Robertson, responding to the Obama administration's announcement that it would no longer defend the Defense of Marriage Act, on The 700 Club, towleroad.com, Feb. 24.



## Parting Glances Then & Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

# Time marches on, and on

I recall a cartoon that appeared in The New Yorker magazine a goodly while ago. It appeals to old timers. Like myself.

Two or three Walt Disney animals are gathered deep in a sunlit forest. A cuddly rabbit looks up at a wise, chirpy owl on a tree branch, and asks, "Where were you when Bambi's mother died?" Where, indeed.

It's a lighthearted way of dealing with mortality and memory, gently posing a question we often ponder: "Where were you when so-and-so-important died (was fatally run over by a car, was kidnapped, or outed for being gay)?"

Or, for those of us who are older LGBTs, "Where were you when San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk was assassinated by Dan White? (If you're too young to know who Harvey Milk was, it's time to read, and hopefully to learn from, your gay – ever possibly repeatable – history.)"

I was five when my mother took me to see Disney's 1941 "Bambi." Like hundreds of kids I cried during the fatal forest fire, but was reassured it was make-believe. "Bambi's mom's safe in Heaven," my mom cuddled me, and I felt secure knowing that there could be happy endings after all in my storybook kingdom.

I was 9 when President Franklin Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Georgia, just days before World War II ended. Mrs. Weeks, our music teacher, made the sad announcement. We sang patriotic songs.

"I'll bet Nazi Hitler's glad," I ventured at the dinner table. "Yes, Boy; but not for long," said my dad. Soon the war that killed 50 million people ended. We celebrated with 100,000 others in Downtown Detroit.

And now, 48 years after a fateful 1963 November day, I still vividly recall President John F. Kennedy's assassination. I was working at Wayne State, returning from lunch to hear unthinkable news. Coworkers located a TV set, and we huddled in stunned silence, watching stark, black-and-white history unfold moment by tragic moment.

Two days later I watched as Jack Ruby stepped boldly into a lax, police-cordoned garage, hand gun blasting Lee Harvey Oswald in the stomach. "Oh, God! I can't believe it!" I shouted, shaken, sickened by what I saw, alone in my off-campus apartment.

(Joyce Berman, the gay friendly co-owner of the deli where I have morning coffee, is Ruby's niece. She says her relatives maintain he killed Oswald in cold blood because he had a fanatical admiration for the charismatic Kennedy. Conspiracy theorists would disagree.)

A year after the JFK assassination I sat next to Larry, a U.S. Army sergeant, at Detroit's Woodward Bar. He was on leave. I gave him my address, promptly forgetting about it (sobering up the next morning). A month later I received a letter.

When Larry was discharged, we saw each daily, eventually living together for seven years. I learned he had been in Kennedy's funeral as a member of the Honor Guard. He'd accompanied our beloved President's body for burial at Arlington. A gay sentinel to history.

When Princess Di died in August, 1997 I was staying with Chicago friends. There was a tentative TV interruption, followed minutes later by a cautious note of hope. Finally came the official word: the tunnel crash was fatal. Another sad, numbing weekend for everyone.

I joined the queue of mourners who signed a memorial book at the British Embassy. Princess Di was the epitome of glamour, a fairy tale princess abandoned by Charles, a philandering prince. Her AIDS charity work set her apart as regally special. What will become of boys William and Harry, I wondered? (What indeed?)

It seems like yesterday. Been there. Saw that. Survived. Awaiting the Blue Bird of Happiness. In a forest still dimly lighted.



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## BTL EDITORIAL

## We'll leave regressive Republicans in the dust

In the past few weeks, we have seen progress vehemently opposed and hastily unraveled. President Obama stopped supporting the Defense of Marriage Act and told his legal department to stop fighting for it in court; now, Republicans are likely to get their own lawyers and fight for it themselves. On the state level, Republicans are set to undo a decision to give state employees partner benefits. The decision by the independent, constitutionally-created Michigan Civil Service Commission was supposed to take effect in October, but now it's likely it won't happen at all: if Republicans can get a supermajority in the House and Senate to vote against it, the decision will be undone.

Republicans, basing their support on fear tactics ("The sky is falling! Gays want to destroy marriage! And recruit our children!"), have the power for now. They can undo legislation for now. They can get their older, conservative voting bases freaked out for now. But there's one thing these regressive Republicans can't undo.

It's called social progress.

Republicans can't undo the fact that the mainstream media likes gays, who are no longer just the butt of the joke onscreen. They can't undo the presence of gays as main characters in sitcoms and dramas that are popular with teens and young adults. They can't undo the influence of popular musicians such as Lady Gaga and Jason Mraz, who are using their fame to lobby for LGBT rights.

Republicans can't undo the vocal and powerful group of LGBT teens who are standing up to authority figures and fighting for equality, and they certainly can't make illegal the love of those teens' supportive parents, either.

Republicans can't change that so many of today's teens and young adults, who – LGBT or not – just don't get what the Republican fuss is all about. These young adults have grown up with out LGBT friends and family members. Many of them went to college, where they learned to think critically and reasonably. They spend free time watching Ellen and Glee. To

Republicans can legislate from the top all they want, but they can't legislate social change.

them, Republicans look stodgy, unreasonable and decidedly old-fashioned.

Republicans can't undo the effect of the social media revolution. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are all making it possible for people to connect with one another across states, countries and continents. Connecting with each other enables people to feel less isolated and to band together for more organized and effective change.

Spaces like Facebook also tend to become forums for clumsy but open public debates, as acquaintances' views clash on Facebook walls and posts. Republicans can't undo these challenging, questioning and mind-expanding exchanges.

Republicans can legislate from the top all they want, but they can't legislate social change. Try as they might, they can't control the minds of the masses – minds that are slowly getting over their fear of LGBTs through education, acceptance and love.

And even though laws and policies are subject to the zigzag of progress – one step forward, two (or three) steps back – social progress tends to go in one direction. Once a parent decides to side with the LGBT community because their kid's a part of it, it's all but impossible to undo.

So when you think about it this way, Republicans' tantrums about LGBT rights don't look like roadblocks. They look like pathetic attempts to postpone the inevitable. It's as if they're flailing in vain against the rushing current. Time only moves forward. Every day the sun rises and sets. Every day, we work for progress, and every day we win – if only just a little.

## VIEWPOINT



## Westboro thrives on publicity

BY KEITH ORR

I have a history with the Westboro Baptist Church. They picketed me.

I was not the first. Their first pickets go back to the 1980s. They would show up at funerals of people who had died from HIV/AIDS. Outside of the gay community no one was taking issue with this. Legislators were not passing bills limiting how far picketers had to stay away from funerals. In fact, it appeared that most of America had no problem with the WBC.

They first made mainstream news when they picketed Matthew Shepard's funeral. The brutality of that murder actually brought some compassion from folks outside the gay community. There was even a bit of outrage that this nutcase was picketing this funeral.

The Phelps family has always thrived on publicity. They were drunk with pleasure from all the publicity they got from picketing Matthew Shepard. Pissing off gays wasn't getting them what they wanted. They needed to piss off a lot more people.

Queers who paid attention understood that WBC pissed people off so that other people would engage them. If they engaged the Phelps physically, the family took them to court. The Phelps also sued local municipalities for not protecting their First Amendment rights.

*This is a major source of funding for the Phelps clan.*

That is VERY important to note. Let me rephrase it. If the Phelps can get you into court, they make money.

Fred Phelps holds no degree from any religious seminary or other institution. The "Reverend" title is self-proclaimed. Note that I NEVER call him Rev. Phelps. No one else should, either.

Phelps is a disbarred lawyer. He was disbarred for an enormous number of nuisance lawsuits. Several of his children are lawyers. They do the courtwork now.

If you ever go to one of his protests, you will see a guy nearby videotaping everything. His job is simple. He is collecting evidence.

When those planes slammed into the twin towers, the Phelps clan put out a news release that they were happy this happened. It happened because America was being so nice to all of its

I am proud that when Phelps picketed me in 2001 we beat him at his own game.

gay citizens. And then they picketed the funerals of people who died in the 9/11 attacks. As America went to war in Afghanistan, and then Iraq, they started picketing military funerals. Brilliant. That really pisses people off, and they had a lot more lawsuits. If you are a member of the Phelps clan, that means business is good.

One of those funerals was for Marine Lance Cpl. Matthew Snyder.

Snyder's father sued the Phelps Clan. I feel sorry for Albert Snyder. He lost his son to war. And then he had some nutjobs show up at his son's funeral. I know how horrible it is because Phelps has been doing that to the queer community for 25 years.

But I am very angry with him for engaging the Phelps family in court. What was he thinking? The Phelps clan got a lot of publicity. They LOVE bad publicity.

And they have a Supreme Court judgment in their favor, and I am sure a hefty monetary settlement is on its way, if it was not a part of this judgement.

That will keep them picketing for a long time to come.

And it was *entirely* predictable. If Mr. Snyder had asked a queer, we could have told him what was going to happen.

I actually completely agree with the Supreme Court decision. If unpopular speech is not protected, well, we wouldn't have even had an LGBT rights movement. The answer to hate speech is not to legislate against it. The answer is to use the hate speech to educate rational people of your cause.

I am proud that when Phelps picketed me in 2001 we beat him at his own game. We raised money instead of him. And the message the media picked up on was our message, not the whack job's. Other folks have found clever ways of meeting him head on without giving him publicity or money.

I wish Mr Snyder had.

# Supreme Court rules in favor of Westboro Baptist Church

## Court says hate protests are protected speech

BY LISA KEEN

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled March 2 that the First Amendment protects an anti-gay protester's demonstrations in close proximity to a private funeral service.

The case, *Snyder v. Phelps*, arose out of a conflict around anti-gay activist Fred Phelps and his followers, the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kans., staging loud and hate-filled protests near the funerals of American soldiers. The now-infamous protest signs claim soldiers deserve to die because American society tolerates homosexuality.

One family of a service member decided to take action to stop the protests and filed suit in federal court, claiming the protests amounted to intentional infliction of emotional distress, a violation of the family's right to privacy, and civil conspiracy.

The conflict began in March 2006 when the family of Matthew Snyder, a Marine killed in Iraq, held a funeral service for him in Maryland. Later that day, they saw television news reports of the funeral being picketed by Phelps and his followers carrying signs, saying such things as "Fag troops," "Semper fi fags," "God Hates Fags," and "Thank God for dead soldiers." Phelps had also posted his comments on his website.

The family sued Phelps in 2007, and were awarded a total of nearly \$11 million, which was later reduced to \$5 million. Phelps appealed the ruling in 2008 to a federal appeals court, which sided with the church on the basis of First Amendment rights and threw out the \$5 million judgment.

In an 8-1 decision, with only Justice Samuel Alito dissenting, the high court agreed with the federal appeals court, saying that the free speech clause of the First Amendment protects public speech, which includes speech related to "any matter of political, social, or other concern to the community."

The vote was somewhat of a surprise. At oral arguments in October 2010, most of the justices challenged Phelps' attorney, his daughter Margie Phelps, about their "outrageous conduct" and "exploiting" a family's time of grief.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor had said she had trouble with Phelps' claim that the protests were simply engaging in public discourse about a public issue, given that some of their speech was "directed at the Snyders" and "talking about them raising Matthew for the devil, teaching him to defy the creator, to divorce and commit adultery."

Chief Justice John Roberts said the case largely turned on whether the Phelps' protests were "of public or private concern, as determined by all the circumstances in the case." Citing several Supreme Court precedents, he noted that speech on public concerns is entitled to "special protection." Roberts said the content of the Phelps protest "plainly relates to broad issues of

"Westboro's funeral picketing is certainly hurtful and its contribution to public discourse may be negligible. But Westboro addressed matters of public import on public property, in a peaceful manner, in full compliance with the guidance of local officials."

— Chief Justice John Roberts

interest to society at large." He reiterated the messages on several posters, including "God Hates Fags" and "Semper Fi Fags," "Fags Doom Nations," and "Fag Troops."

"While these messages may fall short of refined social or political commentary," wrote Roberts, "the issues they highlight—the political and moral conduct of the United States and its citizens, the fate of our Nation, homosexuality in the military, and scandals involving the Catholic clergy—are matters of public import."

In evaluating the context of the messages, Roberts said that, although the protest was staged outside a private funeral, it took place "peacefully on matters of public concern at a public place adjacent to a public street."

Such speech, he wrote, "cannot be restricted simply because it is upsetting or arouses contempt." The majority also held that the funeral site did not justify the charge that the Westboro group had violated the family's privacy, given that the protest was only barely visible to the family.

Roberts referred to a 1995 Supreme Court decision in *Hurley v. Irish-American Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston* to support his argument. In that decision, the Supreme Court said a St. Patrick's Day Parade organizer had the right to exclude an openly gay contingent from the annual event, which took place on a public street. But in that case, the high court ruled that the parade organizer was a private party and that the parade was, in essence, the organizer's speech.

"Westboro believes that America is morally flawed," wrote Roberts, "many Americans might feel the same about Westboro. Westboro's funeral picketing is certainly hurtful and its contribution to public discourse may be negligible. But Westboro addressed matters of public import on public property, in a peaceful manner, in full compliance with the guidance of local officials."

Justice Stephen Breyer concurred with the decision but added his own statement saying he felt the opinion did not address other important aspects of the case—such as the fact that the protests were broadcast on television and that the messages were

also posted on the Internet.

Justice Alito said he does not believe the First Amendment is "a license for the vicious verbal assault that occurred in this case." Alito said Westboro members have "almost limitless opportunities to express their views" but that that doesn't mean "they may intentionally inflict severe emotional injury on private persons at a time of intense emotional sensitivity by launching vicious verbal attacks that make no contribution to public debate."

Alito said he believes Westboro has "devised a strategy" to maximize publicity for their messages by targeting specific funerals and sending out press releases to "ensure that their protests will attract public attention."

"This strategy works," Alito said, "because it is expected that respondents' verbal assaults will wound the family and friends of the deceased and because the media is irresistibly drawn to the sight of persons who are visibly in grief." He pointed to the Westboro church's recent protests around the funeral for a nine-year-old girl in the Tucson shootings this year and around the funerals for five Amish girls killed by a gunman in 2006.

In Matthew Snyder's case, said Alito, the Westboro's picket signs "would most naturally have been understood as suggesting—falsely—that Matthew was gay. Homosexuality was the theme of many of the signs," he noted. "A bystander seeing those signs would have likely concluded that they were meant to suggest that the deceased was a homosexual." He noted that the church members followed up with statements on their website, saying that Matthew's parents "sent him to fight for the United States of Sodom."

Such comments, said Alito, go "far beyond commentary on matters of public concern." He said he would allow the Snyder family to recover damages for the intentional infliction of emotional distress caused by speech on a matter of private concern.

"In order to have a society in which public issues can be openly and vigorously debated," said Alito, "it is not necessary to allow the brutalization of innocent victims like petitioner."

## Creep OF THE Week

# Rick Santorum

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

I'm sure glad my last name isn't Santorum. For one thing, I wouldn't want to be related to Rick Santorum. For another thing, his name means "The frothy mix of lube and fecal matter that is sometimes the byproduct of anal sex." And that's the first thing that pops up on Google.



Rick Santorum

Santorum's "Google problem," as it has been dubbed in the media lately, is something he brought on himself when he compared gays getting married to man-on-dog sex. Shortly thereafter, a reader of Dan Savage's "Savage Love" column suggested coining "Santorum" as a sex term. Savage obliged. And "santorum" was born.

In 2007 Santorum was voted out of his U.S. Senate seat and we didn't hear much from him. But he's back with his eye on being President Frothy-Mix-of-Lube-and-Fecal-Matter of the United States, and making sure gays and lesbians aren't allowed to marry is still one of his biggest concerns.

Needless to say, President Obama's recent decision to stop defending the Defense of Marriage Act in court because it is unconstitutional has gotten Santorum riled.

In a March 4 column for the *Des Moines Register*, Santorum wrote, "Intellectually, morally, and constitutionally President Obama's claim is absurd. And it is a dagger aimed at the heart of a core constitutional value: the free exercise of religion."

This is, of course, not true. The anti-gay right has been crying about how treating gays equally is akin to banning God and demanding everyone worship Perez Hilton. No one is advocating locking pastors up or turning churches into gay bars. What Santorum is really arguing for isn't the freedom of religion; it's the freedom to discriminate and the freedom to legislate using an anti-gay "morality" code based on religion.

Oddly, to defend his argument he used the example of Catholic Charities in Boston who stopped doing adoptions because they didn't want to grant adoptions to gays. According to *The Boston Globe*, "[Catholic Charities decided] to abandon its founding mission, rather than comply with state law requiring that gays be allowed to adopt children." Mind you, the state wasn't forcing Catholic Charities to hand over all of the babies to a pillaging gay mob. The state was saying, "Look, you can't judge a parent unfit just because he or she is a homo." That was, obviously, too much to ask, and the organization chose dogma over kids who needed help.

"With the redefinition of marriage, religious groups of all types will be forced to make the same type of choice—get out of the business of helping people or compromise your constitutionally protected convictions," Santorum wrote.

Let me get this straight: if gays are treated equally then religions of all kinds will abandon social services? Like the local church-run soup kitchen won't give out soup anymore because they don't want to give soup to gays? It's as if the only thing between the teachings of, say, Jesus and abject indifference to human suffering and need is homosexuality. So long as religious organizations can discriminate against gays, all is right with the world. Makes perfect sense.

In his column Santorum charitably added, "I believe if two adults of the same sex want to have a relationship that is their business. But when they ask society to give that relationship special recognition and privileges, then we should be able to have a rational debate about whether that is good public policy."

Aww, isn't that sweet? Santorum thinks gays deserve to mind their own business. So long as they aren't asking to be treated fairly, everything's cool.

As for the "have a rational debate" part, that's pretty suspect coming from someone who thinks a man having sex with his husband is the same as a man fucking a dog.

## National Briefs

BY REX WOCKNER

### Gay marriage safe in New Hampshire for now

New Hampshire's Legislature will not vote in 2011 on either of two bills aimed at repealing the two-year-old law that made same-sex marriage legal.

Members of the House judiciary committee voted 15-0 without debate March 3 to place the bills on hold until 2012.

The committee unanimously voted down a third bill that would have converted same-sex marriages into a new kind of civil union different from the civil unions New Hampshire used to have.

An estimated 1,400 same-sex couples have married in New Hampshire.

### Wyoming Senate kills anti-gay-marriage bill

Wyoming's Senate voted 16-14 March 2 to kill a bill banning recognition of same-sex marriages entered into in other states and nations.

The bill was designed to counteract a state law that recognizes legal marriages from other states and countries.

Wyoming lawmakers also recently killed a proposal to amend the state constitution to ban same-sex marriage.

### Immigration Equality to sue federal government

The LGBT group Immigration Equality is planning to sue the federal government over the Defense of Marriage Act. The group says DOMA prevents married U.S. citizens from bringing their foreign same-sex spouses to live with them in U.S. states that allow same-sex marriage or recognize same-sex marriages from elsewhere.

The planned lawsuit follows President Barack Obama's recent instruction to the Department of Justice that it stop defending in court the section of DOMA that bans the federal government from recognizing states' same-sex marriages.

Immigration Equality said it believes there is a good chance the lawsuit will succeed, at least for legally married same-sex couples in states that allow or recognize same-sex marriages

## Rev. Peter J. Gomes dies after stroke

WASHINGTON — The Rev. Peter J. Gomes, theologian, author, Harvard professor of Christian Morals and minister at Boston's Memorial Church, died Feb. 28 from complications arising from a stroke. Dr. Sharon Groves, director of the Human Rights Campaign's Religion and Faith Program, released a statement after Gomes' death.

"Rev. Gomes was instrumental in shaping how a new generation approaches the Bible and the discussion of sexuality," Groves said. "Gomes deftly demonstrated in the pulpit and on the page how the Bible has systematically been used as a tool of both liberation and oppression.

"But Gomes did more than rail against religious bigotry; he offered a way for religious people to claim their faith and their sexuality ... In his 1996 bestseller, 'The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart,' he taught people to pay attention to the spirit of the Bible rather than viewing it as a convenient shield for their prejudices.

"He was a paradigm-shifter who gave religious and secular leaders alike a way to see how the dream of equality for all people had a resounding place among the faithful. He will be deeply missed."

# Boehner calls for House group to defend DOMA

## House members introduce bills to expand, defend DOMA

BY LISA KEEN

House Speaker John Boehner announced March 4 that the House would take some action to defend the federal law that prohibits recognition of same-sex marriages. Meanwhile, at least three bills were introduced this week to either defend or expand the reach of the Defense of Marriage Act.

Boehner's statement did not specify what the House would do to defend DOMA. It said only that he would convene a meeting of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group "for the purpose of initiating action by the House to defend this law.

"It is regrettable that the Obama Administration has opened this divisive issue at a time when Americans want their leaders to focus on jobs and the challenges facing our economy," said the statement. "The constitutionality of this law should be determined by the courts — not by the president unilaterally — and this action by the House will ensure the matter is addressed in a manner consistent with our Constitution."

In fact, the Department of Justice made clear, when it announced it would no

longer defend DOMA in court, that it was up to the courts to make the final determination of whether the law is constitutional. The administration also made clear it intended to continue enforcing the law until the law is determined to be unconstitutional by the courts.

While Boehner said last week he had a number of options on the table concerning DOMA, the announcement that he was calling a meeting of the Advisory Group suggests a somewhat measured response given the level of vitriol on the conservative right concerning the DOJ's decision.

Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., introduced bill HR-875 on March 2 to prevent any federal court from deciding "any question pertaining to the interpretation of, or the validity under the Constitution" of DOMA. The bill has 13 sponsors, including four members of the Texas delegation (Reps. Joe Barton, Ralph Hall, Jeb Hensarling, and Ron Paul), and one member of the Florida delegation (Rep. Dennis Ross).

Republican Rep. Paul Broun of Georgia introduced bill HJR-45 to amend the U.S. Constitution to prohibit the U.S. Constitution and the constitution of any

state from recognizing marriages other than "a man and a woman." The bill has 21 co-sponsors, including Reps. Joe Barton, Louie Gohmert, Randy Neugebauer of Texas, Rep. Phil Gingrey and Lynn Westmoreland of Georgia, and Rep. Jeff Miller of Florida.

And Republican Rep. Louie Gohmert of Texas introduced bill HR-143 directing the House speaker to take "any and all actions necessary" to defend DOMA. The bill has 26 co-sponsors, including Reps. Bill Flores and Pete Olson of Texas, Rep. Phil Gingrey of Georgia, Rep. Dan Lungren of California, Reps. Donald Manzullo and Joe Walsh of Illinois, and Reps. Jeff Miller, Richard Nugent and Steve Southerland of Florida.

The Advisory Group, noted in the Speaker's press release, is a five-member panel consisting of the house speaker, the majority and minority leaders, and the majority and minority whips.

"Under House rules, the advisory group has the authority to instruct the non-partisan office of the House General Counsel to take legal action on behalf of the House of Representatives," noted the press release.

## Republicans hold up gay nominee confirmation

### Ed DuMont is Obama's only openly gay nominee to a federal appeals bench

BY LISA KEEN

Republican members of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee have been holding up the nomination of President Obama's only openly gay nominee to a federal appeals bench.

President Obama nominated Washington, D.C., attorney Ed DuMont to the Federal Circuit bench on April 14 last year, but the nomination has not progressed through the usual committee hearing and vote to move to the Senate floor. At the end of the last Congressional session, the committee returned DuMont's nomination to the president, along with those of several other appeals court nominees who had not gained confirmation. The president re-nominated those candidates at the start of the new congressional session and several have seen movement — either their first hearing or even a second one.

But DuMont's nomination has not received even one hearing.

In fact, only one other nominee on the committee's list of pending federal appeals court nominees has waited longer than DuMont for a confirmation vote: controversial liberal nominee Goodwin Liu.

Liu was first nominated in February 2010 and was reported favorably out of committee in May. But his nomination never reached the floor.

Liu, however, has already received a second confirmation hearing just this month. And the committee has hearings scheduled on March 10 for two federal appeals candidates who were nominated months after DuMont was. One of those two nominees, Jimmie Reyna, was nominated to the Federal Circuit five months after DuMont.

Asked why DuMont's nomination has not been scheduled for a hearing, a spokeswoman for Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy said only that "Committee Republicans are still reviewing information about the nomination."

A spokeswoman for the committee's ranking minority member, Senator Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, did not respond to a request for comment, nor did a spokeswoman for DuMont.

If confirmed, DuMont would be the first openly gay person to be appointed to a federal appeals bench. The Federal Circuit, located in Washington, D.C., is the only federal appeals court with national jurisdiction and hears cases involving government contracts, patents, trademarks, customs issues and veterans' benefits.

DuMont's responses to the committee's routine questionnaire included responses that would seem to please members of both sides of the partisan aisle. He noted having made contributions to a large number of gay and progressive groups, but he also signed onto a

letter of support for one of President George W. Bush's controversial conservative appeals court nominee, Miguel Estrada. DuMont also clerked for an appointee of President Reagan, 7th Circuit Court Judge Richard Posner.

Meanwhile, openly gay district court nominee J. Paul Oetken has not yet been scheduled for a hearing, but President Obama nominated him only Jan. 26 of this year.

Oetken is nominated for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, covering much of Manhattan.

In response to questions from the Senate Judiciary Committee's standard questionnaire, Oetken indicated that he co-authored a friend-of-the-court brief in support of overturning sodomy laws, in *Lawrence v. Texas*. The U.S. Supreme Court struck down sodomy laws in that case, with a decision issued in 2003. Oetken also noted he holds memberships in the Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal, and the ACLU's LGBT Project.

Oetken served as Associate Counsel to President Clinton from 1999 to 2001.

If approved, Oetken would become the second openly gay judge in that federal district — along with Deborah Batts. He would be the third openly gay federal judge in the country — along with Emily Hewitt of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. Batts and Hewitt were both appointed by President Clinton.

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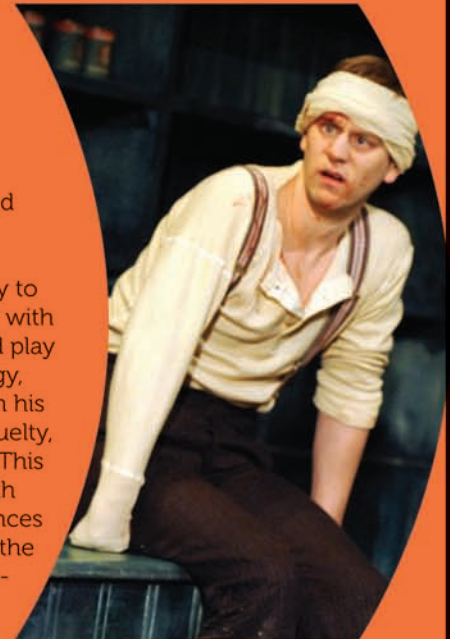
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## Open gays elected to Irish Dail

Two gay men made history by being elected to Ireland's lower house of Parliament, Dail Eireann, on Feb. 25.

Dominic Hannigan will represent Meath East, a parliamentary constituency in the northeast of the nation, for the Labour Party.

And John Lyons will represent the constituency of Dublin North West for Labour.

Hannigan currently is a member of the Seanad Eireann, or Senate. Members of that body are not directly elected, and its powers are weaker than those of the Dail.

Hannigan will have to give up that seat, to which he was appointed in 2007 by fellow politicians.

Ireland's only other openly gay member of Parliament – current or past – also is a senator. Since 1987, David Norris has represented voters who are graduates of the University of Dublin.

## Mozambique LGBT group still unregistered

Mozambique's only LGBT group, Lambda, said March 1 that it has been waiting three years for the government to complete its official registration.

The group, also known as the Mozambican Association for the Defense of Sexual Minorities, submitted its documents to the registry office in January 2008.

The registrar responded that the group's existence "offends current morality," and forwarded the forms to the Justice Ministry for review.

In early 2009, Justice Minister Benvinda Levi suggested a rewrite of one article of the group's statutes, which the group agreed to.

In early 2010, Lambda met with the deputy justice minister. He said there was no legal impediment to registration and suggested the group submit a recounting of facts and law to the ministry, which it did.

Nothing has happened since then, which Lambda says amounts to a violation of its constitutional right to freedom of association.

## Honduras special unit to investigate LGBT hate crimes

Honduras is creating an investigative unit and task force to tackle hate crimes against LGBTI people, women, youth and journalists.

The government ministers of human rights and public security will be directly involved in the undertaking, which will utilize 150 researchers.

Officials estimate that Honduras has seen 200 anti-LGBTI killings in the past five years.

In January, the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa urged the Honduran government to "vigorously investigate" five murders of LGBT people that took place since Dec. 18, 2010.

The embassy expressed "great concern" about the killings and said "the protection of Honduran law extends to all citizens regardless of sexual orientation."

The government must "take all necessary steps to protect LGBT persons, who are among the most vulnerable to violence and abuse in Honduras," the U.S. officials said.

## Cuban TV airs Glee

Cuba's Cubavision channel is airing the uebergay U.S. television series Glee, each Saturday at 5:45 p.m. State TV also recently aired Six Feet Under.

## Belarus LGBTs hope to march in May

Gay activists in Minsk, Belarus, applied to the city government March 4 for permission to hold a "March of Equality" on May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Last year, the city's Executive Committee banned a gay pride march and, when activists ignored the ban, several of them were aggressively arrested for taking part in an unsanctioned public action.

Moscow Pride founder Nikolai Alekseev, who joined that march, said police were "brutal and violent."

This year, the organizers' application expanded the scope of the proposed march to include several other minority groups in hopes of improving the odds of getting city approval and reducing hostility from anti-gay protesters.

The march, if approved, will wrap up four days of "Festival of Equality" events that include a film screening, a photo exhibition and other activities.

## Report: Int'l AIDS Conference shortchanges at-risk populations

A new report charges that the biennial International AIDS Conference, the premier gathering for people working in the HIV field, shortchanges groups most likely to become infected with HIV, including gay men, transgender people, sex workers and drug users.

An "audit" of conference programming, conducted by the Global Forum on MSM & HIV, analyzed last year's gathering in Vienna and found that the percentage of sessions exclusively focused on such groups was 2.6 percent for men who have sex with men, 1.1 percent for transgender people, 3 percent for sex workers and 4.5 percent for drug users.

"While the International AIDS Society turns a blind eye, HIV rates among these populations continue to climb around the world," said the forum's executive officer, Dr. George Ayala. "The IAC is the world's most important opportunity for international exchange and collaboration on HIV and AIDS. Such abysmal representation of most-at-risk groups only serves to reinforce the invisibility, discrimination and disregard that drive the epidemic among these communities."

The report recommends that conference organizers ensure a transparent process for reviewing abstracts and designing programming, increase their support of authors developing abstracts focused on key populations, and broaden representation on the committees that develop conference programming.

"It is incumbent upon the organizers to ensure that the IAC becomes a vehicle for change, shifting the global landscape so that funding, research and programs are directed to those who need them most. Right now it's part of the problem," Ayala said.

## LGBT group forms in Montenegro

An LGBT organization has formed and been officially registered in Podgorica, capital of the former Yugoslav republic of Montenegro. The group, LGBT Forum Progress, is pressing for a law granting gay couples the rights of marriage.




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# Morgan Fairchild: HER GAY LOVE STORY

"eCupid" makes its worldwide premiere during the Detroit Independent Film Festival on March 11 at the Burton Theatre.

## Actress on new film, Meryl stealing movies and her latest role – as fairy godmother

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

It's no stretch really that Morgan Fairchild's latest role in the queer-themed "eCupid" has her trying to connect two gay men. She's been connecting with gay people her whole life, even before the bombshell-with-brains went lesbian for Sandra Bernhard on "Roseanne." In the indie romantic comedy, which premieres for the first time ever during the Detroit Independent Film Festival at 8 p.m. March 11 at the Burton Theatre, the actress stars as a mysteriously wise waitress who knows her gays.

Recently, Fairchild talked about her "eCupid" and "Roseanne" roles, and the progress we've made with LGBT characters. The 61-year-old also chatted about breaking the AIDS stigma in the '80s, why actresses over 40 can't find work (hint: Meryl Streep), and how her Twitter followers get more than they bargain for.

**Essentially you play the fairy godmother of the gays in "eCupid."**

Yeah, that's my role in life. (Laughs)

### 'eCupid'

8 p.m. March 11  
Burton Theatre  
3420 Cass Ave., Detroit  
detroitiff.com

#### How did you get involved in the movie?

They offered it to me, and so I read the script and I thought it was really cute. It's a traditional romantic comedy with two guys instead of a guy and a girl, and I'm just a big supporter of the LGBT community being treated equally – that they have real lives, that they can be cute, that it all doesn't have to be strange and dark stories, or even sexy stories. This one is just a light romantic comedy that could've been done in the '30s.

**You make a good point. So many gay films, especially in the '80s and '90s, were about AIDS and, well, AIDS.**

Yeah, AIDS – or bathhouses, guys in leather and a lot of S&M. (Laughs) I have so many gay friends and relatives, and I've been involved in

the theater since I was 10 – all my friends were always gay. There are a lot of different kinds of people, so I was just happy to see a cute movie that just happens to be gay.

The detective series I did with Chad Allen, "Shock to the System," was the same kind of thing. It's a detective story with a guy who comes home to his lover who's gay. I think it's very important to show a broad spectrum of emotions and lifestyles – just people living their lives.

#### Are you doing any other gay-themed projects?

I'm getting ready to do one right now called "Happy Ending," and it's not exactly gay-themed, but it's sort of. I don't even know if I'm allowed to talk about it yet, but I'll just say it's an interesting story about a woman who comes to terms with her life and has an affair with another woman who isn't gay – ostensibly they're both straight but end up having an affair that becomes very meaningful and changes both of their lives. So to me, that's gay themed, but I don't know if the director actually thinks it is. (Laughs)

It's a really nice script, and that's what

you're always looking for – good stories of all kinds being told, whether it's drama or comedy, or a romantic comedy where people just happen to be gay. It's the same way in real life. I mean, so many conservative people would be shocked to know that friends of theirs are gay and just have normal lives.

**They always say everyone knows at least one gay person.**

God, I know millions! A lot of my fan base has always been gay, and I just grew up around everybody being gay, so I've known since a very early age that the gay and lesbian friends that I had were exactly the same as the others. They went through the same heartache; they had the same hope and aspirations. Everything was the same – except the sexual orientation.

**Why do you think your fan base is mostly gay?**

Oh, because I play those sort of vampy bitches. I've been told that a lot of guys do me in clubs, so I guess I'm up there with Cher and Liza.

See Fairchild, page 23

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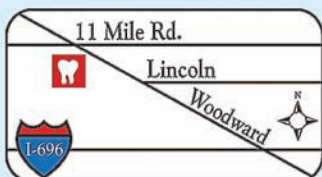
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Danish import talks gay fans, sex in pop music and her no-rules world

# Oh Land is Our Land

Oh Land stops in Pontiac on her first-ever North American tour. Photo courtesy of Epic Records

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Nanna Oland Fabricius is in her own world again. That's where the Danish artist – who goes by Oh Land, a play on her middle name – imagines a mystical, anything-goes life for herself. And it's from that place that she wrote her self-titled American debut, an electropop piece of dreamy dance songs like the first single “Sun of a Gun” and destined-to-be-gay-anthem “We Turn It Up.”

She recently launched her first-ever North American tour, one that promises to be a visual dazzler with balloon video projections and her cool couture sense. From the road, Oh Land spoke to us about her wacky dreams, being a “Black Swan” ballerina and how sexuality in music videos bores her.

**Oh Land isn't just a play on your middle name, but you describe it as a fairytale world where anything can happen.**

That's how I see my little musical world. When I write, I feel like I dive into this place where there's room and space for all of my thoughts and dreams and fears. There's nothing I try to hide and that's my land of Oh, where everything can happen.

**Even gay marriage?**

Yeah, totally! Everyone can get married – wherever there's love.

**Have you ever been inspired creatively by a dream?**

I have very vivid dreams, and I often take things

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directly from my dreams and translate them into either ideas for music videos or press photos or even music sometimes. I think I'm quite a light sleeper so I dream very specific things.

**What's the craziest dream that you've had?**

I've had so many crazy dreams! (Laughs) Recently, the dream that I liked the most involved three cats and three black swans that were flying over me in this really cool formation, and it just looked amazing, and I was lying on the grass taking a picture of it. I wish I had that picture in real life.

**Why do you think you connect so well with gay people?**

I've been playing a lot of shows at gay clubs and I feel like I've always had a very warm welcome. Maybe because my show doesn't really have any rules and it's very kind of visual, and a lot of people in the gay community can relate to that or feel the things that I express.

**Between Lady Gaga and Katy Perry and all the other gay-adored dance divas, do you feel like you have to compete for some of the gay love?**

No, I don't actually. Whoever wants to listen to my music and whoever can relate to it somehow or get some kind emotion out of it, I'm just really, really happy for every single fan I get. I'm not competitive in that way.

**How did having two musical parents – a mom who was an opera singer and a father who was a composer – influence your career?**

They would always play and rehearse, and musicians would come in and out of the house all the time, so we didn't really put on records. I'd always listen to live music. I remember my childhood home as just being like one big live concert all the time, and that influenced me a lot. We always sang when my mom was singing, and I'd always make vocal harmonies for her songs. I've really brought that with me to the music I make today.

**After watching the video for “Sun of a Gun,” one thing I noticed that sets you apart from other female artists is that you're more focused on art than sex. Is overt sexuality not something that interests you?**

Yeah. It's because I was dancing ballet for 10 years and ballet is pretty much based on one idea of beauty – and the idea of always trying to be pretty or perfect and live up to a specific ideal just really bored me after I'd spent so much time trying to be that. The harder you try to reach perfection, the bigger the flaws will seem. That's my experience at least. So I just never try to live up to a certain idea of how you're supposed to move in music videos or in general as a woman.

I see a lot of girls that have to play on sexy and I just think it can be a little boring.

**Were you a Natalie Portman/“Black Swan” ballerina?**

(Laughs) When I saw that movie I definitely could relate to it in a way. Not literally, but I could at least sympathize with her because it's more than just being a ballet dancer. It's about what you sacrifice for the arts, whatever kind of artist you are.

**You don't tear your fingernails off, do you?**

No! (Laughs) But you know, when you do something really passionately, it's very common that you kind of become what you do – and that's always dangerous.

**Would you still be a ballerina if you didn't injure your back?**

I would still be dancing but I feel – and it probably sounds overly religious – there's a meaning behind what happened in my life, and I think it needed to happen for me to get to music.

**You're always told how much you look like a model. Have you ever considered modeling?**

No, never. I would be a terrible model. It would never work for me. I'm way too short and I'm way too opinionated. I would be like, “Can you turn that light a little?” and “Can you photograph me from another angle?” It would be terrible. And I would find it hard trying to walk and look a certain way. I'd feel silly because I know I'm not like that.

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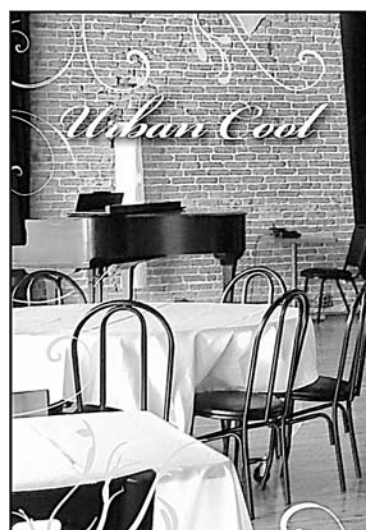
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Continued from p. 17

(Laughs) Although, I don't sing, so I don't know what they do to imitate me exactly!

When I was on tour with "The Graduate," every opening night party I would have some guy come up to me and say, "I do you in my act, do you want to see?" I'm sort of afraid to see what they do to do me!

**Maybe they do Old Navy commercials.**

That they could do!

**In "eCupid," you play a wise waitress who dishes relationship tips to two gay men. Do people come to you for advice often?**

You never tell anyone how to run their life, and I don't feel called upon to jump in and tell people how to do it either unless I'm asked. But even if asked, I think you can only make suggestions and offer your own experience: "You know, when I was younger I got into something like this and here's how I handled it for better or for worse – and it worked out well, or it didn't." If it didn't, I'd advise you not to do it that way! (Laughs)

**Good advice! You also have expert gay-dar in the film. Are you good at spotting the gays?**

I grew up with gay guys, so I'm pretty good at it. I actually had one friend who was a magazine publisher who was dating all these hot women around L.A. and at one point said, "I have to tell you: I'm gay." I told him I knew, and he said, "How do you know when I didn't know?!" I said, "I don't know. I just knew. I didn't know you didn't know. I thought the women were beards!"

**The film also touches on the power of phone apps on our lives.**

I don't have any apps, so this was all new to me. I have a very old Samsung that my young friends laugh at.

**Tell me you at least text.**

Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I text. And I'm on Twitter now. I'm a foreign policy nut, so I got on Twitter (@morgfair), and I think some of the people who follow me get a little disappointed because between makeup tips, they're also getting a lot of Libyan meltdown analyses. I've tried to bring it back a bit because some of the people who follow me are foreign policy nuts and then some are just fans who just want hair and makeup tips.

**For the last few years, you've been switching back and forth between doing indies and TV shows. Which do you prefer, film or TV?**

Oh, you know, I just like acting. I grew up in the theater and started doing film and television a little later on, so I just go back and forth between all mediums. To survive in this business these days – don't forget I'm on the board of two unions, and you see all the numbers – every actor I know is having to do a lot of different mediums just to stay relevant, especially if you're over 40 and you're not a kid breaking into the business.

**Is it harder for you to find work now?**

Oh yeah – especially for women. There are just fewer parts for women over 40.

"When they offered it ('Roseanne') to me, I knew that the last person in the world that anybody would see walking through that door after the big buildup of 'Sandra (Bernhard) has a new girlfriend' would be Morgan Fairchild."

**Well, look at Meryl Streep.**

Well, look at Meryl Streep – she takes every good part for any woman over 40. When was the last time you saw Goldie Hawn or Bette Midler or Barbra Streisand or Susan Sarandon as a lead in a movie? Other than Meryl, there's nobody. If there's a good script, she takes it.

**It's surprising how sexist Hollywood still is – and yet it seems that men, like Clint Eastwood, are thriving in the business.**

Not so much. Look at Clint Eastwood, but he's the iconic one. But for "Invictus" with Morgan Freeman and Clint Eastwood directing, I think they had to get Matt Damon to play the other character in order to get it green-lit. I mean, there's an ageism undercurrent even for men in leads.

**In the '90s you played Sandra Bernhard's bisexual girlfriend on "Roseanne." How far have we come with gay characters on TV?**

We've come a long way since then. That was very breakthrough when I did that, which I wanted it to be. When they offered it to me, I knew that the last person in the world that anybody would see walking through that door after the big buildup of "Sandra has a new girlfriend" would be Morgan Fairchild. That's the last person they'd expect. But I think we've come a long way, and we're getting away from stereotyping and just seeing people as people.

**How did that role change your career?**

Oh, it didn't really – except that a lot of people then thought I was a lesbian! I even had my lawyer say, "I know you've been with your boyfriend for a lot of years, but has something changed?" (Laughs) But that's how weird Hollywood is. You just have to say, "No, I believe in stepping out and being iconoclast and breaking barriers and opening up the world for people."

It's the reason I took such a very strong stand on AIDS early on. I'm a virus nut, and my hobbies are emerging viruses and epidemiology. So I knew a lot about the virus when Rock Hudson was announced as being sick, and I knew I was the only celebrity they had who could go on "Nightline" and explain what a retrovirus is and how it works and try to take the stigma off the disease and try to get it treated just like a disease and not a "gay disease." I spent a lot of the '80s and '90s doing that.



**Do you think the stigma still exists?**

No, not nearly like it did. But I spent a lot of time trying to break those barriers down and eventually was joined by other people. When I started doing it, everybody told me not to get involved because it was too controversial, but I knew somebody had to – and I was the only famous face they had who could talk knowledgeably about the disease at the time.

**What made you passionate about AIDS?**

I'm a virus nut. I was following AIDS since '79 or '80 when it was 13 cluster cases of Kaposi's sarcoma in New York and didn't have a name, and it was just these odd anomalies. Then there were 11 cluster cases of Pneumocystis pneumonia in San Francisco and I thought that was odd. These were just little paragraphs in the newspapers, and then it came out that they were all in gay men – and I knew something new was out there.

**Did you lose a lot of your friends to the virus?**

Oh yeah. I lost a ton of people, and a lot of them I tried to warn that there was something new out there. I had warned one friend of mine who was an actor and sort of closeted, though I knew he was gay. I was very concerned about him because I knew he would do drugs and get drunk and party a lot then go home with anybody. At an AIDS fundraiser I was sponsoring in Beverly Hills, he came over to me and he said, "You were the first person I ever heard say the word AIDS, and I wish I had listened."

**You've played many roles on TV, in film and in commercials. What gets you recognized the most?**

It depends on the generation. Older people tend to remember the series that I did – the three series I did in the '80s – and some people still remember me from "Search for Tomorrow" from the '70s. Certain generations love the first TV movie I did called "The Initiation of Sarah," and then "Flamingo Road." Younger people tend to love the "Friends" or Old Navy stuff, or even right now with "Chuck." People who go to a lot of theater are big fans of some of the theater work I've done. It just depends on what generation they are from.

**Do you still get free fleece?**

Oh no, honey, I didn't get free fleece then!

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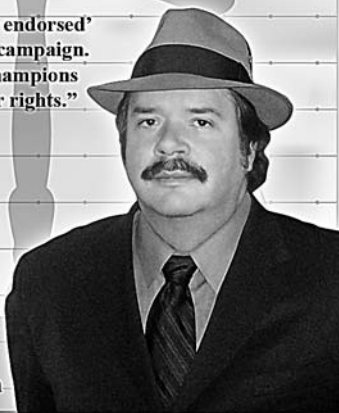
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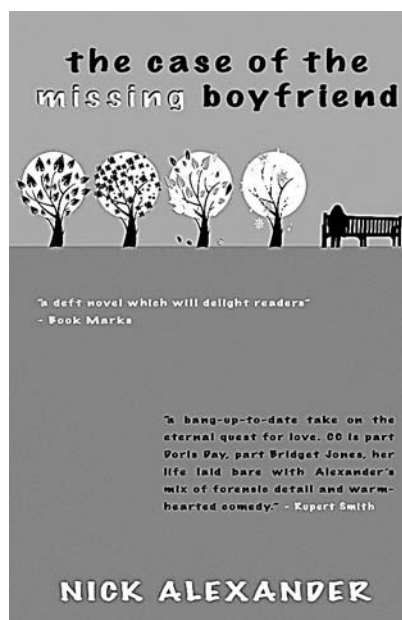
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## Life BOOK MARKS

by Richard Labonte



"The Case of the Missing Boyfriend," by  
Nick Alexander. BigFib Books, 364 pages,  
\$15.95 paper.

After charming readers in recent years with a series of winsomely eccentric, gay-centric romances ("50 Reasons to Say Goodbye," "Sleight of Hand"), Alexander expands his storytelling reach with an engaging twist – the character missing a boyfriend is female ad executive CC, adored by colorful gay pals while yearning for an apparently unobtainable Mr. Right. The title is quite misleading; this is no mystery. Rather, it's a sly reversal of your typical gay romance, focusing on a straight character – an endearing blend of youthful Auntie Mame (she's nearing 40) and self-doubting Bridget Jones – who falls for a man who, distressingly, seems as gay as the male friends with whom he parties. The British author's six previous books were written primarily for a queer audience, and gay readers will no doubt relish the queer content of this well-written seventh. It's a slight stretch to compare Alexander's fiction to that of, say, Armistead Maupin – but this slyly commercial novel could share the crossover appeal, to straight readers, of Maupin's work.

"Angels and Manners," by Cynn  
Chadwick. Bywater Books, 300 pages,  
\$14.95 paper.

Carrie Angel is a working-class mother scraping by in Section 8 housing while apprenticing for her carpentry license, dueling with her demanding and emotionally abusive ex-husband for custody of her two teenage sons (one a feisty queer boy), and trying to contain her fiery temper. Jen Manners is a more hoity-toity woman – but, in the aftermath of an ugly divorce, she's forced to move onto Carrie's subsidized housing block with her aggrieved daughter,

selling jewelry to get by. Lower-class and upper-class don't blend well at first, but eventually the two women bond – a friendship forged in part through the three teens – in this in-touch-with-the-times novel about home foreclosures, government cutbacks and a degrading downward economic spiral. Carrie and Jen both start out straight, but they aren't destined to fall in love – the lesbian twist involves a third woman. Instead, Chadwick's expertly constructed novel (she was once a master carpenter) focuses on the process of women learning to discover their strengths and to trust themselves.

"The Lover's Dictionary," by David  
Levithan. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 220  
pages, \$18 paper.

The male narrator in this essentially two-character novel comments on catching a peek of chest under his partner's shirt, not blouse; the couple has sex in Central Park; both cruise passersby on the street. Does the two-year relationship (maybe more, maybe it's over) this inventive book encompasses involve two men? Could be. After all, the mystery-gender character snored when sharing a bed with a woman friend on a college trip. On the other hand, the same character explains away not drinking on an early date by declaring, "I'm pregnant," and then "cracking up" – because "he" is making a joke about abstaining, or because "she" is playing with a new beau's emotional edginess about previous beaus? Levithan's first novel for grown-ups – his several previous novels are targeted at young adult readers – is purposely, and triumphantly, enigmatic about gender. It's also told entirely, from "aberrant" through

"juxtaposition" and "kerfuffle" to "zenith," as entries in a dictionary defining the arc of two people who hope they're deeply in love – but who aren't truly certain.

"Welcome to My World," by Johnny Weir.  
Gallery Books/Simon & Schuster, 272  
pages, \$26 hardcover.

Yep. Johnny Weir is a big homo. In what he calls his quarter-life memoir, the flamboyantly controversial figure skater makes his queerness clear. Still a virgin until age 20 ("Figure skating, where jealously runs as rampant as rhinestones, is a fucked-up place to find your romantic future"), he writes that a relationship with his first boyfriend was stuffed into the closet, not by Weir's choice but because of the U.S. Figure Skating Association's don't-tell demands. Those details aside, however, this isn't really a coming-out life story. It's a young man's poised, poignant and powerful account of his passion, since age 11, for a grueling discipline that blends on-ice artistry and athleticism, both of which Weir embraces, along with a readily confessed flair for fashion: "Once I went through my growth spurt around seventeen and got my man body, I was ready to act like a man – and design my own costumes." Weir doesn't shy away from recounting his colorful public life, but this unexpectedly complex memoir also depicts a private homebody grounded in love of family, love for friends – and fondness for vacuuming.

Richard Labonte has been reading, editing, selling, and writing about queer literature since the mid-'70s. He can be reached in care of this publication or at BookMarks@qsyndicate.com.

### Featured Excerpt

## THE LOVER'S DICTIONARY

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DAVID LEVITHAN

inadvertent, adj. You left your e-mail open on my computer. I couldn't help it – I didn't open any of them, but I did look at who they were from, and was relieved. indelible, adj. That first night, you took your finger and pointed to the top of my head, then traced a line between my eyes, down my nose, over my lips, down my neck, to the center of my chest. It was so surprising I knew I would never mimic it. That one gesture would be yours forever. ineffable, adj. These words will ultimately end up being the barest of reflections, devoid of the sensations words cannot convey. Trying to write about love is ultimately like trying to have a dictionary represent life. No matter how many words there are, there will never be enough.

—from "A Lover's Dictionary," by David Levithan

## Footnotes

BOLD STROKES BOOKS, launched several years ago as a lesbian press, continues to expand its gay male-interest titles. Coming in May: Greg Herren's "Who Dat Whodunnit," a Scotty Bradley mystery set in New Orleans just after the Saints' Super Bowl victory, and Dale Chase's "The Company He Keeps: Victorian Gentlemen's Erotica." Coming in June: Jess Farraday's "The Affair of the Porcelain Dog," a mystery set in nineteenth century London. Coming in July: David-Matthew Barnes' "Accidents Never Happen," bringing together a 39-year-old cruiserweight boxer and a college sophomore... POETRY BOOKS TO WATCH OUT FOR: Coming this month, Minnie Bruce Pratt's "Inside the Money Machine" from Carolina Wren Press, poems about getting by in a tough economic world... APRIL BRINGS "TORN," by C. Dale Young, poems exploring the byways of lust and blood, and of the heart, from Four Way Books... POET DAVID TRINIDAD has edited a posthumous collection of Tim Dlugos' writing – every poem published in his lifetime, along with previously unpublished work; "A Fast Life" is coming from Nightboat Books in May... AND, LATER THIS year, Trinidad's own "Dear Prudence: New and Selected Poems," is coming from Turtle Point Press.



# 'The Godfadda' hits Novi! Ba-da-bing!

BY JOHN QUINN

Now that another Academy Award season is over and that pale period piece "The King's Speech" has gobbled up the goodies, I find myself missing the good old days – 1972, to be exact. Mario Puzo's "The Godfather" – now there's a flick for the ages! It has everything! Gore! Guns! Sex! Spaghetti! Brando refusing the Academy Award and sending some wannabe from Central Casting in tribal dress to protest Hollywood's oppression of Native Americans! Oh, the drama!

When they made me an offer I couldn't refuse, I trotted up to Andiamo Novi Theatre to see "The Godfadda Workout," which is a workout indeed. A lone actor, the incomparable Seth Isler, takes on 37 roles to deliver memorable scenes from the iconic film. He is a whole gymnastic team of feats, vaulting desks, tables and portable bars as if they were pommel horses, all to be in position to deliver the next character's line. The manic pace, lightening costume changes, gimmicked set and props make for some great slapstick. Yet we don't sense parody here, only homage. Isler is a father of this demon child and clearly in love with its heritage.

Our hapless hero is the victim of overexposure to the Corleone clan's soap opera and finds his words and actions sub-referencing the film even at the most inappropriate times. It's sort of like Tourette's

**R E V I E W**

**'The Godfadda Workout'**

Andiamo Novi Theatre, 42705 Grand River Ave., Novi. Wednesday-Sunday through March 20. \$30-\$35 for show only, \$79.95-\$89.95 per couple for dinner & show. 248-348-4448. [www.andiamonovitheatre.com](http://www.andiamonovitheatre.com)

syndrome for the Cosa Nostra. His way out is provided by Don Vito himself, now merely a disembodied voice from the rafters. If Isler can flesh out the memorable scenes to the Don's satisfaction all by his lonesome, the "spell" will be broken.

Well, not entirely alone. Isler is aided by a stage crew hereby dubbed the "Fedora Five" and a dresser who, it appears, really has her hands full – of soggy costumes. This show is full of sight gags, and timing is everything. We're not disappointed. The audience will indulge the slow, choreographed set changes if they realize that those down times are Isler's only chance to do mundane things like change costumes and breathe.

The performance is slick, witty and thoroughly entertaining. I wish I could remember more of the film, but my memory sleeps with the fishes. Clearly the audience was picking up bits I was missing, yet I found myself watching not so much WHAT



Seth Isler tackles "The Godfather" in "The Godfadda Workout" through March 20. Photo: Courtesy Andiamo Novi Theatre

was done, but HOW it was done. And it's a tour-de-force.

Allow me to mention that the show was opened by the musical talents of tenor Aaron Caruso who sang some Italian thingy called "Nessun Dorma" from Touring Dot. While he never did explain who Dot is or where she's touring, a little Puccini was welcome for the top of the evening. You can catch Mr. Caruso's act (and with a name like Caruso it's GOTTA be good!) at Andiamo in Warren this October.

# Dark comedy lights up Ann Arbor

ANN ARBOR – The University Musical Society presents the Druid and Atlantic Theater Companies in four performances of Martin McDonagh's "The Cripple of Inishmaan" from Thursday, March 10 through Sunday, March 13 in Ann Arbor's Power Center, located at 121 Fletcher Street.

In 2009, the New York run of the Druid and Atlantic Theater co-production of "The Cripple of Inishmaan" ran for over three months and was twice extended due to popular demand. Described by The New York Times as "a production that no theater lover should miss," this multi-award-winning production is a brilliant comic masterpiece, complete with suspense and a great deal of heart. Written by Academy Award-winning writer/director Martin McDonagh and directed by Tony Award-winning director and Druid Theater Company founding member Garry Hynes, this production won nine major international theatre awards in 2009 including Outstanding Director, Best Production, and Outstanding Ensemble. Hynes is the first female director to win a Tony Award.

Set in 1934, "The Cripple of Inishmaan" is a savagely funny dark comedy about the life of young Billy Claven, a crippled orphan and resident of

Ireland's isle of Inishmaan. When word arrives on Inishmaan that a Hollywood filmmaker is coming to a neighboring island to shoot a movie, Billy auditions for a part in the film, eager to break free of the doldrums of his life – and to everyone's surprise, he is offered the role and moves to America to film it.

"The Cripple of Inishmaan" showcases McDonagh's trademark humor, rich with macabre cruelty, and introduces audience to a host of eccentric island characters, all trading stories within an inch of their lives. An Irish playwright, McDonagh is one of the most celebrated new English-language dramatists of his generation. His first play to be produced, "The Beauty Queen of Leenane," opened at the Druid Theatre Company in 1996 and won the 1998 Drama Desk Award. Other plays to his credit include "A Skull in Connemara" (1997); "The Lonesome West" (1997); "The Lieutenant of Inishmore" (2001); and "The Pillowman" (2003). McDonagh has also extended his talents to the big screen, earning a 2004 Academy Award for his short film, "Six Shooter." McDonagh's 2008 feature film, "In Bruges," won a BAFTA award for Best Original Screenplay.

For tickets or additional information, contact the University Musical Society at 734-764-2538 or online at [www.ums.org](http://www.ums.org).



Irish and American theater companies team up to co-produce "The Cripple of Inishmaan" coming to Ann Arbor March 10-13. Photo: Courtesy University Musical Society

org. Tickets start at \$18 and may also be purchased in person at the League Ticket Office (911 North University Avenue). UMS Ticket Office hours: Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., closed Sunday.

Event Sponsor:  
T-Shirt Guy,  
Custom Movie Shirts and More!  
313-766-5519  
[TShirtGuy123@yahoo.com](mailto:TShirtGuy123@yahoo.com)

**WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?**  
Bette Davis • Joan Crawford  
Sister, sister, oh so fair, why is there blood all over your hair?  
March 11 at 8 p.m.  
March 12 at 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.  
Theatre Organ Overture  
Half Hour before Showtime

**'WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?'**  
Bette Davis • Joan Crawford  
Tickets: \$4.00

**Glitty Glitty Bang Bang**  
Dick VanDyke, Sally Ann Howes and Lionel Jeffries  
March 25 - 8:00, March 26 - 2:00 and 8:00

COMING ATTRACTION  
COLUMBIA PICTURES CORPORATION  
**THE THREE STOOGES**  
MOE LARRY CURLEY  
Three Stooges Festival  
April 8 - 8:00  
April 9 - 2:00 & 8:00  
Tickets: \$5.00.  
Event Sponsor:  
Treasures from Paul's Basement,  
Classic Movie & Horror Prints,  
<http://stores.shop.ebay.com/Treasures-From-Pauls-Basement>

COMING ATTRACTION  
**Tarzan Double Feature**  
April 29 - 8:00  
April 30 - 2:00 and 8:00  
Tickets: \$6.00

**Redford THEATRE**  
17360 LAHSER RD.  
NE Corner of Lahser/Grand River  
[GoodTimes@RedfordTheatre.com](mailto:GoodTimes@RedfordTheatre.com)  
[www.redfordtheatre.com](http://www.redfordtheatre.com)  
**313.537.2560**  
Free Attended Parking

# RTM Happenings

## Editor's Picks

### Outings

High school proms for LGBT teens can be nothing short of a nightmare. Jackson High School's Gay Straight Alliance has created a safe and affirming solution which allows teens to celebrate their prom with the partner of their own choice: The 2nd Annual Peace Prom.

Last year, over 150 students attended the school's first Peace Prom. This year, attendance is expected to double, after receiving attention from both local media and Equality Michigan.

The prom will be held in St. Johns United Church of Christ in Jackson with a theme of Masquerade. Tickets are \$5. Masks will be provided if needed. Young adults age 14-20 are all welcome, provided state or student ID is presented. For more information, search Facebook for Peace Prom 2011 Masquerade.



### Music & More

In the stand-up world, there is no act quite like Maria Bamford and her unique set of voices. Her impersonations range from the cynical hoarse L.A. agent, to an archrival from high school, to Bamford's passive-aggressive mother, to a 30-foot monster that loves Jesus and Capri pants.

"I've been thinking about having kids lately. I already have names picked out: Doughnut and The Golden Hen," Maria explains in her shtick. "I know what you're thinking, 'How do I know they'll be girls?' But a mother knows, a mother knows."

Bamford performs March 10-12 at the Comedy Showcase located on E. Liberty in Ann Arbor. Tickets available online at aacomedy.com.



### Theater

Jeff Daniels has a knack for telling great stories about Michigan – and St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild has a knack for presenting top-notch productions of his plays. "The Tropical Pickle," which runs March 11-27, is no exception.

"The Tropical Pickle" is set in beautiful Macomb County, Mich., where Bob Lee, played by Thom Griffin, is the plant manager at the Shankleferd Pickle Company. The show revolves around the wheelings and dealing of Bob's somewhat unscrupulous family as they are bound and determined to be selected as the company's representatives for an all-expenses-paid trip to Miami for the annual Condiment Convention.

Performance dates are March 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26 and 27. All performances are at 8 p.m. except for March 20 and 27, which are at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$18 each for adults and \$16 each for students and seniors. To reserve tickets, call 248-737-3587.



### OUTINGS

#### Wednesday, March 9

**TransCend**, 6:30 p.m. Open to 18+. Younger are welcome with parent or guardian permission. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer Street, Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. kgllrc.org

#### Thursday, March 10

**Detroit Area Womyns Network Gathering**, 5 p.m. DAWN is a social group for professional women 30+. 27843 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. dawn.web.officelive.com

**The Caregiver Support Group**, 6 p.m. For more information call or E-mail. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer Street, Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. 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

#### Friday, March 11

**Is it Safe to Tell**, 6 p.m. Workshop for getting a sense of knowing if it's safe to open up to someone about having HIV and if the time is right and other related topics. RSVP via phone or e-mail. Aids Partnership Michigan, 2751 E. Jefferson Suite 301, Detroit. 313-446-9820. Cpeoples@aidspartnership.org

**Womyn's Film Night**, 7 p.m. Film: Swimming. In this coming-of-age story, while suffering through a summer job at her parents' burger joint and enduring her brother's watchful eye, Frankie enjoys her friendship with Nicola. But when Frankie begins to forge relationships with some newcomers in town, the bond she shares with Nicola is threatened. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

**Holland is Ready-Film Series**, 7:30 p.m. Film: Seven Passages. Stories of Gay Christians. Holland is Ready, 248 S. River St., Holland. 616-990-5669. rev.jenadams@yahoo.com



Lauren Ambrose of "Swimming."

#### Sunday, March 13

**Anti-Bullying Summit II**, 1 p.m. Working to create a Bully Free Community. Jim Toy Community Center, 1432 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor. gailwolhoff@gmail.com

#### Tuesday, March 15

**Transgender Partner Support Group**, 6 p.m. A support group for partners. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. kgllrc.org

#### Wednesday, March 16

**Is "Gay" Church "Real" Church**, 7 p.m. First part of a dialogue series exploring the impact of silence on the African American LGBTQ community: Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Facilitated by Detroit City Council President, Charles Pugh. Agape Spirit Life Ministries, 2930 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 248-825-6149. agapespiritlifeministries.org

**LGBTIQ Support Group**, 7 p.m. An inclusive environment for all gender who are healing from domestic and/or sexual assault. YWCA of KGLRC, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234.

#### Friday, March 18

**Womyn's Film Night**, 7 p.m. Film: Girls' View. Collection of poignant and amusing award-winning shorts, diverse views of lesbian life exposing the angst and joy of teen love, mother-daughter relationships, being different, monogamy and unrequited love. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

#### Saturday, March 19

**LGBT Discussion Group**, 7 p.m. Discussion topics vary from session to session, but all revolve around aspect of being a sexual and/or gender minority. The Ellen Bommarito LGBT Center, 303 S. Saginaw St. 365 University Center, Flint. 810-766-6606. umflint.edu/lgbt

**Peace Prom**, 8 p.m. Jackson High School's LGBTQ Prom. Masquerade theme. Age: high school freshmen-20. Tickets: \$5 purchasable at the door. Photos: 2 for \$5. All guests must have school ID or state ID/license. St. John United Church, 801 S. Mechanic St., Jackson. 517-962-3119. cylvorsrainbow@hotmail.com

## MUSIC & MORE

#### BENEFITS/SOCIAL EVENTS

**Affirmations** "The Big Bash 2011: Cirque du Soiree" Featuring aerial performers as a part of the evening's entertainment. Tickets: \$150-\$250. Diamond Center Ballroom, Suburban Collection Showplace, 46100 Grand River, Novi. 6 p.m. March 19. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

**Mitten Mavens** "Season Opener 'Dublin Header'" Portion of ticket proceeds to benefit Big Brother and Big Sister system. Tickets: \$10. Free admission for children 12 and younger with purchase of an adult ticket. Demonstration Hall, MSU Campus, Building #57, East Lansing. 6 p.m. March 12. mittenmavens.net

#### CLASSICAL

**Bach Collegium Japan** "Bach's Mass in B Minor" Founded in 1990 by Masaaki Suzuki with the aim of introducing Japanese audiences to period instrument performance of great works of the Baroque period, the Bach Collegium Japan comprises both orchestra and chorus. Tickets \$10-\$65. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 24. 734-763-3333. ums.org

**Detroit Opera House** "A Gershwin Rhapsody" Celebrating the genius of George Gershwin and featuring some of his most beloved standards including "S Wonderful", "Embraceable You", "Someone to Watch Over Me" and more. Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit. 7:30 p.m. March 12. 313-237-SING. michiganopera.org

**MSU College of Music** "Cello Plus celebrates music of Schubert, Haydn, Shostakovich, Bach" Tickets: \$10. Music Building Auditorium, West Circle Drive, East Lansing. March 19-March 25. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu

**University Musical Society** "Scharoun Ensemble berlin" The eight musicians of the Scharoun Ensemble express an artistic commitment to both the heritage of the past and the challenges of the present. Tickets: \$24-\$48. Rackham Auditorium, 915 East Washington St, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 9. 734-763-3333. ums.org

#### CONCERTS

**Caesars Winsor** "Celtic Crossroads" Critically acclaimed show that incorporates seven world-class musicians who play over twenty instruments on stage, with rhythms of Irish dance. Tickets: \$15. Caesars Winsor, 377 Riverside Drive East, Windsor. 2 p.m. March 24, 8 p.m. March 24. 800-991-7777. caesarswinsor.com

**Caesars Winsor** "Bob Newhart" With a 50-year career that spans the stage and screen brought into Newhart's signature comedic style. Tickets: \$25. 377 Riverside Drive, Windsor. 9 p.m. March 26. 800-991-7777. caesarswinsor.com

**Farmington Hills Cultural Arts** "Blackthorn" Tickets: \$17-\$19. Farmington Players Barn Theatre, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. March 10-March 12. 248-473-1848. recreg.fingov.com

**Macomb Center for the Performing Arts** "The Irish Rovers" Performing authentic Irish music. Tickets: \$37-52. 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 8 p.m. March 11. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

**Olympia Entertainment** "Charlie Wilson" Tickets: \$59-\$89. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. March 12. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

**Olympia Entertainment** "KEM's 2011 U.S. 'Intimacy' tour" Special guests El DeBarge and Ledisi. Tickets: \$39.50-\$88 Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. March 25. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

**Olympia Entertainment** "Yanni" Returns to the USA and Canada with a concert tour. Tickets: \$28.50-\$68.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. March 27. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

**Random Reason Productions** "Onra featuring Buddy Sativa" French hip hop beatmaker, Onra and Buddy Sativa from Paris, France for his second Detroit appearance. Tickets \$7-\$10. Park Bar, 2040 Park Ave, Detroit. 10 p.m. March 11. parkbardetroit.com

**Majestic Theater** "Jacuzzi Boys" This is raucous pop of the murkiest order-jangling guitars, caveman drums, and songs of sex and seashells, dead animals and birthday cakes. Cover: \$8. Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave, Detroit. 9 p.m. March 19. 313-833-9700. majesticdetroit.com

**The Whiting** "Pink Floyd Experience" Tickets: \$18-\$49. 1241 E. Kearsley, Flint. 8 p.m. March 10. 8102377333. TheWhiting.com

**The Whiting** "Johnny Winter with Special Guest The Rusty Wright Bank" Tickets: \$15-\$37 The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley, Flint. 8 p.m. March 25. 810-237-7333. TheWhiting.com

**Cabaret Detroit** "Caren Kapson & Roy Sexton" Stories told in song, featuring selections from the American songbook, Broadway and contemporary song writers. Wine, cocktails and Vinoteca's small plates menu. Vinoteca, 417 S. Main St., Royal Oak. 7 p.m. April 8. 248-383-5460. cabaretdetroit.com

**Majestic Theater** "Dave Mason" In his long career, Mason has played and recorded with many of the era's most notable musicians, including Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, George Harrison, Russ McLellan and Mama Cass Elliot. Tickets \$25 Majestic Theater, 4120-4140 Woodward Ave, Detroit. 8 p.m. March 12. 313-833-9700. majesticdetroit.com

**Mosaic Singers** "Singsation!" A concert by the local choir, performing an eclectic array of music. Bach to Broadway, Gospel to World Music and everything in between. Tickets: \$10-30. Detroit Film Theatre, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 13-March 13. 313-833-4005. mosaicdetroit.org

**The Ark** "Marcy Playground" This alternative rock band, named for the playground of a school in Minneapolis, had its breakthrough in 1997 with the hit "Sex and Candy." Tickets: \$17.50. The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 9. 734-761-1800. theark.org/2668.html

**Wharton Center** "Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings" Instrumental ensemble primarily composed of musicians from the Detroit Symphony and Michigan Opera Theatre orchestras. Tickets: \$20. Cobb Great Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 3 p.m. March 27. 1-800-WHARTON. whartoncenter.com

## DANCE

**The Whiting** "River North Chicago Dance Company" Tickets: \$27-\$39. 1241 E. Kearsley, Flint. 8 p.m. April 2. 8102377333. TheWhiting.com

**Eisenhower Dance Ensemble** "Motown in Motion" Celebrating two decades of dance in Detroit with Motown in Motion, a production uniting music and dance in an evening of Motown hits. Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit. 2:30 p.m. March 20. 313-237-7464. ede-dance.org

## FESTIVALS

**International Institute** "Irish Fest" A celebration of Irish culture before St. Patrick's Day. Tickets \$25-\$35 International Institute, 111 E. Kirby, Detroit. 7 p.m. March 12. 313-871-8600. iimd.org

### START Project-University of Michigan

"FestiFools" Wacky performance of oversized puppets entertaining thousands downtown. Hundreds of creative volunteers from the Ann Arbor area and students from the University of Michigan have joined forces. Free parking. More information online. Main St., Address, Ann Arbor. 3 p.m. April 3. festifoos.org

## FILM & VIDEO

**Ann Arbor Film Festival** Screenings: \$9, \$95.00 Full Festival Pass, \$55.00 Weekend Pass Michigan Theater and other Various Venues, Ann Arbor. March 22-March 27. 734-995-5356. aafilmfest.org

**Cranbrook Academy of Art and Art Museum** "2011 Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour" Features the world's best footage on mountain subjects and extreme sports. The films range from productions created by first-time filmmakers to professional crews working with companies such as the BBC and National Geographic. Tickets available at Moosejaw stores in Birmingham and Rochester only. The Uptown Palladium 12, 250 N. Old Woodward, Birmingham. 7 p.m. April 7. cranbrookbanff.com

**Detroit Film Theater** "Kawasaki's Rose" Considers the ways in which the past never stops informing the present, especially in societies where secrets are a way of life, and professional or personal success can depend upon a single, well-placed morsel of information, be it true or false. Detroit Film Theater, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 4-March 20. 313-833-7900. dia.org

**Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit** "Hydra Decapita and Last Angel of History" Hydra is a series of recordings that imagines a fictional world system entitled Drexciya, populated by the subaquatic descendants of Africans drowned by slavers during the Middle Passage. Last Angel examines the relationships between Pan-African culture, science fiction, intergalactic travel, and rapidly progressing computer technology. MOCAD, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. March 19. 313-832-6622. mocadetroit.org

**Redford Theater** "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" Dick Van Dyke, Sally Ann Howes, Lionel Jeffries. Tickets: \$4. Redford Theater, 17360 Lahser Rd, Detroit. 8 p.m. March 25, 8 p.m. March 26. 313-537-2560. redfordtheatre.com

**Redford Theater** "What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?" A chilling tale of two aging sisters who live in a decaying Hollywood mansion where one spends her declining years dreaming of lost fame and tormenting her wheelchair-bound sister with unnerving intensity. Tickets: \$4. Redford Theater, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit. March 11-March 12. 313-537-2560. redfordtheatre.com



"Whatever Happened to Baby Jane"

## OTHER

**Kalamazoo Institute of Arts** "Ladies' Night Out and Fashion Show" New season with on-trend updates to its classic profile. Tickets: \$35 general, \$45 VIP. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo. 6:30 p.m. March 23. 269-349-7775. kiarts.org

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

**Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ** "Karaoke Night" Free and open to all. Singing, discussion of current events, food, games and have fun! A welcoming and affirming church. 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave, Lansing. 6 p.m. March 18. 5174847434. PilgrimUCC.com

## BENEFITS AND FUNDRAISERS

**Kalamazoo Civic Theatre** "A Wine Tasting in Three Acts" Provides guests with an opportunity to move from room to room around the beautiful Civic Auditorium, into areas not often seen by patrons of the theatre. Tickets: \$40. Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. 5:30 p.m. March 10. 69-343-1313. kazooicivic.com

**Vive La France** "Cabaret Fundraiser" Famed local duo William Bolcom and Joan Morris, as well the musical talents of a number of Arbor Opera artists, perform jazz, musical theater and opera selections to raise money for Arbor Opera Theater. Tickets: \$25 general, \$40 VIP. Arbor Opera Theater at The Earle Restaurant, 121 W. Washington St., Ann Arbor. March 13. arboropera.com

# THEATER

## CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

**A Murder is Announced** \$15-show only, \$30 for dinner and show; Dinner starts at 6:30 p.m., with the doors opening at 6 p.m. Starlight Dinner Theatre at Waverly East Middle School, 3131 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing. March 11-19. 517-243-6040. starlightdinnertheatre.com

**Daddy's Dyin' Who's Got The Will?** \$10-\$12. SRO Productions, The Burgh, 26060 Berg Road, Southfield. Through March 13. 248-796-4645. srotheater.org

**Doubt** \$10-\$18. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin Ave., Ann Arbor. March 10-13. 734-971-2228. a2ct.org

**Game Night** \$15. Port Huron Civic Theatre at McMorran Theatre, 701 McMorran Blvd, Port Huron. March 11-13. 810-966-4800. gamenighttheplay.com

**Inherit The Wind** \$15. Players Guild of Dearborn, 21730 Madison St., Dearborn. March 11-27. 313-561-8587. playersguildofdearborn.org

**The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee** \$18-\$20. Stagecrafters, Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. March 18-April 10. 248-541-6430. stagecrafters.org

**The Tropical Pickle** \$16-\$18. St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild, 400 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills. March 11-27. 248-737-3587. StDunstansTheatre.com

## COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY THEATER

**Rent** \$5-\$20. The University Theatre at Shaw Theatre, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. March 17-27. 269-387-6222. wmutheatre.com

## PROFESSIONAL

**A Lesson Before Dying** \$17-\$20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through March 20. 313-868-1347. detroitreptheatre.com

**Absinthe Makes the Heart Grow Fonder** \$7-\$10. Crawlspace Theatre Productions at Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. March 11-12. 269-599-7390. crawlspace theatre.com

**August: Osage County** A staged reading, \$5, which includes refreshments. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 6 p.m. March 13. 810-237-1530. flintyouththeatre.org

**Blast From the Past** \$39.95 adult, \$30 ages 12 and under. The Williamsburg Showcase Dinner Theater & Conference Center, 4230 M-72 East, Williamsburg. Through March 26. 231-938-2181. cateringbykellys.com/dinner-theater

**Equus** \$25. The Blackbird Theatre, 325 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. Through March 19. 734-332 3848 . blackbirdtheatre.org

**Fatal Attraction: A Greek Tragedy** \$10-\$20. Who Wants Cake? at Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through March 14. 248-545-5545. whowantscaketheatre.com

**Hylomorph** \$20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. Through March 19. 313-365-4948. planetant.com

**Kimberly Akimbo** \$18-\$20. Stormfield Theatre, 201 Morgan Lane, Lansing. March 9-27. 517-372-0945. stormfieldtheatre.org

**Last of the Boys** \$15-\$18, and pay-what-you-can. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company, 1515 Broadway at 1515 Broadway, Detroit. March 11-April 2. 313-408-7269. magentagiraffe.org

**My Dull Friend** \$5. Who Wants Cake? at The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through March 13. 248-545-5545. whowantscaketheatre.com

**Nevermore** \$22. The Encore Musical Theatre, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. March 10-20. 734-268-6200. theencoremusicaltheatre.org

**Sister's Easter Catechism: Will My Bunny Go To Heaven?** \$19.50-\$34.50. The Gem Theatre, 333 Madison St., Detroit. March 9-April 17. 313-963-9800. gemtheatre.com

**Stomp** \$45-\$75. Chatham Capitol Theatre, 238 King St. West, Chatham, Ontario. March 15-16. 1-866-807-7770 . chathamcapitoltheatre.com

**The Broadway Onstage Murders** \$16. Broadway Onstage, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Through March 19. 586-771-6333. broadwayonstage.com

**The Cripple of Inishmaan** \$18. University Musical Society at Power Center, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. March 10-13. 734-764-2538. ums.org

**The Godfadda Workout** \$30-\$35 for show only, \$79.95-\$89.95 per couple for dinner & show. Andiamo Novi Theatre, 42705 Grand River Ave., Novi. Through March 20. 248-348-4448. andiamonovitheatre.com

**The Piano Lesson** Previews March 3-6 & 10 (\$10-\$24). \$27-\$41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron, Ann Arbor. March 3-April 3. 734-663-0696. performancenetwork.org

**THEATER FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES**  
**Beauty and the Beast Jr.** \$5-\$10. Warren Civic Theatre at Warren Community Center, 5460 Arden, Warren. March 18-20. 586-268-8400. warrencivic.org

**Lyle the Crocodile** \$7. Kalamazoo Civic Youth Theatre, Parish Theater, 426 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. March 18-26. 269-343-1313. kazooicivic.com

**Pinkalicious** \$7. Downriver Youth Performing Arts Center at Trenton Village Theatre, 2447 West Jefferson, Trenton. March 11-13. 734 671-2202. dydac.com

**Tom Sawyer** \$13-\$15. Spotlight on Youth at The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. March 10-13. 734-394-5300. canton-mi.org/village theater

**Toy Story 3** \$15+. The Palace of Auburn Hills, 6 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills. March 9-13. 1-800-745-3000. ticketmaster.com

## AUDITIONS

**THE CROSWELL** - will hold auditions for its four-show summer season, March 12-13 & 19, 517-263-6868.

# ART 'N' AROUND

**Detroit Artist's Market** "Annual Scholarship Awards and Exhibition" DAM has a nearly 80 year history of supporting emerging artists, turning the spotlight on the best new artists emerging from the area's stellar arts programs. This year students will be selected from the Cranbrook Art Academy. 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 4-April 9. 313-832-8540. detroitartistsmarket.org

**Detroit Institute of Arts** "Fakes, Forgeries and Mysteries" 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 25-April 10. 313-833-7900. dia.org

**Flint Institute of Arts** "Promises of Freedom" A comprehensive collection of African American art featuring more than 60 works by artists including Charles White, Jacob Lawrence, and Romare Bearden. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Feb. 25-April 17. 810-234-1695. flintarts.org

**Gallery Project** "Mine Yours" Gallery Project presents Mine Yours, a multimedia exhibit in which 31 local, regional and national artists explore at various system levels issues of possession, boundaries, privacy and encroachment. Gallery Project, 215 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Feb. 25-April 3. 734-997-7012. thegalleryproject.com

**Kalamazoo Institute of Arts** "The Wyeths: America's Artists" Exhibition of works by three generations of artists in the Wyeth family. Tickets: \$4-\$8. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. March 1-April 17. 269-349-7775. kiarts.org

**Kalamazoo Institute of Arts** "Familiar Surroundings" This exhibition of works drawn from the permanent collection highlights other American originals who ignored the dictates of modern art and developed personal styles rooted in their local environment. Included are works by John Marin, Martin Lewis, and Reginald Marsh. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. March 1-April 10. 269-349-7775. kiarts.org

**Macomb Center for the Performing Arts** "Puzzles of Expectation" The work of Deborah Orloff and Eric Troffkin. The Art Gallery, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. March 8-April 13. 586-286-2089. MacombCenter.com

# Between THE Lines™

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**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](mailto:DearJodyValley@hotmail.com)

## No more (daddy) drama

**Q.** Jody, I think I need to tell you some background stuff so you can understand where I'm coming from. My mother used to tell me that my father was killed in a car wreck shortly before I was born. After that, she moved across country, as she said, "to get away from all the memories." I was born after the move, so I never even had a chance to meet anyone who knew my dad. My mother had told me that my dad's parents were dead and he had no other brothers or sisters. So, I had never had a chance to know much about him. My mother, when asked by me, said that there wasn't much to say about him, though she gave me some sketchy details, which in retrospect, seemed pretty canned. I felt my dad was a dud with little interesting about him. It wasn't a good feeling for me.

Now to the present: Recently I came out to my mother. She didn't take it very well, but at least she didn't go the I'm-going-to-disown-you route. She just sort of went into a quiet stunned mode; didn't say much. I left that day not really knowing what she had on her mind, though I new it wasn't a congratulations-for-finding-out-who-you-are moment.

I rudely found out that she had a coming out to do as well. It took her a couple of days, but I got this phone call from her. Mind you, she chose the phone to let me know that my father wasn't a dead husband, but a "sperm donor." I was reeling from this information – trying to process it – when she then threw another fast ball to my head: "I'm not to fault because you're a pervert; it's your sperm donor father who had to be gay... or have it in his genes." Then, she proceeded to tell me how sorry she was, that it really wasn't my fault, but she was sure we could get help for my "condition."

She said all this, trying to slip by the sperm donor statement, to excuse herself from fault and on to how I could get cured – and even who could cure me. She had researched, through her pastor, who could help with "my condition." It sounded like some right-wing deprogramming set up.

Mother was blabbing on about this so fast that I could hardly absorb it, let alone respond to her. I felt like I was going to vomit so I told her that I was sick and had to hang up. Neither of us has called the other since then.

I'm feeling so confused and upset. I don't know what to do next. I'm sorry that I told my mother that I'm gay. It feels like she is sort of paying me back for telling her that I am gay. It's like I opened Pandora's Box and all the family secrets came bursting out.

I don't know where to go from here. I don't even know what I'm asking you. It's just that I feel so bad and stuck.

*Son of Sperm Donor*

**A.** I can only imagine how confused, deceived, betrayed and angry you must feel. Her ignorance toward your sexuality certainly has expressed itself in a hurtful way. I think you need some time to deal with all that your mother threw at you. It's not just that your mother sees your sexuality as something to fix, but she has been deceptive to you about half of your heritage.

I recommend that you seek counseling to help you deal with your emotions through this time. Counseling can also help you think about all the new information you've gotten from your mother.

I care about what has happened with you. Keep me informed.

**Jody's on Facebook! Find her by searching for "Dear Jody Valley."**

*Jody Valley spent 12 years as a clinical social worker. She worked with the LGBT community both as a counselor and a workshop leader in the areas of coming out, self-esteem and relationship issues. The "Dear Jody" column appears weekly. To reach Jody, send an e-mail to [dearjodyvalley@hotmail.com](mailto:dearjodyvalley@hotmail.com). Letters may be edited.*

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# Indulge, Libra!

BY JACK FERTIG

*Spring fever hits early with Venus sextile Jupiter tempting us to new friends, fun, and flirtation. Then she aspects Mars, eager to realize the dreams inspired by Jupiter. Venus and Mars will aspect Saturn, bringing everything back down to earth. Get grounded with fresh new perspectives and you're ahead of the game!*

**ARIES (March 20 – April 19):** Too many social temptations make it harder to get things done, but you could organize your friends in a productive way, especially in a charitable service. That could introduce you to your next mate, or cement an existing partnership.

**TAURUS (April 20 – May 20):** Your initiative and innovations are getting good notice. Opportunities and responsibilities are about to grow. Share the credit along with the work and you'll get lots of support from behind the scenes.

**GEMINI (May 21- June 20):** Friendly encouragement is welcome, but remember that's what friends are for. When you parlay their faith into actual constructive efforts you'll run into new obstacles. Accept those creative challenges and justify the regard of your admirers.

**CANCER (June 21- July 22):** Your public reputation and career advances will enhance your opportunities for private fun and games. That could feed a cycle of benefits on both sides, but all that could be a distraction from necessary work at home.

**LEO (July 23 – August 22):** Being very accommodating to your partner, especially in bed, will help you reach new understandings in your relationship. You may then hit a wall, but that was always there. It will give you a better understanding of how to negotiate limits.

**VIRGO (August 23 – September 22):** Getting too clever at work can confuse your colleagues. Listen at least twice as much as you talk. Taking the lead, you'll just go in circles. Stick to what everyone knows you're good at and trust others on your team.

**LIBRA (September 23 – October 22):** Indulge those playful urges, even your wicked streak. Just remember your partner is with you against the rest of the world. If single, any

prospective partner will be all the more eager to be on your side.

**SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21):** Creativity, and perhaps even a dash of perversity, is the key to getting through any task, no matter how onerous. If you can hold on to that attitude you can clear away a lot of household drudgery.

**SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20):** Your efforts to be brilliant and playful could prove more confusing than amusing to the folks at home. Your friends kind of get it, but the act still needs a bit more work. It's OK; they all still love you.

**CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19):** To get ahead more effectively you have to appreciate where you came from. Siblings, even if they seem angry or confused, have important lessons for you. Make a gratitude list.

**AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18):** Try a new look based on your most underappreciated asset, physical or otherwise. That will start some fun discussions and then some arguments, but that's the point! You're used to stretching other people's brains, now push your own to new limits.

**PISCES (February 19 – March 19):** Worries? Doubts? Not sure where you're going? Never forget to meditate! Getting into frenzy and going off half-cocked carries a huge price. Calm that overheated brain and answers to your problems will come into focus.

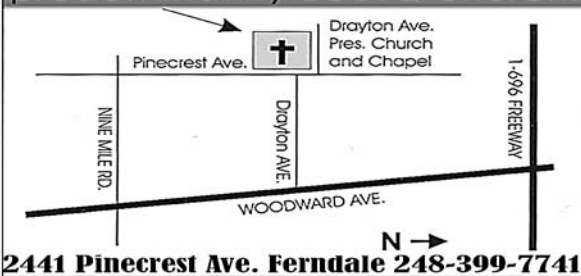
*Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available for personal and business consultations in person in San Francisco, or online everywhere. He can be reached at 415-864-8302, through his website at [www.starjack.com](http://www.starjack.com), and by e-mail at [QScopes@qsyndicate.com](mailto:QScopes@qsyndicate.com).*



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Solution to puzzle from page 30




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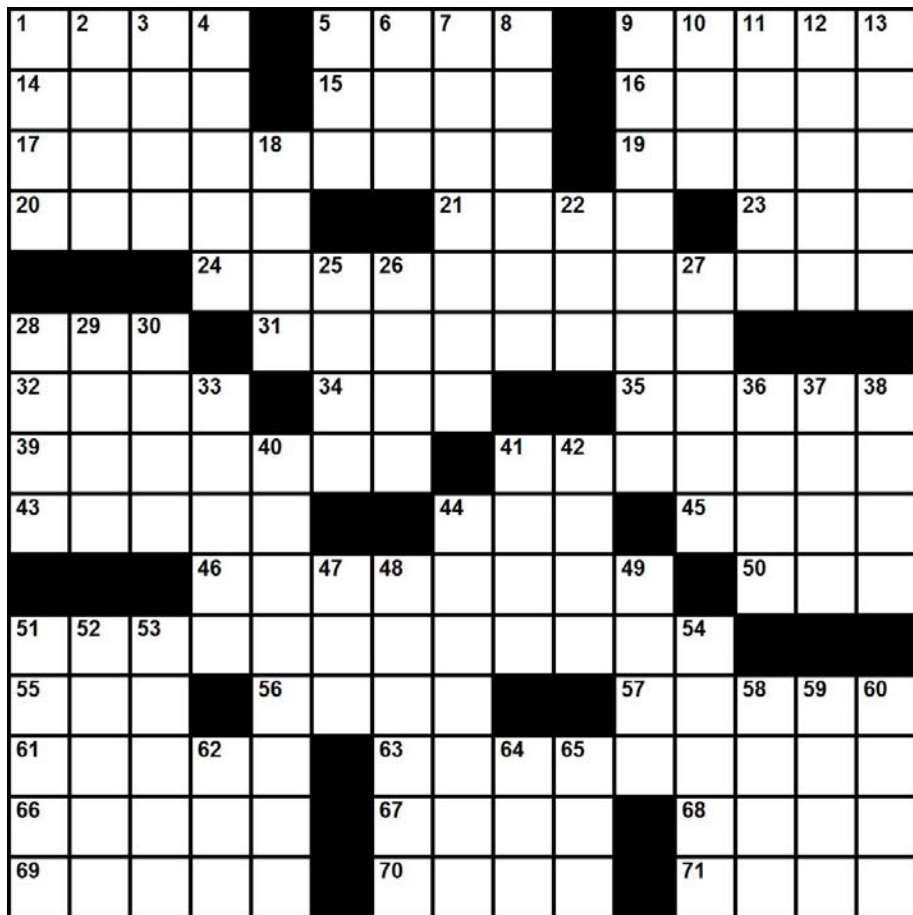
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# That's a Fact, Jack

## Across

- 1 Bride and bride's vehicle
- 5 The d. of k.d. lang
- 9 Rock costar
- 14 Declare openly
- 15 Nastase of the net
- 16 Standing up straight
- 17 Character in 63-Across
- 19 Kind of blitz
- 20 Hit in the family jewels
- 21 Caesar's final reproach
- 23 What an octopus shoots off
- 24 Actor who played 17-Across
- 28 Come out on the beach
- 31 Tear up
- 32 AZT, e.g.
- 34 Break for Heather's mummies
- 35 Made less difficult to bear
- 39 With 41-Across, actor who played 51-Across

## Down

- 41 See 39-Across
- 43 Ventriloquist Bergen
- 44 Bottom line
- 45 Village People hit
- 46 Plant collections
- 50 Crazy like a fox
- 51 Character in 63-Across
- 55 HMO concern
- 56 "Like \_\_\_ not"
- 57 "There Is Nothing Like a Dame" fruit
- 61 Sacred song
- 63 Upcoming movie based on a Jack Kerouac book
- 66 Write "The Hot'l Baltimore"
- 67 Moliere's mom
- 68 "Six Feet Under" character
- 69 Smoothies
- 70 Where the last ferry leaves
- 71 Antony of "Shakespeare in Love"

## Down

- 1 Be deficient in
- 2 Russian John
- 3 "Oliver!" request
- 4 One of the little hooters
- 5 Soft in the head
- 6 Home state of J. Nabors
- 7 Bug a phone
- 8 At the head of the line
- 9 Showed reluctance
- 10 Stuff from your shaft
- 11 Took advantage of a decorator
- 12 Danish topper
- 13 Vampire vanquisher
- 18 Nose activator
- 22 Sung syllable
- 25 Pre-kiss insert, perhaps
- 26 Chose not to swallow
- 27 Pisa place
- 28 Beat barely
- 29 Pitt of "Inglourious Basterds"
- 30 Hamlet

- 33 Poet Judy
- 36 Bottom lines
- 37 Letter abbr.
- 38 Time of decision
- 40 Isolated individuals
- 41 Greek queen of heaven
- 42 Islamic leader
- 44 Cover for locks
- 47 "Poppycok!"
- 48 Hag transport
- 49 Where to look, in "Misty"
- 51 Coins featuring Eleanor's husband
- 52 \_\_\_ Gay
- 53 Husband of a Duke
- 54 Fish stories
- 58 Guy that cruised with a pair of bears
- 59 Concert receipts
- 60 Baltic Sea tributary
- 62 Announcer Hall
- 64 "I'm a trisexual, I'll \_\_\_ anything once"
- 65 Put the whammy on

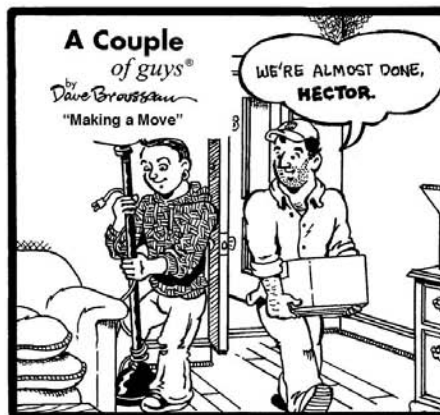
Solution on 29

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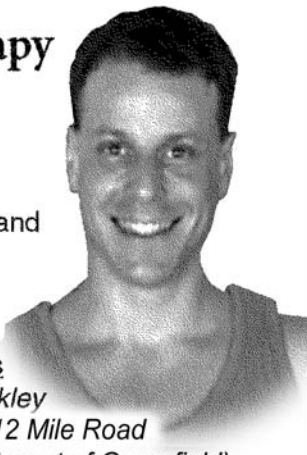
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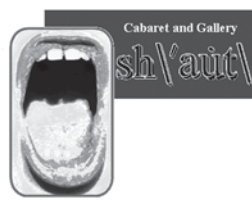




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## Eat Gay Love

Fine, I'm going public with it – I have no idea what I'm doing with my life. Therefore, I update my Facebook status with positive self statements just to make it look like I know what I'm doing. Is that common? Am I allowed to be my biggest fan? I can't stop myself. I guess I'm trying to be optimistic about my future, even though my agent called today, advising me to completely rewrite my latest novel. It's too dark, he says. It reads like the catharsis of someone going through a bad breakup, and nobody is going to read that. Not when they're surviving their own bad break-ups. Still, I'm not going to be upset. So what if I'm stuck cohabitating with my dad for the rest of my life? I need to remain strong because my friend Hank is having a real problem. Lately, he says I haven't been there for him. Not since I got back with my boyfriend. So tonight, he's on a first date, and I'm supposed to prove myself by being available by cell, just in case he, you know, wants to flee.

God knows, it's happened before....

"Just once!" Hank exclaims. "And that's 'cause some guy said I reminded him of his son. Who says that on a date? It made me want to dial the predator hotline."

Oh. That's the thing about Hank. He likes to date older men, but he can't handle it when their age difference comes up. Therefore, he makes certain to steer the conversation during dates, leading to mindless banter and awkward revelations, such as confessing his daily battle with anorexia. He thinks admitting his disorder will make older gentlemen feel bad for him, ultimately causing them to fall in love with him because there's no chance he'll ever get fat. The theory is flawed, yes. But then again, Hank finds it best to "keep it real."

That is 'til tonight, when his dating life takes an eerie turn. "Oh dear God!" Hank shrieks, calling me. "Can you believe the nerve? This guy says he won't allow me to leave the restaurant until I eat something. Doesn't he know it's Valentine's Day? He should be kissing my ass. What am I gonna do? He drove. And now, I'm stuck at Chili's, hunched over a toilet."

"Why? Are you throwing up?"

"No. I'm anorexic, not bulimic," he scoffs, as if he were seated on the high throne of an eating disorder hierarchy. "Listen. I need you to come and get me."

"On Valentine's Day???"

"So? You have a boyfriend. He's not going anywhere. What's the problem?"

The problem is my boyfriend is preparing a romantic spaghetti dinner, and I have every intention of paying him back for it. In other words, I'm going to put out. Or so I hope! I mean, this is the first time we've been alone in awhile. Why? Well, it's been hard rescheduling my life after nine months of being single. The truth is: I'm having trouble with the transition. I go from work, to the gym, to work, to dinner, to bed. And somewhere in that time, I have to fit him in. And friends such as Hank, I barely see them at all.

Therefore, when I advise Hank to solve his dating dilemma by simply eating something,

The problem is my boyfriend is preparing a romantic spaghetti dinner, and I have every intention of paying him back for it. In other words, I'm going to put out. Or so I hope! I mean, this is the first time we've been alone in awhile. Why? Well, it's been hard rescheduling my life after nine months of being single.

he blows up, stating I just want off the phone. "You had time for me when you were single," he states. "I liked you better when you were alone. You were miserable enough to have empathy!"

"Ugh. Are we arguing now?"

"If you have time."

Through his clever tone, I sense he's smirking. But I'm not going to feed into his drama. Instead, I'm going to hang up. Quite the idea, except Hank has me on speed-dial. Too bad, I'm not answering. Rather, I'm twirling spaghetti strands on a spoon, as my boyfriend curiously eyes me each time the phone buzzes.

"You're awfully popular tonight," he says.

"Well, I'm the dating columnist. And everyone needs advice on Valentine's Day."

"Really? Then why aren't you answering the phone?"

Honestly, because I need advice too. Tell me, how do you go from being single to being coupled without losing a single friend? Lately, I feel caught, having to choose which person I can see each night.

But tonight is Valentine's Day. Therefore, the boyfriend wins. But who was there for me when I didn't have a boyfriend? Hank....

So what I do?

"You answer the phone," my boyfriend instructs.

And I realize he's not been the one putting me in the middle; I've been putting myself there. I don't need to be everything to everyone all of the time. I just need to be someone to some people some of the time, particularly when they need someone to listen. So I answer, and you know what? Hank doesn't chew me up a bit. Maybe because he doesn't eat....

Or maybe because answering reminds him I care enough to tell him he needs to.

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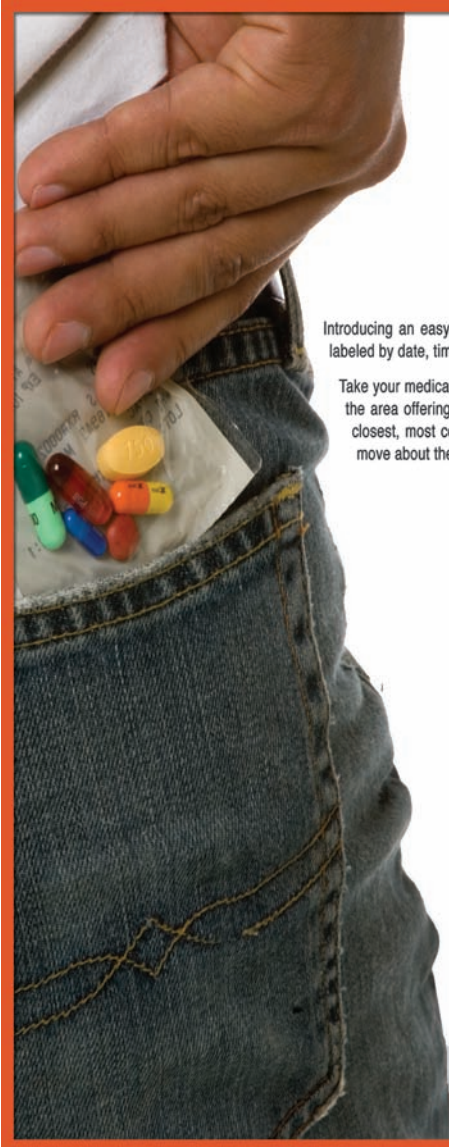
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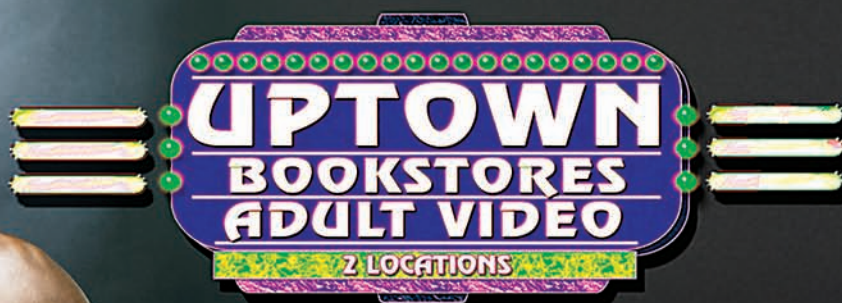
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Bradley Cooper. Photo: New Line Cinema

## Lee Daniels eyes Bradley Cooper

What movie will Lee Daniels ("Precious") make next? It seems like he has a new potential project every few weeks. Will it be "Selma" like we keep hearing? "The Butler"? That remake of Fellini's "Nights of Cabiria"? Well, the answer is maybe "none of the above" if "The Paperboy" happens. Based on Pete Dexter's 1995 novel, it's a crime thriller about two brothers pulled

into the investigation of a rural sheriff's murder and it's set to star "I Am Number Four"'s hot young thing Alex Pettyfer. Word is that Daniels is already reading actors for roles and has made offers to both Bradley Cooper to play Pettyfer's older brother and to "Modern Family"'s Sofia Vergara. Of course, what "Precious" fans want to know is if there's a part for Gabourey Sidibe in all this, because given the fleeting nature of deals and shelved projects, literally anything can still happen at this point. So stay tuned for further speculation.

## Griffin's 'Glee'-ful Tea Party

It wouldn't be a proper week of entertainment news if the "Glee" PR machine didn't have some kind of announcement. And this week's flash is the addition of a new right-wing character to the cast. A Tea Party-loving, homeschooling, Sarah Palin type. Played by Kathy Griffin. Now, contrast that casting announcement with creator Ryan Murphy's stated intention to make this character part of the show's inclusive vibe. Does anyone think it's possible to have it both ways? Will it ride the outside edge of insulting, like the way Ashley Fink's character Lauren Zizes gets to be powerful "and" the butt of fat jokes? Will the show simply abandon the character and her story lines when the next sensational musical guest star comes along? Can politically outspoken Kathy Griffin play a sympathetic right-winger without smirking? And, more to the point, how long before Sarah Palin takes to the Internet with a video explaining how offended she is?

## Tilda's Thai debut?

That tiny sound you just barely heard was the collective swoon and sigh of art film fans who very much want the following project to hurry up and become real: hyper-acclaimed gay Thai filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul, whose latest film "Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives" won the Palme d'Or at Cannes and is currently in a handful of U.S. arthouse cinemas, is working on his next film, "Mekong Hotel." And it looks like it "might" star Queen of Everything Cool, Tilda Swinton. What's it about? The director says it will "address the relationship between

man and water, the catastrophic flooding which is blamed on Chinese dams and diseases spread by industrial-scale pig farming." Of course, if that's the case then expect those themes to be dealt with obliquely; Weerasethakul is infamous for plotlines that feel baffling right down to the closing credits. But who cares, really, because if Swinton winds up taking part it'll get the visionary director seen by even more sets of confused eyes. And in the movie business that's how you win.

## Lesbian directors are all right

Everything's coming up deals for two lesbian directors. One of them is hot off an Oscar-nominated success story. The other one brushed up against Academy Award acclaim a few years ago. And both of them have high profile projects lined up. Lisa Cholodenko, whose "The Kids Are All Right" is the movie to beat in the Best Actress race, is taking on the film adaptation of Tom Perrotta's novel "The Abstinence Teacher." In the same vein as Perrotta's earlier stories, "Election" and "Little Children," it will mine anxiety in suburbia when a New Jersey sex education teacher has to battle local conservative forces that would seek to silence her curriculum. Meanwhile, tough-minded "Boys Don't Cry" filmmaker Kimberly Peirce has set up "The Knife" at Universal, a true crime drama about an L.A. gang member-turned-FBI-informant whose life is in constant danger. No casts or start dates for either of these projects, but details are sure to come soon enough.

Romeo San Vicente thinks abstinence is hilarious. He can be reached care of this publication or at [DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com](mailto:DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com).

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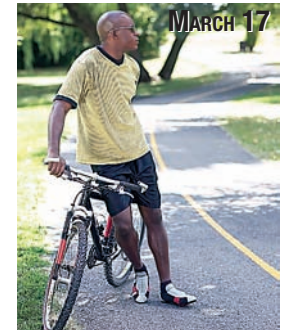
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