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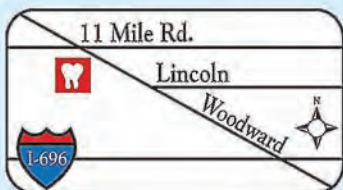
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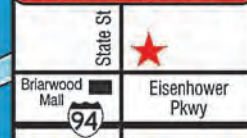
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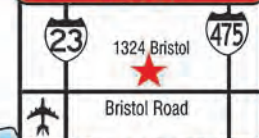
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# BTM Speak Out

BY ERIC RADER

## Defense of Marriage Act archaic law

### House GOP wants to defend DOMA with taxpayer money

Earlier this year, President Obama announced that his administration would no longer defend the so-called "Defense of Marriage Act" in federal court. This discriminatory law prohibits the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriages, and allows the states to refuse to honor such unions performed in other states. Several gay couples have mounted legal challenges to the law, arguing that it violates the constitutional right to equal protection of the laws. A Massachusetts court ruled in two separate cases last year that the law indeed was a violation of the Constitution and should be struck down. In the meantime, other cases challenging DOMA are moving forward in Connecticut.

We must tell our representatives that we don't want them to use taxpayer money to defend discrimination.

Throughout the earlier DOMA cases, the Obama Administration defended the law. Many people in the LGBT community were perplexed by the president's legal defense of a law that he was attempting to overturn. The president's legal advisors responded that as president, Obama must defend laws that are on the books, even if he disagrees with them. Rather than having the judiciary strike down this law, the president expressed his preference for repealing it through the legislative process. However, now that Republicans control the House, legislative repeal of DOMA is off the table. Thus, judicial action is the only route to ending this obnoxious law. The president's decision to abandon his legal defense of DOMA would seem to make it easier for the courts to strike it down.

Unfortunately, House Republicans have moved in to fill the legal void. Speaker John Boehner has announced that the Republican majority will hire its own lawyers to defend the law in court. To add insult to injury, the Speaker of the House wants to redirect taxpayer funds to pay for the House's legal effort to defend DOMA. House Republicans have hired a high-priced law firm to mount their legal defense, and it could cost millions of dollars. All of this comes at a time when the House leadership is seeking to make massive cuts to vital federal programs in an effort to supposedly balance the federal budget. Austerity is the House GOP mantra, except when

they want to treat gays as second-class citizens.

In their successful effort to recapture control of the House last fall, Republicans said very little about social issues. Gay marriage, abortion, and other social issues were rarely brought up by GOP candidates last year, and the Tea Party movement has largely ignored them in their policy agenda. Yet, now that the Republican Party is in control of the House, they are using their power to pursue a rabidly reactionary social agenda. Their first strike was an unsuccessful effort to cut off family planning funds for Planned Parenthood, ostensibly in the name of fiscal discipline. In their legislative agreement with Democrats to avoid a government shutdown a few weeks ago, the House leadership succeeded in adding a policy amendment that prevents Washington D.C. from using its own local funds (not federal money) to finance abortions. Now the Republicans want to use federal money to defend discrimination against gay and lesbian couples. Social issues have absolutely nothing to do with the federal deficit, but the GOP is using the budget as a pretext to push their right-wing ideology.

When the voters went to the polls last November, they were most certainly not focused on social issues, but rather on their economic discontent. It appears that Republicans feel they won a mandate to pursue regressive social policies, regardless of what the public wants. This again points to the importance of elections and the need for all LGBT citizens to participate in the political process. Every member of the House of Representatives is on the ballot in 2012.


For many years, Republicans have used gay rights as a wedge to divide voters and elect their candidates to office. This cynical ploy was a key part of George W. Bush's electoral strategy when he won reelection in 2004. However, times have changed. Support for same-sex marriage is increasing across the country, with some surveys now showing that a majority of citizens favor allowing gay couples to marry. Most citizens favor equal job opportunities for our community, and support allowing gay and lesbian troops to serve openly in the military. House Republicans are pursuing an archaic agenda that most of the nation rejects. In the weeks ahead, it's important that we remind our representatives in Washington that we don't want them to use taxpayer money to defend discrimination, and that DOMA should be allowed to die. If Republicans continue their effort to defend this law, we should work to defeat them in 2012.

Contact your U.S. Representative — ask him or her to oppose the Republican effort to defend discrimination: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)


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## Spirituality summit May 7

DETROIT—KICK, the agency for LGBT African Americans, is holding a spirituality summit on Sunday, May 7. Registration is from 9-10 a.m and a continental breakfast will be served. Lunch is provided and the entrance is free.

“Many seek to have a relationship with a higher power but due to mischaracterizations of God, people remain separated from and hurt by their institution of worship,” said Lewis L. Smith, minister-in-training and summit committee member. “Healing Detroit is a unique opportunity to have significant dialogue to address spiritual and religious values among the LGBT people of faith and greater community.”

Healing Detroit is an African-American LGBT initiative developed to address barriers and social constraints that have impacted the growth and development of Detroit’s black LGBT community.

The agenda for the day’s activities includes two sessions. The morning session, “Teaching God’s LGBTQ Children,” seeks to educate the community as to what the Bible says about homosexuality. It includes a panel discussion of the seven scriptures that address homosexuality: Genesis 19:4-8, Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:22-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 1 Timothy 1:9-10, and Jude 1:5-7.

The afternoon session, “Teaching ALL God’s Children,” will be a panel discussion about the black church and homosexuality. Topics will include “Conceptions & Misconceptions,” “Gays in the Church,” and “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell: A Church Tradition?”

Healing Detroit is made possible by a grant from the Arcus Foundation. Current partners are SPICE, Affirmations, Equality Michigan, the Ruth Ellis Center and KICK. To register, email [healingdetroit@yahoo.com](mailto:healingdetroit@yahoo.com) or call 313-285-9733.

## Financial workshop focuses on LGBT families

FERNDALE— Comerica Bank and its LGBT Alliance Group is sponsoring an “Estate and Financial Workshop for the LGBT Community” at Affirmations on Wednesday, April 27 at 6:30 p.m.

The event will feature discussions on estate planning strategies, domestic partnership agreements, caring for elderly patients and medical decision challenges.

The panel of presenters includes attorney Roy A. Lutman, Comerica Bank estate advisor Brian K. Wolfe, Comerica Bank Vice President and personal banker Carol Huckleby and Comerica Securities Consultant Julie Shemanski.

Affirmations is located at 290 W. Nine Mile Rd. in Ferndale. For more information, go online to [www.goaffirmations.org](http://www.goaffirmations.org).

# Hundreds of law students protest graduation speaker

## U-M students dislike Ohio Senator’s opposition to gay rights

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

ANN ARBOR— Students at the University of Michigan’s Law School are protesting the selection of their commencement speaker, Ohio Senator Rob Portman, because of his opposition to gay rights.

The law school announced on April 12 that Portman would be the featured speaker at its graduation ceremony this spring. On April 14, 98 graduating students sent a letter to Law School Dean Evan Caminker to express their “profound disappointment” with Portman’s selection, and another 200 first- and second-year law students sent a similar letter to the dean on April 15.

“Michigan Law prides itself on its commitment to diversity and tolerance,” the 98 graduating students wrote. “While we do not wish to silence debate nor to categorically deny individuals with anti-gay politics any opportunity to speak at the law school, we believe that (the) decision to host a (graduation) speaker who is openly hostile to LGBT rights is deeply unfair to the LGBT students who will be in the audience this year celebrating their graduation.” The students urged the dean to reconsider his choice and rescind the invitation.

Portman, a U-M law school graduate, has a voting record that the 298 students dislike. As a U.S. Representative, Portman voted for a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning same-sex marriage in 2004. Portman also voted for the Defense of Marriage Act, which allows states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages performed legally in other states, in 1996. (The Obama administration has since deemed the act unconstitutional.) And in 1999, he voted to bar same-sex couples in Washington, D.C. from adopting children.

Sarah St. Vincent, a graduating law student who is the media contact for the group of students who are organizing the opposition efforts, said some U-M law students have also sent personal letters to Portman asking him not to speak at their graduation ceremony. St. Vincent said some Ohio university students, who have expressed their support of the group by writing personal letters to Portman, have contacted the group as well. St. Vincent also said the group received a letter of support on April 21 from the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans Queer Youth and Student Organisation, an NGO based in Brussels.

A group of alumni has also expressed support in an open letter, viewable online, to Dean Caminker.

“The choice of Senator Portman as speaker for this occasion is antithetical to Michigan Law’s long civil rights legacy,” the letter says. “Senator Portman, in his public life, has actively worked to deny some members of the graduating class their civil rights.”

The alumni write in their letter that they do not wish to ban anti-gay speakers at the school, but Portman’s invitation “is hurtful to those whose civil liberties (Portman) would



Photo from [robportman.com](http://robportman.com)

deny, and embarrassing to members of Michigan Law’s community who care about upholding the character and image of the school.”

The Michigan Daily, U-M’s student newspaper, shared excerpts of an email Dean Caminker sent to the law school community about the issue.

“All the communication surrounding this issue has been thoughtful, and I respect our students’ conviction and outreach. I truly regret that this issue has caused members of our community distress in anticipation of what should be a celebratory day,” he wrote.

“We are deeply invested in the principle of diversity where a wide spectrum of perspectives is included. The Law School remains steadfast in its commitment to create a supportive environment for our LGBT community, and also to create an educational environment in which diverse viewpoints can be represented. Anything less would undermine the Law School’s core values.”

“Our graduating class is among the first of a generation that views equality based on sexual orientation as something more than an academic question on which people can agree to disagree,” Imran Syed, who graduates this year, wrote in an op-ed in The Michigan Daily

on April 13. “We have been raised in a slightly more enlightened world, and count amongst our friends and colleagues many gay people who continue to face discrimination that is abhorrent to the spirit of constitutional protections afforded to all people.”

“There was a time when such discrimination was common, and acceptable,” Syed wrote. “That time has passed.”

U-M still plans for Portman to deliver the commencement speech May 7. St. Vincent said that the students are considering a few responses, including walking out.

Eric Felleman, one of the co-chairs of Outlaws, an LGBT student group at the law school, is working on purchasing rainbow-colored tassels and LGBT-supportive buttons to be worn at the graduation ceremony. “Already, close to 125 students and faculty members have ordered tassels. Many more are expected to wear buttons,” he wrote in an email to BTL.

“There was a time when such discrimination was common, and acceptable. That time has passed.”

—U-M law student Imran Syed

“We look forward to working with the law school administration to improve the speaker selection process,” Felleman continued. “We hope that with increased student participation, future speakers will be more of a reflection of the values of the graduating class.”

“It is law school,” St. Vincent said. “The whole point is to debate and learn to respond to different points of view. That’s what we all do all day long. But at the same time there are just some points of view that we feel are objectively discriminatory and objectively not tolerable.”

## Understanding gender variance

TROY— Congregation Shir Tikvah is hosting an educational event titled “Gender variance and Expression in Children – Understanding Through Education” at 7 p.m. on May 3.

Kim Pearson, executive director and co-founder of TransYouth Family Allies will speak. TYFA is the only national organization dedicated exclusively to education and advocacy for gender variant and transgender children and youth.

This is a community event organized by TYFA, The Michigan Psychological Association Foundation and Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion.

Shir Tikvah is located at 3900 Northfield Parkway. Donations will be accepted to offset the costs of bringing Pearson to Detroit. Those who want to attend are encouraged to RSVP to [rabiarnie@shirtikvah.org](mailto:rabiarnie@shirtikvah.org).



# Advocates challenge state officials on second parent adoption

## DHS 'misinterprets' state law, says Mich. ACLU

BY TODD HEYWOOD

Mere weeks after the Arkansas Supreme Court overturned a ban on same-sex adoption, the battle over two-parent adoptions is heating up in Michigan as advocates for youth in the foster care system say that thousands of children are being denied permanent homes.

Under a 1935 law, only one person in state government can sign off on every adoption in the state, causing a two-month delay, reports the Detroit News.

But there are some youth who have two loving adult caretakers. Some of those caretakers are same-sex partners. Those co-parenting scenarios are called "second parent adoptions" and the battle to approve them has been a rocky process for years.

The Michigan Department of Human Services oversees adoptions and foster care programming in the state. Its current director, former Michigan Supreme Court Justice Maura Corrigan, is a longtime opponent of same-sex partners adopting children. The Michigan Messenger asked MDHS spokesperson Gisgic Gendrau if the department had any plans to push for second parent adoption.

"Michigan statute requires that, when there is a two-parent adoption, the parents must be married. Michigan does not recognize same-sex marriages. Single parent adoptions do not take into account the sexual orientation of the parent. This is a legislative issue, not a court nor a DHS issue," Gendrau wrote in an email.

That response drew sharp criticism from advocates in the state.

Jay Kaplan, staff attorney for the ACLU of Michigan's LGBT Project, had this to say about the DHS response:

"The Department's interpretation of Michigan's adoption statute is inaccurate. There is nothing in Michigan's adoption law that says that the parties must be married in order to jointly adopt.

"Michigan's statute requires that if a person who wishes to adopt is married, his or her spouse must join in on the adoption petition, but there is no language in the adoption statute that says joint adoptions are limited to married couples.

"The Department is manufacturing a prohibition that is not there in the specific language of the statute, which according to Michigan courts, 'must be strictly construed.' Courts in Illinois, District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont (all of which have similar adoption statutory language as in Michigan requiring married spouses to join in adoption petitions) have held that this language does not prohibit two unmarried persons, including gay couples, from jointly adopting.

"Michigan appellate courts have not looked at the issue of gay couples adopting, and although (Gendrau) states otherwise, this is a court and legislative issue. It is not up to DHS, under the direction of Maura Corrigan, a former justice on Michigan's Supreme Court, who without a case before the Court, intervened to stop Second Parent Adoptions from being granted in

Washtenaw County in 2002, to manufacture a prohibition that is not there in the statute."

And Kaplan was not alone. Emily Dievendorf, policy director at Equality Michigan, also weighed in on the DHS statement.

"Michigan's equal rights advocates are finding that Arkansas is way ahead of Michigan in a number of ways. Arkansas recently passed an enumerated anti-bullying bill into law and with this Supreme Court decision has once again executed a concern and support for the general welfare of its residents that Michigan has yet to show.

"Michigan continues to struggle for an anti-bullying law that protects all kids and is now attempting to misconstrue our adoption laws in ways that only endanger the stability of Michigan's children. In this case, the Michigan Department of Human Services is interpreting Michigan adoption law in ways that deny kids available homes when its purpose is only to implement a Michigan statute that has no marriage requirement. The misinterpretation prevents the placement of our state's most vulnerable youth."

DHS did not respond to a follow up inquiry asking Corrigan to respond to Kaplan's allegation she had manufactured "a prohibition that is not in the statute."

*Story originally appeared on <http://michiganmessenger.com>*

## Ruth Ellis goal: \$100,000

### The center for homeless LGBT youth needs your help

BY BENJAMIN JENKINS

**DETROIT**— The Ruth Ellis Center, a non-profit dedicated to LGBT homeless, runaway and at-risk youth, is currently fundraising with a goal of \$100,000 before the end of September.

Every \$2 raised by the center will be matched by \$1 from the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan as part of its yearlong program to aid emergency food and shelter organizations.

Last month REC launched a new, easy-to-use donation tool on their website. People can donate money with just a few clicks at [www.ruthelliscenter.org](http://www.ruthelliscenter.org).

"(The fundraiser) is going exceptionally well," said Director Laura Hughes. "So often LGBT youth fall through the cracks and this outpour of support clearly shows there's a commitment to LGBT youth in the community."

The center must raise \$80,000 to receive the full grant given by the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan. Currently the center has

"So often LGBT youth fall through the cracks and this outpour of support clearly shows there's a commitment to LGBT youth in the community."

—Ruth Ellis Center Director Laura Hughes

## Jewish Gay Network kicks off Twice Blessed

### Series addresses issues faced by aging LGBTs

BY ANNE ADELSON

In our current social and political climate, the needs of diverse families in Michigan are evolving faster than our supporting institutions. The Jewish Gay Network of Michigan is offering a four-part series for older LGBT adults, Twice Blessed: Modern Family – You and Your Loved Ones, that addresses the unique issues facing LGBT families as they age.

The Twice Blessed Modern Family program begins with Establishing Legal Protections on May 4 at 7 p.m. at the Kahn Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield. Guest speakers include Jay Kaplan, staff attorney for the ACLU-LGBT Project and Mary Kator, chief counsel of the Rainbow Law Center. They will discuss how federal and state laws fail to protect the LGBT community.

"Older LGBT adults, both singles and couples, tend to be marginalized and may not seek appropriate legal resources," said Twice Blessed co-chair Linda Lee. "This program will address some of the ways that people who cannot get married or choose not to can still legally protect themselves." Speakers will cover issues such as wills and trusts, housing and how older

adults can use present laws to protect their rights and property.

### Are you losing your nest egg?

The series continues with Securing Your Finances on June 9 at 7 p.m. in the Atrium of Henry Ford Hospital in West Bloomfield. Twice Blessed co-chair Marjory Miller believes older LGBT adults, along with those who haven't yet reached senior status, can "use this event to become aware of the possibility of financial exploitation and how to avoid it." Guest speakers will be Laura Champagne, executive director of Citizens for Better Care; Stacey Cassis, assistant vice president and senior financial advisor of The Spickler Group at Merrill Lunch; and Beth Correa, senior vice president of retail banking at Comerica Bank.

### What happens if you get sick?

Part 3 of the program addresses what you need to know about inpatient hospital care for LGBT patients, partners and caregivers before the need arises. Health Care: Choosing Options and Communicating with Professionals will take place in the Henry Ford West Bloomfield Atrium on June 16 at 7 p.m. This event features a discussion of examples of sensitivity and care that should be routine with regard to patient care and families of choice, but often are not.

Guest speakers will be Jim Kraft, the chaplain at Henry Ford Hospital, as well as other Henry Ford Hospital professionals. Topics will include the latest rules concerning DNR orders, what LGBT patients need to know to ensure their wishes are met in a hospital setting and helpful communication guidelines for professionals.

### How can we create a community without closets?

The final event is Celebrating Our Diverse Community through Story and Song, which takes place on Monday, June 20 at 7 p.m. at the Kahn JCC in West Bloomfield. "This session will focus on creating a caring and accepting community for older adults, whether they are gay or straight," said Judy Lewis, JGN executive director. The Sing Out Detroit choir will perform, followed by a panel discussion featuring Lewis and Carol Rosenberg, the executive director of the Jewish Family Life Foundation.

Tickets for this series are \$10 each or \$35 for the entire series. Pre-registration is encouraged. Information can be found on the JGN website [www.jgnmi.org/events.html](http://www.jgnmi.org/events.html) but walk-ins are welcome. Continuing Education Credits are offered for this series. See website for details.

raised more than \$65,000 in six months.

While the non-profit has felt the economic recession as most businesses and organizations have, the center continues to find support:

"It is really the youth in our area who are most affected by the economy. We are just fortunate to have the trust of our donors who know their dollars will be leveraged forward," Hughes said. "Their support is what lets us support more LGBT youth."

According to a study in 2007 by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, up to 40 percent of homeless youth in America identify as LGBT.

Along with general operating costs, the funds raised will assist the center's three programs. Second Stories offers hygienic supplies, clothing, meals, Internet access and weekly support groups. The center also offers two residential programs: The structured Semi-Independent Living Program for 12 to 17-year-olds and the Transitional Living Program, an up to 18-month independent living arrangement for 16 to 21-year-olds.

Alternative to donation, the REC also seeks volunteers to mentor youth preparing to become independent. It is reaching out to local businesses hoping to acquire internship opportunities, so that the center's young adults can gain job experience.

Donations to the Ruth Ellis Center can be made online or by mail to address 77 Victor St., Detroit MI, 48203.

**Poll: A senator who's speaking at the U-M law school graduation ceremony opposes gay rights, and some students don't want him to be allowed to speak. What should U-M do?**

Allow the speaker. We all have the right to free speech.  
**7 votes**

Take back his invitation. Gay rights are civil rights.  
**23 votes**

Rather than get him gone, I would rather see nearly the entire student body stand and SILENTLY face away from him during his speech. THAT would send a message, I think. And it would also express MY sentiments, at least: "I understand there are people in the world with your views, but I turn away from you and those views, and I protest that you have a venue for your views while I don't (YET!)." One could still hear what he's saying. (It would be) no more disrespectful of HIM than he is of others.  
**-Steve Duerksen**

It's the students' graduation, so the speaker should be their choice.  
**-George Borg**

Is he speaking about gay rights? Otherwise, let him speak.  
**-Billione Multimedia**

*Comments may be edited for grammar and length.*

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**Lunatics, politics and heroes**



**Dr. Alfred M. Freedman**

*"This category is for individuals whose sexual interests are directed primarily toward people of the same sex and who are either disturbed by, in conflict with, or wish to change their sexual orientation. This diagnostic category is distinguished from homosexuality, which by itself does not constitute a psychiatric disorder. Homosexuality per se is one form of sexual behavior and, like other forms of sexual behavior which are not by themselves psychiatric disorders, is not listed in this nomenclature of mental disorders."*

– The American Psychiatric Association statement titled "Homosexuality and Sexual Orientation Disturbance," declaring that homosexuality was not a mental illness in 1973, quoted in the obituary of Dr. Alfred M. Freedman, a psychiatrist who led the APA to destigmatize homosexuality, nytimes.com, April 20. Dr. Friedman died at age 94.



**Gauguin: "Two Tahitian Women"**

*"I feel that Gauguin is evil. He has nudity and is bad for the children. He has two women in the painting and it's very homosexual. I was trying to remove it. I think it should be burned. I am from the American CIA and I have a radio in my head. I am going to kill you."*

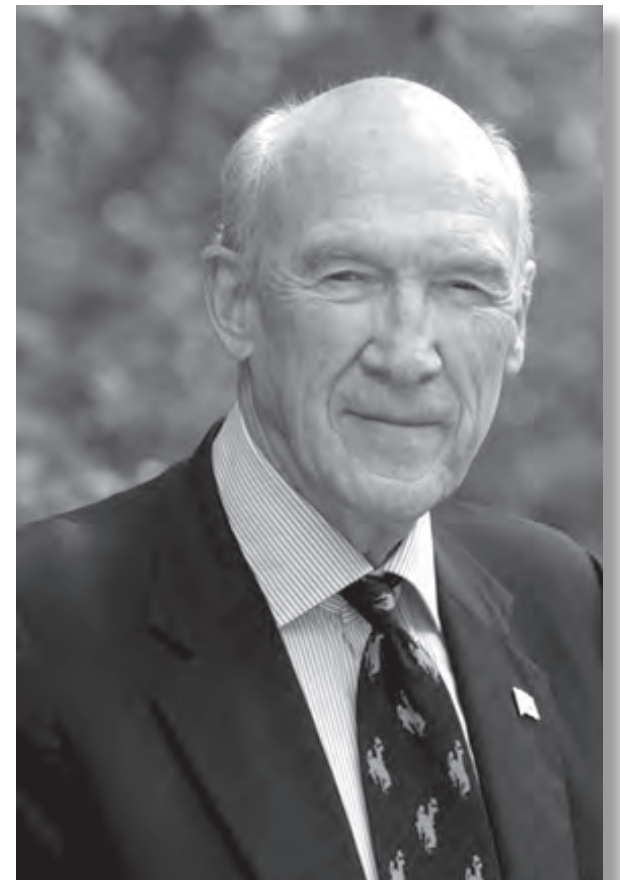
– A deranged visitor to the police, after attacking a painting by Paul Gauguin titled "Two Tahitian Women" at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C.; washingtonpost.com, April 4. The painting sustained no damage.



**John Amaechi**

*"I am tired of people having this debate about the relative impact of pejorative words on their target minority group. If injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, then the relative power of an antigay slur is irrelevant, it is simply a threat to human dignity, and that should appall us all."*

– John Amaechi, in his column titled "A Gay Former NBA Player Responds to Kobe Bryant," about LA Lakers guard Kobe Bryant using an antigay slur at a referee on camera during a game, offthedribble.blogs.nytimes.com, April 15.



**Senator Alan Simpson**

*"We have homophobes on our party. That's disgusting to me. We're all human beings. We're all God's children. Now if they're going to get off on that stuff – Rick Santorum has said some cruel things – cruel, cruel things about homosexuals. Ask him about it; see if he attributes the cruelty of his remarks years ago. Foul. Now if that's the kind of guys that are going to be on my ticket ... I'm not sticking with people who are homophobic, anti-women, moral values – while you're diddling your secretary while you're giving a speech on moral values? Come on, get off of it."*

– Senator Alan Simpson, R-WY, in an interview on MSNBC about social conservatives in the Republican party, thinkprogress.org, April 11.



## Parting Glances Then and Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

### Peel me a sour grape, Camilla!

I'm a patient person (having waited the requisite number of years to be thought of as well tempered – i.e., over the hill) but as my royal wedding invitation never arrived, I'll be spoiling on the subject of Kate & Wills, and the royal family.

(As my grandparents on my mother's side were born in England, migrating here about 1910, and, as I once had an aunt who was born there too, I thought that surely those antecedents to my own auspicious American birth – as well as my Facebook profile – would stand me in good stead for an invite. No such luck. Pity.)

May I say at the onset I find Kate Middleton to be quite stunning – a beauty, in contrast to her father-in-law Prince Charles' second, tampax touted, wife Camilla. (More of that anon). If given my aesthetic druthers, I prefer Harry to Wills, though the former may not be fathered by the male royal personage of the latter. (Anon also.)

The source for this sour grapes column is a glossy magazine recently published in time for the royal wedding (presumably for other non-invited American persons of Anglo Saxon heritage). Its title, "Collector's Issue Royal Scandals & Shockers!" Subtitled: "Murder, Madness, Lies, Cheating & More."

Purportedly there are "250 photos inside!" adds the cover, with banner headlines, "Charles & Camilla Marriage Hell," "The Queen Her Secret Agony," "Fergie's Drunken Shame" (you do remember her, don't you?), along with, "Why William & Kate's Marriage Is Doomed!"

The magazine sells for \$6.99 US/Canada, and carries the caveat, "Display until June 20, 2011" (presumably the date by which time a fresh batch of royal gossip will be available for non-invitee reader titillation). For those readers who, in spite of this proffered gossip mongering, are fans of the collective House of Windsor past and present, there are several wedding event mementoes for purchasing.

If so inclined, one may purchase a Royal Inspiration Replica Ring (four convenient installments of \$24.75), Prince William and Catherine Official Royal Engagement Postage Stamps (\$4.95 a set), a "beautifully framed canvas print" of Kate & Wills (two interest free installments of \$19.99), and a Royal Engagement 16" Kate Middleton Doll, with two designer dresses.

There's every possibility that "Royal Scandals & Shockers" will be turned into a lavender-scented soaper. Episode 1 would be called, "Queen Victoria Cheats with Her Faithful Servant." Episode 2, "Prince Albert Goes Jack the Ripper." Episode 3, "Edward & Wallis Play Footsie With Adolf Hitler." So much for the distant past.

Current episodes might include: "Prince Philip Clocks the Big 20 With Princess Alexandra of Kent," "Her Majesty Plays Horse With Richard Burton," "Prince Charles Meets His Long Lost Brother" – less than memorable quote: "I even have the same ears as Charles" – and – shudder – "Queen's Cousins Locked Away in Psycho Ward."

No doubt, the TV series climax could be, "Charles' Gay Sex Bombshell!" According to the magazine British tabloid sources, purportedly His Majesty Charles (oh, yes, the Queen says that the next king may very likely be Prince Wills) has had a three-year affair with a man, and has also been caught in flagrante delicto by a servant named George Smith. (Who delicto'd whom isn't clear.) There's one photo.

Four photos merit comment. The first: Prince Harry's pix with British Army Major James Hewitt. Side by side there's no question about who sired whom. Second: Camilla Parker-Bowles in a wheel chair with unsigned cast, after being a bit too tiddly and falling down a mountain side. (Oh, yes, Charles' tampax remarks on page 19.)

There are several photos of Princess Di. All lovely. There's also much gossip. All forgivable. Let her rest in peace. If anyone was royalty it was she. Take it from an uninvited queen.

Charles@pridesource.com

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## Editorial

# U-M law students, we salute you

Brave graduates make gay rights go mainstream

Our hats are off to the class of students at the University of Michigan's Law School for making it clear that gay rights are mainstream civil rights, no different than anyone else's.

When it was announced that their commencement speaker was going to be Rob Portman, a U.S. Senator who has long opposed gay rights, some brave students decided to do something about it.

They sent a letter, signed by 98 graduating students, to the law school dean. Then they sent another letter, signed by 200 first- and second-year students. Some of them even sent personal letters to Portman.

What did their letters say? Graduating student Imran Syed, who spoke out in an April 13 op-ed in U-M's newspaper, the Michigan Daily, sums it up best:

"Our graduating class is among the first of a generation that views equality based on sexual orientation as something more than an academic question on which people can agree to disagree. We have been raised in a slightly more enlightened world, and count amongst our friends and colleagues many gay people who continue to face discrimination

that is abhorrent to the spirit of constitutional protections afforded to all people. There was a time when such discrimination was common, and acceptable. That time has passed."

And even though Portman is still planning to speak at the ceremony and the school won't rescind its invitation, the students aren't quieting down. They're purchasing rainbow tassels and pins to wear at their ceremony, and some are even considering a walkout.

Now, a graduation ceremony is supposed to be a celebration – in this case, for getting through the prestigious law school at U-M. One would think that all of this debate (and potential walkout) would distract from the recognition that the students deserve.

"Many of us wish we weren't having to contemplate walking out on our graduation day," Sarah St. Vincent, a graduating law student told BTL last week. "But at the same time, if it comes to that, this is what we believe in and we're proud to make the statement."

To which we heartily congratulate the graduates, and say: We're so proud that the world belongs to you.

They're purchasing rainbow tassels and pins to wear at their graduation ceremony, and some are even considering a walkout.



## The Gay Moralist

BY JOHN CORVINO

# What the Bible doesn't say

Gay-rights advocates often complain that our opponents are selective in their use of the Bible. Indeed they are. But so are our allies.

I confronted this problem recently after a talk I gave in rural Pennsylvania, when fielding comments from two audience members from opposite sides of the debate.

The first cited Romans 1, where St. Paul claims that because people had "exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles," God gave them over to "degrading passions," so that the women exchanged "natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error" (Romans 1:26-27).

I personally don't accept the authority of scripture, as I explained in my talk. This is the same Paul who several times tells slaves that they must obey their masters, even harsh masters (see Ephesians 6:5, Colossians 3:22, 1 Timothy 6:1, Titus 2:9-10, and 1 Peter 2:18). He gets some stuff clearly wrong.

But I also pointed out that the audience member was reading quite a bit into the text.

Paul is addressing a specific group of people – first-century Romans – about a specific group of people: Gentiles who engaged in idolatry. He states that the latter's same-sex passion is a sign and consequence of their rejecting God in favor of images of "man or birds or animals or reptiles." To read his discussion more broadly as a general claim about all homosexual acts is to supply information that isn't there.

It's also to attribute a blatantly false claim to Paul, since most homosexuality doesn't stem from idol worship, and most idol worship doesn't lead to homosexuality.

After I finished making these points, a second audience member chimed in:

"And besides, Jesus never said a single word about homosexuality," he said. "That silence speaks volumes."

No, it doesn't.

Gently I responded, "We need to be careful about reading things into silence. Jesus doesn't say anything about Ponzi schemes either. But Bernie Madoff is still an asshole."

"Sure," he replied, "but that's not something that existed at the time. Same-sex relationships

did exist, and the fact that Jesus chose not to mention them is significant."

I really don't think so.

Perhaps Jesus chose not to mention them because he thought their wrongness was obvious. Perhaps he had bigger fish to fry (so to speak).

Or perhaps he did mention homosexuality, but his comments got lost among the scores of competing gospels that never made it into the Biblical canon. We just don't know.

What we do know – or should – is that reading messages into the Bible is a tendentious and potentially dangerous game.

Sure, the first audience member was doing that for anti-gay purposes, and the second one was doing it for pro-gay purposes. But they

were both doing it: reading their own biases into the text, and then using the text as validation for those biases.

And by the way, slavery certainly existed in Jesus' time, yet Jesus failed to condemn slavery

(in the texts that we have). Does his relative silence there speak volumes, too?

I don't like picking on my allies. I'm sure some readers will think, "If such beliefs make liberal Christians feel better, why not let them slide?"

Because the gay-rights battle isn't freestanding, that's why. It's tied into other debates about freedom, religion, rationality, the role of government, the justification of moral norms, and so on. It's not only our conclusions that matter, but also how we arrive at them.

The very same license that allows one person to assert that Jesus' silence on homosexuality "speaks volumes" allows another to assert that Paul's commentary on certain pagans demonstrates the wrongness of all homosexual acts. It lets people read something into the text that isn't there, and then to attribute that supplied message to God Himself.

The danger in this process is that it lets people think that they have infallible backing for their fallible prejudices.

We know what this mistake looks like when our opponents do it. We shouldn't validate the mistake by committing it ourselves.

John Corvino, Ph.D. is a writer, speaker, and philosophy professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. Read more or watch clips from his talks at [www.johnncorvino.com](http://www.johnncorvino.com).

# Victim in McDonald's attack alleges hate crime

## Victim: 'I'm just afraid to go outside now'

ROSEDALE, Md. (AP)— A transgender woman whose brutal attack at a McDonald's restaurant in Maryland was captured on video that later went viral said she was the victim of a hate crime.

Twenty-two-year-old Chrissy Lee Polis told The Baltimore Sun that since the attack April 18, "I'm just afraid to go outside now because of stuff like this."

The video posted online shows a woman being attacked and apparently having a seizure. Baltimore County police say a 14-year-old girl has been charged as a juvenile and an 18-year-old woman faces an assault charge in the case.

Polis told the newspaper that after she used the restroom, "They said, 'That's a dude, that's a dude and she's in the female bathroom.'"

Polis said she was confronted by a girl who spat in her face and accused Polis of talking to "my man." Polis said another girl then also spat on her face, and that they then beat and kicked her, pulled her by the hair and tore off her earrings.

"They really hurt me really bad," Polis said in a videotaped interview that was posted on the newspaper's website.

All the while, she said, a McDonald's employee recorded the attack on his cell phone even though she told him to stop. She said her injuries would certainly have been worse had an older female customer not assisted her.

"They just seemed like they wanted to pick a fight that night," Polis said.

Lt. Robert McCullough, a spokesman for the Baltimore County police, told The Associated Press on Saturday evening that police are working with the state's attorney's office to determine whether other charges should be brought and whether anyone else should face charges.

"I'm sure our investigators will be doing additional follow-up, speaking with the victim in this case," McCullough said.

Asked about Polis' allegation that she was a hate crime victim,

McCullough said investigators would certainly look into such claims.

"Generally when it comes to cases that involve racial, religious, ethnic or sexual orientation from an investigative standpoint, we approach the case from the perspective of the victim," he said.

Franchise owner Mitchell McPherson said in a statement that he was shocked by the beating inside the Rosedale restaurant. The company also condemned the beating. McPherson said the employee who took the video and appeared to alert the assailants that police were on the way "is no longer employed with my organization." Other workers may also be disciplined.

Equality Maryland has called for the attack to be investigated as a hate crime, according to The Sun, and Polis' twin brother said it's painful to watch his sister face such abuse.

"My sister has gotten this her entire life," Matty Polis said. "Being the way she is, she's always had a hard time."

# AIDS prevention pill study halted

## Women taking Truvada just as likely to get HIV as women taking dummy pills

BY MARILYNN MARCHIONE

Researchers are stopping a study that tests a daily pill to prevent infection with the AIDS virus in thousands of African women because partial results show no signs that the drug is doing any good.

Women taking Truvada, made by Gilead Sciences Inc., are just as likely to get HIV as other women who have been given dummy pills, an interim analysis of the study found. Even if the study were to continue, it would not be able to determine whether the pills help prevent infection, because the results are even this far along, researchers said.

The finding is disappointing because another study last fall concluded that Truvada did help prevent infections in gay and bisexual men when given with condoms, counseling and other prevention services. Many AIDS experts view that as a breakthrough that might help slow the epidemic.

Family Health International, a nonprofit involved in AIDS research, announced the new results on Monday. The group launched the study two years ago and had enrolled about half of the 3,900 women intended in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. As of last week, 56 new HIV infections had occurred, half in each group.

No safety problems were seen with Truvada. However, women taking it were more likely to become pregnant than those on dummy pills.

"That's both a surprising finding and one that we can't readily explain" by what is known so far about Truvada's effects on women using hormonal contraceptives, said Dr. Timothy Mastro of Family Health International. The study was sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Gilead provided the drugs for the study.

Truvada already is sold for

treating HIV. It's a combination of two drugs, tenofovir and emtricitabine, or FTC, made by California-based Gilead Sciences Inc.

Using it or its components for prevention is still "very promising," Mastro said, although benefits and risks may vary by gender and by the way the virus is spread — sex between men and women or riskier anal sex among men, for example.

Last year, a study in South Africa found that a vaginal gel spiked with tenofovir cut in half a woman's chances of getting HIV from an infected partner. Protection was greater for those who used it most faithfully.

A similar effect was seen in the study of Truvada in gay men. The drug lowered the chances of infection by 44 percent, and by 73 percent or more among men who took their pills most faithfully. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

See AIDS study, page 15

# Creep of the Week

## Teonna Monae Brown

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

There are plenty of reasons why Chrissy Lee Polis, a 22-year-old transgender woman should have thought twice about going to McDonald's on April 18. Pick just about any item off the menu, really. High fat, the empty calories, the boatload of preservatives, the environmental impact of beef production.

But one thing she probably didn't consider was getting the shit beat out of her by a couple of teenage girls while store employees recorded a video and laughed.

That's exactly what happened at a Baltimore County McDonald's in Maryland and the horrific video has been watched thousands and thousands of times.

In the video Polis is seen being kicked and punched and slapped repeatedly by two girls who are screaming at her, though what they're saying is not intelligible on the video (I suspect, however, that it is not nice). She screams back at times and keeps trying to walk away, but it's no use. The girls are nothing if not tenacious. And savage. They just keep coming back with more violence to dish out.

Like I said, I can't understand anything the girls are screaming or anything that Polis says. After Polis is dragged cave-man style by her hair from the back to the front of the restaurant, an elderly woman stands up and tells one of the attackers to "get off of her" as she tries to break up the attack. The girls are not very receptive to this for some reason. I mean, you'd think that two people ruthlessly attacking someone in the middle of a McDonald's would be totally reasonable and respectful of their elders. But the girls go right on slapping and kicking and punching.

The manager at the store repeatedly says, "Stop," trying but failing to separate the girls from Polis. No other employee attempts to help, though early in the video Polis is on the floor after being kicked and is holding what looks like a plastic shopping bag. As she scrambles to get away, something falls out of the bag and an employee in a red shirt reaches down and grabs whatever it was that fell out. And that's the last we see or hear of the McDonald's crew until the end of the video where we hear someone warn the girls to get out of there because the police are coming and then say, "She's havin' a fuckin' seizure, yo."

Because Polis is, indeed, having a fucking seizure, and no attempt is made to assist her in any way. Even after someone says, "She needs help right now," you hear the manager off camera saying, "They're on their way" while Polis thrashes unaided on the floor and the girls take off.

The girls, by the way, have names. One of them is 18-year-old Teonna Monae Brown. The other is only 14 years old so her name has not been released as of press time. All I know about her is that she apparently has really cool older friends and that she told police that she and Brown "got into a fight with a woman over using the bathroom."

In a case of tragic irony, Maryland's legislature recently stripped the Gender Identity Anti-discrimination Act of "public accommodation protections" for transgender people and then failed to pass the damn thing anyway.

The police may prosecute the beating as a hate crime. Not because Polis is trans, but because Polis is white and her attackers are black. Whether race played a role in the attack or not is not yet clear. That trans-phobia played a role in the attack seems pretty clear.

Teonna Monae Brown clearly has some anger management issues (last year she was arrested after starting a fight at the very same McDonald's). But it's more than that. This was not just a couple of girls getting into a catfight. This was a sustained, directed, malicious attack on a person who was unarmed and outnumbered.

Brown isn't the first person to get it in her head that a transperson is less than human and deserving of violence. But you know what? Thanks to the dumb shit with the cell phone, thousands of people have seen what would otherwise be just another under-reported attack on a transperson. This has happened before. And it will happen again. If anything good comes out of this situation it'll be that next time fewer people will be able to just stand by and watch.

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This was not just a couple of girls getting into a catfight. This was a sustained, directed, malicious attack on a person who was unarmed and outnumbered.

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The mission of The Jewish Gay Network of Michigan is to serve all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Jews, their families and friends; by providing community, information, empowerment and education in an environment of respect. The goals of JGN are "A Community Without Closets" and the end to negative, derogatory and inaccurate information about people who are Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender (GLBT) or questioning their sexual identity.

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Wednesday, May 4, 2011

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Jay Kaplan

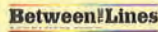


Mary Kator

Jay Kaplan, Staff Attorney for the ACLU-LGBT Project, and Mary Kator, Chief Counsel, Rainbow Law Center, PLLC, will discuss how various federal and state laws and policies fail to protect LGBT people from discrimination and deny recognition of same-sex relationships, creating both economic and emotional hardships for LGBT older adults and straight older adults in partnered relationships. We will discuss these gaps in the law and what kind of public policy changes are necessary. We will also present how LGBT older adults can use some present laws to protect their property and financial interests.

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## Lowe's to add 'Gender identity or expression' to discrimination policies

BY BTL STAFF

Lowe's Companies, Inc., a national home improvement retailer, plans to add the terms "gender identity or expression" to its Equal Employment Opportunity policy due in large part to pressure from the Equity Foundation.

Equity Foundation in Portland, Ore., in partnership with Trillium Asset Management Corporation in Boston, was a leader in the effort to file a proxy with Lowe's encouraging them to change its policies.

Equity Foundation Executive Director Peter Cunningham said, "Equity Foundation is elated about Lowe's including gender identity and expression in their discrimination policies. We realize that our work is not finished, but can celebrate that our transgender brothers and sisters will be protected in the hiring practices of Lowe's. I am excited that Equity Foundation exists not just as a grant making organization, but to also help change the corporate world — it means that our donors' dollars help change society in more than one way."

### ► AIDS study

Continued from p. 13

recently gave advice to doctors on prescribing Truvada along with other prevention services for gay men, based on those encouraging results.

In the new study, "it's difficult to understand why they did not see protection," but blood samples may tell more about whether it's related to how faithfully women took the pills, said Dr. Robert M. Grant of the Gladstone Institutes, a private foundation affiliated with the University of California, San Francisco.

He led the study of Truvada in gay men and said, "we are very confident that this approach is useful" for them.

The new study's result "must be seen as what it is — the closure of a single trial in a field that has generated exciting results in the recent past," said Mitchell Warren, head of the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, a nonprofit group that works on HIV prevention research.

Two other large studies testing AIDS drugs for prevention are under way in Africa, in heterosexual women and in couples where one has the virus and the other does not. Results are expected within two years. The studies have mostly been in countries with high rates of new infections because that makes it easier to see whether a prevention measure is having an impact.

Truvada costs \$5,000 to \$14,000 a year in the United States, but as little as \$140 a year in some poor countries where it's available in generic form.

# Virginia social services board rejects gay adoption

## Religious adoption agencies voice strong opposition

BY DENA POTTER

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)— Virginia's social services board voted April 20 to reject proposed regulations that would have prohibited adoption agencies from discriminating against prospective parents because they're gay.

The state's Board of Social Services voted 7-2 to strip that protection from proposed regulations. The vote came despite objections from some board members who said they didn't have enough time to examine the issue after the state Department of Social Services removed the provision late last week under the advice of Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli.

Cuccinelli advised the board last week that it did not have the authority to prohibit private — often faith-based — agencies from discriminating based on sexual orientation because state and federal law do not offer such protections.

The provision was added to proposed regulations in 2009 by then-Gov. Timothy M. Kaine's administration but only recently became an issue when conservative legislators and organizations said they feared it would allow same-sex couples to adopt.

Virginia allows adoption by married couples and singles, regardless of sexual orientation. But it does not allow unmarried couples to adopt.

Rob Keeling brought his 6-year-old son to the April 20 meeting. Keeling, who is gay, adopted the boy from Guatemala in 2005.

"I did not hear anybody today talk about the best interest of the children," he told the board before the vote. "I heard them talk about their own religious beliefs."

"Children don't come into the world wanting homes that have specific religious beliefs," he continued. "I think they come into the world wanting love — and I know that I have that to offer."

Keeling said 3,350 same-sex couples in Virginia are raising more than 6,000 children, based on data from the Family Equality Council.

Department officials said there are 1,300 children in foster care statewide who are eligible to be adopted.

"We have more than enough homes to go around," he said. "We have red tape and prejudice in the way."

Representatives from Baptist and Catholic organizations and from several faith-based adoption services urged the board to strip the provision, because requiring them to adopt to gay individuals goes against their sincerely held religious beliefs.

Jeff Caruso, executive director of the Virginia Catholic Conference, said including the prohibition would have forced faith-based organizations to decide whether to adhere to their missions and beliefs or obey the law.

"Faith-based agencies play a vital role in the fabric of our commonwealth and their

right to carry out their mission in the services they provide must be respected and preserved," Caruso said.

Department officials could not say how many of the state's 81 licensed child placement agencies were faith-based. Supporters said most are, and that some may decide to quit providing the service rather than allow gays to adopt.

"It goes without saying that any regulation limiting the ability of these agencies to operate would have a significant and lasting negative impact on the children we are called to serve," said Andrew Brown, whose Christian-based America World Adoptions provides about 400 adoptions per year.

Lynn Williams, director of licensing for the state, said the department's goal was to "match a child's religious and moral beliefs" when finding

organization the acknowledgement of their beliefs by denying the civil rights of a class of people," Brisendine said.

The proposed regulation would have prohibited discrimination based on not only sexual orientation, but age, gender, religion, political beliefs, disability or family status. Cuccinelli said in a memo to the department that state and federal law forbid discrimination only on the basis of race, color or national origin, so it lacked authority to expand upon that.

Repeated attempts to include sexual orientation in the state's nondiscrimination prohibition have failed.

Social Services Commissioner Martin Brown advised the board to take Cuccinelli's advice. He acknowledged that the board could have gone beyond the protections outlined in

"Children don't come into the world wanting homes that have specific religious beliefs. I think they come into the world wanting love — and I know that I have that to offer."

— Rob Keeling, gay parent of an adopted child

them homes.

The board received more than 1,000 comments — all but about 30 opposed to including the protection — during public comment period from January through April 1. But the April 20 meeting was the public's only chance to weigh in after the department tossed the provision.

Some board members attempted to get the vote pushed back, but that motion was defeated.

Vice Chair Trudy Brisendine said many of her questions weren't answered until the meeting, and she wanted more time to think about the issue. But in the end, she and Chair Bela Sood voted against stripping out the protection.

"I cannot rationalize giving a religious

state and federal law, but he said that may open the department up to litigation.

"We're going to trust our attorney's opinion," he said after the vote.

If at least 25 people request that the public comment period be reopened because of a "substantive change," it must happen. Claire Guthrie Gastanaga, a lobbyist for gay rights organization Equality Virginia and a former chief deputy attorney general, said she believes that could happen.

If not, the regulations will end up on the desk of Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell, who likely will sign them. They would take effect in 30 days.

## Ariz. governor signs anti-gay-adoption bill

BY REX WOCKNER

Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer signed a bill April 18 that requires public and private adoption agencies to give primary consideration to placement with a married man and woman unless other factors make it not in a child's best interest.

The Human Rights Campaign denounced the new law, calling it a "major defeat" for children and youth.

"Child welfare experts agree that adoptive parents should be judged by their character and their ability to raise a child, not on their marital status or sexual orientation," said HRC Family Project Director Ellen Kahn. "It's shameful that politics trumps the needs of children."

## Obama seems to say work on gay marriage is not finished

BY REX WOCKNER

Speaking at a Democratic National Committee event April 20 in San Francisco, President Barack Obama seemed to say that his administration's work on gay marriage is not finished.

The president was talking about administration accomplishments and added, "And yet our work is not finished." Someone in the audience then shouted "gay marriage." Obama paused, made a facial expression and hand gesture that seemed to say "for example," and then repeated, "Our work is not finished." Here's the White House's transcript:

Obama: "We put two wise women on the Supreme Court, including the first Latina Supreme Court justice. (Applause.) And we rolled back 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' so that everybody can serve their country regardless of who they love. (Applause.) And then we dealt with pirates – (laughter) – and a pandemic. You forgot about that. An oil spill. We've been pretty busy. And yet our work is not finished. It is going –"

Audience member: "Gay marriage."

Obama: "Our work is not finished. (Applause.) It is going to take – it is going to take more than a couple of years. It is going to take more than one term for us to finish everything that we need to do. (Applause.)" Video: [tinyurl.com/wrkfn](http://tinyurl.com/wrkfn).

## Hawaii protects transgenders

BY REX WOCKNER

A bill banning employment discrimination based on gender identity cleared Hawaii's Legislature April 19. Transgender people already were protected in the areas of housing and public accommodations.

Gov. Neil Abercrombie is expected to sign the bill. Twelve other states and the District of Columbia protect transgender people from discrimination.



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## Roommate charged with hate crime in N.J. suicide

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# Renewed fight for gay marriage in New York hits suburbs

## Growing support a 'runaway freight train,' says researcher

BY MICHAEL GORMLEY

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)— Lady Gaga on stage on Long Island last weekend, actors Kevin Bacon, Julianne Moore and Kyra Sedgwick on video, and Gov. Andrew Cuomo in Albany are headliners in New York's growing push to legalize gay marriage, a fight that may already be won thanks to shifting voter sentiment and a concerted, disciplined campaign.

New Yorkers opposed to gay marriage are being swamped by younger people who support it, while polls seem to show a new tack by advocates is working in the suburbs and upstate, the more conservative region where the issue will be won or lost.

Five U.S. states – New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Iowa and Massachusetts – and the District of Columbia have approved gay marriage laws. New York has always been a goal of advocates because of its size, high-profile, and unparalleled media presence.

"A win in New York will provide significant momentum for the movement nationally and, quite frankly, internationally," said Brian Ellner of the Human Rights Campaign, working for same-sex marriage. "New York is very significant."

The organized effort under Cuomo is a turnaround from the surprising 2009 defeat in the state Senate, which fell eight votes short of passage in the 62-seat chamber after strong approval in the Assembly. Back then, advocacy groups operated more independently, sometimes alienating as many lawmakers and their constituents as they won over.

But those votes were just a prologue to today, said Bruce Gyory, a political science professor at the University at Albany who analyzes voter trends.

Despite failing in 2009, the debate demonstrated some of the Legislature's greatest

displays of eloquence – personal stories of sons and daughters denied the joys and rights of marriage – and did what is rare in Albany: It changed votes.

"In my view, that wasn't an isolated phenomenon," Gyory said. "That debate has been replicated hundreds and thousands of times over the Internet, emails and coffee and over glasses of wine in New York's suburbs that has rapidly changed – at an accelerated pace – public opinion."

Advocates for gay marriage learned the power of personal persuasion over in-your-face

same amount. But, he said, national polls now show support climbing at 2 to 4 percent a year, led by coastal states including New York.

Even white Catholics – another major element of New York's suburban and upstate vote – reported rising acceptance in Pew and Gallup polls.

In New York, the Siena College poll this month found a new high for support – 58 percent. The poll showed reliable voters 55 years old and older were divided on the issue, not strongly opposed; and that the influential independent vote favored same-sex marriage. On April 14,

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New Yorkers opposed to gay marriage are being swamped by younger people who support it, while polls seem to show a new tack by advocates is working in the suburbs and upstate.

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parades long ago. Fred and Heidi Perkins held a letter-writing open house at their Plainview home in Nassau County, a key area for the issue and where their gay son wants to be married. They said 70 neighbors showed up.

"My son getting married isn't really affecting anyone else's marriage," said Heidi Perkins, 50, a market researcher. "It's sad."

"We want to dance at our son's wedding," said Iris Blumenthal, 68, of Syosset, Nassau County, and another longtime advocate. "I would love if these senators were in my shoes. What if their child came out as gay and said they wanted to get married?"

A year ago, Gyory's analysis showed support for gay marriage was rising 1 to 2 percent a year nationally, as opposition declined by the

a Quinnipiac University poll found opposition continued to fall toward 30 percent.

"I think at the point you cross 60 percent and approach 2:1 levels of support, the opposition loses its critical mass," said Gyory, a former aide to three New York governors.

And politicians poll such issues extensively within election districts, something public polls haven't yet done.

"You clearly don't want to be behind it," Gyory said. "This is a runaway freight train in the suburbs."

Upstate and suburban Republicans in the Senate also might prefer to dispatch the difficult issue this year, rather than in 2012 when they will be up for re-election, especially with a popular governor taking a lead role.

# Media seek intervention in Prop 8 case

BY REX WOCKNER

The media are seeking intervention in the Proposition 8 case to urge the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to release the 13 days of video from the U.S. District Court case in which Prop 8 was declared unconstitutional.

The trial was recorded to help Judge Vaughn Walker write his decision, and attorneys also played back snippets of the trial at later points in the trial. Walker seemingly "sealed" the recording from other uses.

In recent public talks about cameras in the courtroom, however, Walker, who retired from the bench in February, has played a brief clip from the video, which led to a new flareup about the recordings. A copy of the video was given

to Walker on a disk drive along with his other material when he retired.

The gay side now wants the recordings made public, but the other side wants them to stay sealed and for Walker and the parties to the case to turn over any copies. Now a group of media companies has asked the 9th Circuit to make the recordings public.

The Los Angeles Times, McClatchy Co., CNN, In Session (Court TV), The New York Times, Fox News, NBC News, Hearst Corp., Dow Jones & Co., The Associated Press and KQED say that the public and the media have a First Amendment right of access to court records and proceedings, and seem to suggest that the parties who want the Prop 8 recordings to remain private have failed to meet "their heavy burden

to justify that sealing."

Walker's strikedown of Prop 8, which amended the state constitution in 2008 to re-ban same-sex marriage, is on appeal to the 9th Circuit.

The case has been delayed because the people who were sued – including California's governor and attorney general – have no interest in defending Prop 8. As a result, the people who put Prop 8 on the ballot have intervened in the case to defend it, but it's unclear at this time if they have legal "standing" to defend the amendment in federal court.

The 9th Circuit recently asked the California Supreme Court for its opinion on the "standing" question. The California court is not expected to answer until late this year at the soonest.



# BTL Commitment & Wedding Guide

INSIDE

UNIQUE ON THE CHEAP  
SAME-SEX EXPO  
DOS & DON'TS



# The Big Gay Day

## How to plan a wonderful wedding – without all the worry

BY ANDREA POTEET

When Jason Rice and Stephen Fleck look back on their wedding, they have few regrets.

“We wish we’d worn more fitted tuxedos,” Fleck says, laughing. “That’s the only thing when we look back on it, we wish we’d done differently.”

Baggy suits aside, the Royal Oak couple, who were joined in a commitment ceremony nine years ago, said their wedding was nearly perfect.

But for Rice and Fleck, creating the perfect ceremony was a nine-month process.

They started with the location, booking the Lafayette Grande Banquet Facility in Pontiac for its historic architecture.

“Once we found that building, which kind of fit our personality, everything else kind of fell into place,” Fleck says.

To help pull off their vision of a signature wedding with a twist, the couple turned to husband-and-wife team Miriam Jerris and

Stephen Stawicki, who run The Wedding Connection, in Huntington Woods.

Jerris, who has performed same-sex marriages and commitment ceremonies for

“It varies a great deal and I want to make sure the language I’m using is language that is meaningful and is the language they use.”

She said couples contact her at different

“As planning got closer, the families talked about how much they loved us and supported us. They were kind of surprised that their homophobia was coming up a bit, but they took ownership of it and it brought us even closer.”

– Stephen Fleck

more than 20 years, said some of the only differences she sees in a ceremony for a gay couple is in the words she uses.

“The language goes from ‘partner’ to ‘spouse’ to ‘husband’ and ‘wife,’” Jerris says.

stages in the planning process, from three weeks to more than a year before the ceremony. No matter when they start, she reminds couples to emphasize their love for each other and make choices that are important to them.

“I think the ceremony is the most important part of this celebration – otherwise, what’s the point?” Jerris says. “It’s not a party, it’s a celebration of love. I would say get your place and some dates and then find the person that’s going to officiate your wedding.”

After she’s hired, Jerris said she likes to begin working on vows with the couple immediately and ask them to settle on a general outline and length of their vows. Some couples choose to make their vows a promise, while others choose theirs to be a statement of their love, she said. Lengths vary.

“Short and sweet doesn’t fit everyone,” she said. “It fits short and sweet people. I just let the couple go. I give them lots of examples so they have permission to be who they are. They see there are so many ways to go about it and they feel quite free to do what would work for them.”

Fleck and Rice said it was important for them to include their siblings in the ceremony. Each had their oldest sister walk them down

See Big Gay Day, page 20

# Why have a same-sex wedding expo?

## BTL's May 1 event offers food, entertainment

BY BTL STAFF

**B**TL is sponsoring a same-sex wedding expo at the Livonia Marriot this Sunday. It should be a blast: There will be vendors, free drinks and food, music and models.

But when we announced this on our Facebook page, we received some pointed comments: Why would we sponsor a same-sex wedding expo when same-sex marriage is banned in Michigan?

It's a good question. With several answers.

**1. This is a useful way to connect LGBTs with open and affirming vendors.** These are business owners who have no problem servicing LGBT clients for any kind of celebration. The event planners at the Marriot have encountered couples who, in the midst of planning a same-sex wedding celebration, were suddenly refused services. One couple even lost their reservation for a hall just weeks before their celebration date because the hall didn't want to serve a same-sex couple. The photographers, planners, DJs, caterers and stylists you'll find at the expo will happily provide you with any of their services that you need – for any occasion.

Even though Michigan doesn't allow same-sex marriage, there are LOTS of reasons why we should be able to celebrate.

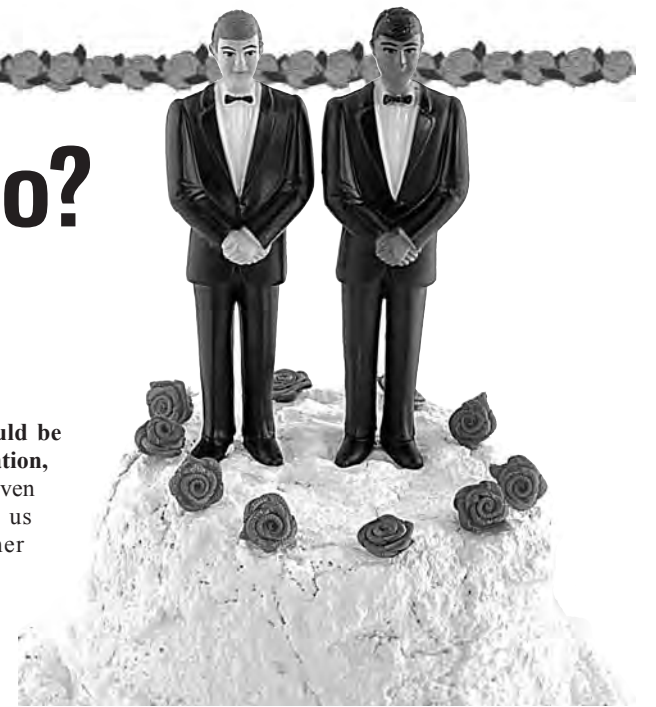
**2. One way to signal to our lawmakers and society at large that we want the right to marry is by declaring our lifelong partnerships anyway.** Many people who oppose gay marriage often point to the fact that our "lifestyle" is "naturally" more promiscuous, so we're not even interested in committed relationships. Which is a bunch of nonsense. We're no more promiscuous than our straight counterparts. We feel the desire to "settle down" with someone we love just as much as straight people do.

**3. We can still proclaim commitment to**

**the one we love, and we should be able to celebrate that proclamation, just like any straight couple.** Even though Michigan won't give us the legal right to marry, other states and countries do. We know of many same-sex couples who have chosen to get married in Canada and then have a celebration back home in Michigan. Who cares if our state denies legal recognition?

**4. Wouldn't it be great if business owners started realizing that LGBTs are a wonderful profit booster?** If same-sex ceremonies become more popular, and vendors see a boost in sales, those vendors are on our side. Those business owners would be able to say to lawmakers: "Yes, these people want to marry. And it's really helped my business. So you should just make it legal already!"

So those are the reasons why we're having a



same-sex wedding expo. But these aren't necessarily the reasons why you should go. You should go because:

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Small, inexpensive details make a big difference

All couples want their wedding day to be special. Whether it's a formal affair or beachside barbeque, brides and grooms across America aim to make the celebration of their love a day everyone will remember.

"Not every couple may be able to arrive by hot air balloon, but that hasn't deterred them from coming up with creative ways to add their own personal flair to their special day," says Amy Myers, vice president of creative services for Things Remembered.

If you're planning a wedding or looking for unique gift ideas, here are some trends to keep in mind:

More couples are opting to send e-vites instead of mailed invitations, or requesting that guests RSVP through a wedding website.

### Online invites and wedding websites

Nowadays, the Internet is essential to wedding planning. In addition to wedding websites, many couples use social network sites to locate products and services for their weddings, often paying online or by phone.

And more couples are opting to send e-vites instead of mailed invitations, or requesting that guests RSVP through a wedding website.

### Custom logos

Couples want to put their stamp on everything, so many are designing custom wedding logos to incorporate on everything from programs and invitations to guest books, cake servers and even reception champagne bottles. For example, Things Remembered, a personalized gift retailer, offers free wedding logo creation with purchases totaling \$150 or more. Not only will they engrave logos on champagne flutes, picture frames and other wedding staples, they'll give couples an electronic file of the logo to use in other materials.

### Coordinated products

Today's vendors are helping to make the process easier by offering complete collections of wedding products, so that the same beading detail on a wedding dress will be found on the cake server, the aisle runner, wedding invitations and more, creating a special synergy on the big day.

### Wedding photos

Gone are the days of picking a few prints and putting them in a formal book of 8" x 10" photo pages. Many couples are choosing digital photo packages that provide them with all of their wedding photos on CDs.

Some couples opt to have photos printed in coffee-table books that incorporate multiple images with words, captions and design elements. Others are turning wedding photos into works of art by printing them on gallery-quality photo canvases. If you're a guest at an upcoming wedding, you can even purchase a photo canvas gift card at [www.ThingsRemembered.com](http://www.ThingsRemembered.com), which lets couples work with an artist to create a personalized home decor piece based on their favorite photo.

### Smaller is better

Today, many couples are planning smaller ceremonies, allowing them to splurge more on the details. Destination weddings are also trending smaller, with people opting for beach weddings at nearby lakes or resorts instead of big trips like Hawaii.

### ► Big Gay Day

Continued from p. 17

the aisle. They also chose other personal touches, like inviting couples they respected – one straight, one lesbian, and one gay – to speak at the ceremony about what made their union successful. At the point where a bouquet would be thrown in a traditional wedding, the couple opted instead to scatter carnations decorated with affirmations to their guests.

Stawicki, who works with his wife on the event-planning side of the company, said that once a couple has decided on their budget and guest count, everything else falls into place.

In an unstable economy, he said couples tend to plan weddings faster. What used to take a year can now be planned in months or even weeks.

Using an event planner familiar with commitment ceremonies can be beneficial, he added, as they can weed out any vendors or wait staff uncomfortable with a same-sex marriage.

"In the old days, you really had to ask that everyone participating in the event not be offended by emotions and acts of love," he says. "It's getting less and less now, but you still have to ask the question."

Rice said that's one reason he and Fleck were glad they chose an event-planning company familiar with commitment ceremonies.

"I didn't want to ruin the feeling of the euphoria of planning the wedding with people turning me down and being bigoted," he says. "That's one of the reasons we asked Miriam and her husband to find all the venues."

Fleck was surprised to find that some of his supportive family members seemed a little uncomfortable with his wedding. He said talking about it directly with the family helped smooth the issues over and brought everyone closer together.

"What was really awesome and beautiful was that we all talked about it," he says. "As planning got closer, the families talked about how much they loved us and supported us. They were kind of surprised that their homophobia was coming up a bit, but they took ownership of it and it brought us even closer."

He said the planning also helped bring him and Rice closer. And one decision they made during the planning has helped them to continue to strengthen their bond.

They videotaped their ceremony. When times are tough, they pop it in.

"It kind of reminds us of what's important," Fleck says. "All couples struggle, and sometimes we'll go, 'We need to pull that out and pay attention to the vows we said.' It puts things in perspective."



## Wedding Dos & Don'ts

### Do: Take time for yourself

After all the anticipation of planning the wedding, don't forget to enjoy it when it's finally here. Jason Rice, who married his partner Stephen Fleck in a commitment ceremony nine years ago, said he's glad he took time to fully enjoy the day.

"Stephen and I took moments," Rice says. "It was an unspoken thing; we would stop whatever we were doing every 45 minutes to an hour and hold hands and watch everybody in silence all around us. It helps to cement a lot of those memories for me."

### Do: Play to your strengths

If you're a details person, focus on attending to the small things. If your strength is seeing the bigger picture, don't sweat the small stuff. Figuring out what each partner was best at helped Rice and Fleck plan their ceremony with minimal stress, and the effects spilled over to their relationship and business. The couple owns Changez Salon in Royal Oak.

"Either hire someone to help you or figure out who does what the best," Rice says. "And then get over yourself and let it be."

### Don't: Let people bully you

Rice and Fleck said they encountered some negative reactions when they told people they were getting married, but didn't let it ruin their ceremony. Dealing with the issues head-on diffused them without ruining the day.

### Don't: Lose sight

Bickering relatives, scheduling conflicts and other devilish details can be stressful, but don't forget the reason for all the planning. Memories of wedding snafus will fade, but the emotions behind the ceremony will stay with you.

"There's something very potent and meaningful about being witnessed as you vow to love this person for the rest of your lives," says Fleck. "If people truly know this is the person they want to spend their life with, even though it's not recognized, I would encourage people to do it."

Source: StatePoint



# Proud on the page

## Lesléa Newman says our lives are worth celebrating

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

“Donovan’s Big Day” looks like any other children’s book, with bright splashy colors and big, coated pages.

And there’s nothing particularly unusual about the journey that Donovan takes as he prepares to be the ring bearer at a wedding, until at the very end – when he delivers the rings to his two joyous moms.

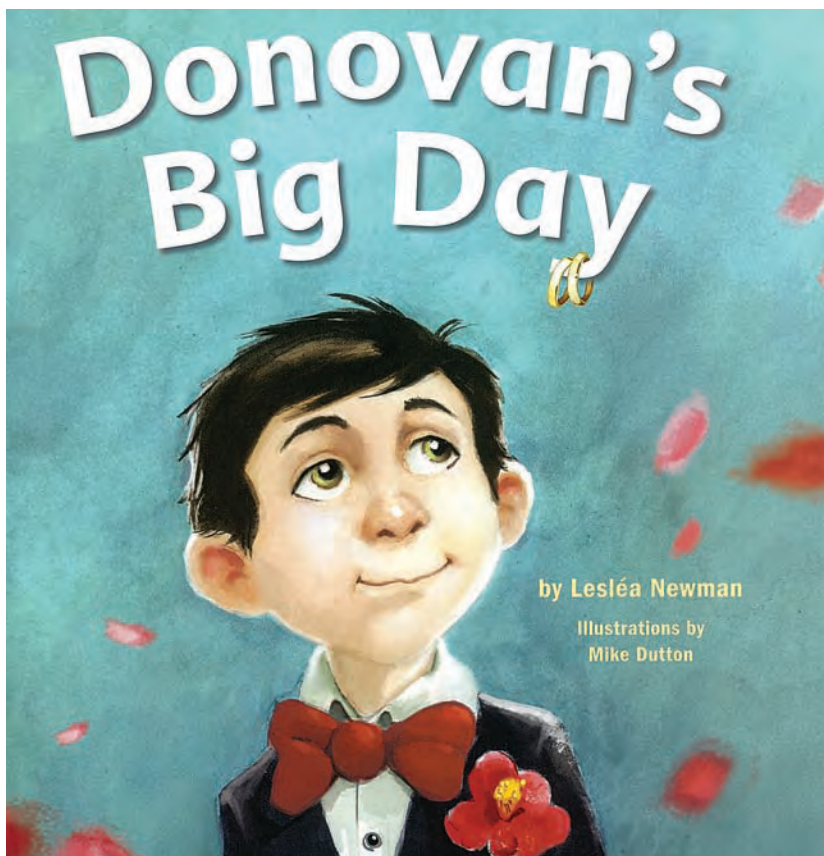
There’s no lecturing about lesbians, no discomfort by Donovan’s family, just a simple story about a happy wedding day. Which is exactly how author Lesléa Newman wanted it.

In her long literary career, Newman has written poems, novels, children’s books and erotica – and in nearly all of those works, she features lesbians and gays. Among her best-known stories are “Heather Has Two Mommies,” a controversial children’s book published in 1989, and “A Letter to Harvey Milk,” a short story that has been adapted for film and theater.

The award-winning author is celebrating her latest children’s book, “Donovan’s Big Day,” which was just released on April 26. Newman chatted with BTL about the new book, gay marriage and why all families are worth celebrating.

**“Donovan’s Big Day” is one of several books you’ve written for kids and adults about gay families. Why is this a topic you keep coming back to?**

It’s my community. It’s very close to my heart. I am legally married, though I don’t have children. I’ve been to many, many lesbian weddings. And a few weddings of



gay men. It just seems very important for me that children who have families with two moms and two dads have a book that is purely celebratory. They deserve that. Why shouldn’t they have that?

**A lot of conservatives like to say that talking to children about same-sex marriage is “indoctrinating” them. But your book doesn’t lecture or push a viewpoint; in fact, it mentions Donovan’s two moms only at the end, and the story could just as easily have been about a man and a woman getting married.**

It’s a book that celebrates the marriage of these two women. It celebrates Donovan’s participation. It celebrates their friends and family who are pictured through the book as being very joyful. So I suppose if it’s giving

a message, the message is love conquers all.

This book treats Donovan’s moms’ relationship as very ordinary and very loving, just like any other relationship, and I think that’s the most powerful message we can give to kids. I know (the book “Heather Has Two Mommies”) was different. First of all, it was published in 1989, and that was a long time ago. It’s much more of a “problem” book because there’s a problem when Heather finds out that she doesn’t have a Daddy like a lot of the other kids in her class, and I didn’t want to do that again. There are some other books with a “problem” – there’s somebody who doesn’t approve, there’s somebody who thinks Heather’s family is wrong. And I just felt like, Enough already.

See Lesléa Newman page 26

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# Commitment & Wedding

## Wedding Queeries

BY STEVEN PETROW



**Can we charge our friends to come to our shower?**

**Q.** My girlfriend and I are planning what we jokingly call a "lesbian couples shower." Right now, we're up to about 40 friends and family members on our guest list and we can't really afford to throw such a big event. A couple of our friends suggested we ask our guests to help us cover the costs. Would that be bad lesbian manners?

**A.** It would be bad manners, period. You simply have too many guests, in two ways: You can't afford to host them all, and showers need to be small enough for guests to get to know each other. Instead of thinking of your shower as one big meet-and-greet, consider it a cozy, intimate gathering of your nearest and dearest.

As soon you get over the crazy idea of charging people admission, cut your list way down and sketch out a reasonable budget. Or consider asking those friends who made the original suggestion to host your little party.

**My mother opposes gay marriage, but loves my husband**

**Q.** My husband and I have been together for over 20 years and were married last October. My mother has said she's very happy and loves my husband. This week at dinner my mother said she was thrilled that "gay marriage was not legal everywhere." Here's the problem: My mother, and especially my stepfather, are rabid Republicans. I know they will continue to follow the Republicans again on this issue. Do I make a big deal about it? Do I point out that they want to deny my husband and me a fundamental right?

**A.** Now, you understand that age-old adage (or religion) at dinner; it can give you indigestion (or worse)! Since you say your mother loves your husband, I think there's a strong disconnect for her between the personal and the political. What I suggest doing is sitting down with your mother (leave your stepdad out of this) the next time you're together and explain how same-sex couples are discriminated against because we can't marry. Use concrete examples and make comparisons to their marriage. For instance, if your partner dies, explain that you're not eligible for his Social Security benefits, but that your mother is when your stepfather passes. Sadly, you have about 1,100 federal benefits that are denied to gays and lesbians to choose from as your examples. A lot of straight folks have never thought of these inequities, but once pointed out, the inherent unfairness is often quite persuasive. If this doesn't change your mom's mind, then either agree to disagree or ask her to put a lid on it (but nicely because it's your mother).

**This mother-in-law is a Bridezilla!**

**Q.** My boyfriend and I will be holding a civil partnership ceremony at the end of this year and have decided it will be a simple affair. Neither of us wants a big "traditional" wedding and we are limited to a strict budget in any case. We have gotten the ball rolling and have started organizing everything that needs doing - registry office, hotel, suits, a photographer, etc. My main problem is my future mother-in-law. Up to now I've always had a great relationship with her, but now she's suddenly become a Bridezilla. She insists on being kept up to date on every little detail and wants regular briefings on our progress. She finds fault in everything we do too. (The hotel isn't nice enough and the menu sounds awful for starters.) She keeps asking us to give her jobs to do. I have tried appeasing her by giving her small tasks, but I'm running out of jobs to invent. I have spoken to my boyfriend about her but he doesn't see it as a big deal. He thinks we should just ignore her. But, I can't!

See Queeries, page 23

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My main problem is my future mother-in-law. Up to now I've always had a great relationship with her, but now she's suddenly become a Bridezilla.

**A.** If this weren't so difficult for you, I'd have a big laugh about it, because Bridezilla mothers-in-law are such a classic by now – straight brides (and grooms) have had to tolerate them since the beginning of time. Gay couples tend to encounter less of the kind of interference you're describing if only because we usually cover the costs of our own nuptials (when our parents aren't paying, they don't get as much of a vote) and we often partner later in life (when our folks have gotten used to us making our own decisions).

But I now see that a mother-in-law is a mother-in-law is a mother-in-law! Hello equality.

You've done everything that you can do; the idea of small tasks is brilliant. It's now up to your boyfriend to take on his mother and set some limits – even if he doesn't see her meddling as a big deal. He needs to do it for you – both for the wedding and also to establish the right boundaries with your MIL for the years to come. You can tell him I said so!

*Steven Petrow is the author of the forthcoming book, "Steven Petrow's Complete Gay & Lesbian Manners," and can be found online at: [www.gaymanners.com](http://www.gaymanners.com). Got a question? Email him: [ask@gaymanners.com](mailto:ask@gaymanners.com).*



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*To Have  
and  
To Hold*



# Sunday's Wedding Expo claims right for marriage rites

BY JAN STEVENSON

It's not legal to get married in Michigan, but we don't care. BTL is producing a same-sex wedding expo on Sunday, and we are inviting everyone to come join in the fun and show support for marriage equality.

The politicians don't get it. Polls show a majority of people think it's just fine for same-sex couples to marry. Companies that provide services for weddings are particularly supportive, because it means more sales of gowns, tuxedos, wedding cakes, honeymoon trips, invitations, catering, wedding rings and all the other accoutrements that go with a wedding ceremony. Michigan's economy could use a boost from more wedding celebrations, and the LGBT community is a ready-made market – if only our near-sighted leaders would clear the legal path.

To celebrate the inevitable legalization of same-sex marriage in America, BTL, in partnership with the Detroit Marriott Livonia, has invited an amazing array of exhibitors and entertainment, food and drink. There will be beautiful celebrity models – many of whom are well-known in the LGBT community – donning exquisite gowns and tuxedos.

"You're fulfilling all of my modeling dreams," said Laura Hughes, executive director of the Ruth Ellis Center, upon accepting the invitation to model formal wear. She will be featured in a fantastic gown from B. Ella Bridal Salon in Northville. Tara Cavanaugh, BTL's news editor; Curtis Lipscomb, executive director of Kick; and Emily Dievendorf, Equality Michigan's policy director are among the other celebrity models. But you will have to

come to the expo to find out who will wear the gowns and who will wear the dashing tuxedos, provided by President Tuxedo of Birmingham.

Kat LaTosch, chief operating officer at Affirmations, is launching her modeling career with the whole family. Her partner, Jennifer LaTosch, will model with her, along with their two sons who will be playing the parts of ring bearers.

We expect exhibitors to engage in some friendly competition, such as between the bakers for the tastiest wedding cake. Elite Sweets of Livonia and The Pastry Palace of Wixom will have their delicacies to sample, and it will be a delicious decision-making process to pick between them – or maybe The Cupcake Station will take the cake!

Sweet Lorraine's is catering the Expo, so no one will leave hungry. The menu (see sidebar) looks scrumptious. In addition to delicious food, each person attending will be treated to two drinks, compliments of Hard Luck Vodka, Detroit's newest specialty vodka distributor.

At the May 1 Expo, Stephanie Hasley and Lisa Sarno of Lansing will be looking for an officiant and a tailor for Sarno's suit. The couple is planning a wedding in June 2012.

Hasley will walk down the aisle in a traditional

gown to join Sarno, who will wear a dark, three-piece tuxedo. They'll exchange non-religious vows and rings as friends and family look on.

"Stephanie really wanted that ritual, that day, that rite of passage," Sarno said. "I wasn't really into it until I did the engagement ritual." She popped the question, complete with a diamond ring, in a Lansing restaurant. "It really changed me. There's something to be said about these rituals we have. How important they are to our moving forward."

"There's something to be said for doing these ceremonial things with your loved ones to witness that further solidifies your relationship," Hasley said.

"We have this rule: I don't have to attend bridal shows," Sarno said. "Stephanie is making me attend this one."

Everyone at the Expo will be entered to win one of the many prizes, including gift certificates to some of the finest restaurants, a weekend getaway to Chicago and the grand prize of a romantic weekend package at the Motor City Casino Hotel that includes dinner for two at Iridescence. Tickets are \$10 at the door, or \$8 in advance at [www.PrideSource.com/events.html](http://www.PrideSource.com/events.html) with the special discount code of BTL1993.

Sharlan Douglas contributed to this story.

"There's something to be said about these rituals we have. How important they are to our moving forward."

—Lisa Sarno

SUNDAY MAY 1

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You might decide to add the rarest of all sapphires to your rainbow ring, he said. "It's orange – the color of the sunset on a humid day," Schowalter said. Sapphires aren't the only gemstone possibility for your rainbow ring. Diamonds can make a statement – yellow, blue, pink, purple, orange, green and white. "It's popular with gay and straight customers," he said. "It's a look with no boundaries."

For a complete list of LGBT jewelers visit [pridesource.com](http://pridesource.com) and check out the Michigan LGBT Yellow pages. You can also visit with our jewelers at the Expo on May. 1

### ► Lesléa Newman

Continued from p. 21

Why not have a book that is just very matter of fact? That takes for granted that this is a wonderful thing and just celebrates the marriage of Donovan's moms.

**Do you think this book being focused on the celebration – instead of the problem – is a sign of the times?**

It's a sign of my times. (Laughs) A lot of lesbian moms have said to me that Heather was very useful, but they would love a book where a kid just happens to have two moms and they take a walk in the park. Where a kid happens to have two moms and they go play baseball. Where it's just an ordinary day. So I kind of went that way instead.

**Are any parts of Donovan's story inspired by your own wedding?**

There's a picture of the wedding on the back of the book. It's my author photo. The wedding took place in 1989. And I would have to say it was probably the happiest day of my life. My face hurt from smiling by the end of the day. So I wanted to write a book that contained that much joy.

And I would probably say the second most joyful day of my life, or pretty close to it, is the day that marriage became legal in the state of Massachusetts. I was at City Hall in Northampton that day watching couple after couple go in for their marriage licenses and come out heralded with rice and birdseed and great applause. Again: I wanted to really capture that joy in a book for children.

**Donovan focuses a lot on what he is NOT supposed to do on the wedding day, like spill his juice or wrinkle his clothes. Why did you focus on that theme?**



Donovan knows how important this is and he really, really, wants to do a good job. So he's very careful to do what he's told and not mess up out of his love for his moms and I wanted to show that. It's really an adult day. And he's a kid, and he has to sit still, and be in his dress-up clothes and not get them dirty and yeah, it's hard.

But I think there's a payoff at the end of the book because he contributes so much to their joy.

**You don't have any kids of your own, so how do you write so well from the perspective of a child?**

The research it requires is to have been a child, so I can somehow tap back into what that feels like. Many well-known children's book writers do not have children, for example Dr. Seuss, Maurice Sendak, Beatrix Potter. So somehow, maybe without having children, we remain children in some way.

**Do you like to read other children's books?**

I love to read children's books.

"It just seems very important for me that children who have families with two moms and two dads have a book that is purely celebratory. Why shouldn't they have that?"

**"Heather Has Two Mommies" was one of the most challenged books in the 1990s (according to the American Library Association), and fell off the top 100 list in 2009. What does it say that a simple children's book stayed on that list for so long?**

It seems that people are very fearful of a book like "Heather Has Two Mommies" because they're afraid that if child is exposed to that book, their child will grow up lesbian or gay – and that would be such a horrible thing. As I was growing up I was an avid reader, I read thousands and thousands of books, all of which, I would say, assumed heterosexuality in the characters, even if they were animals. And none of those books ever changed my sexuality. So I don't think a book is that powerful. People want to protect their children from things that they don't believe in, which I understand. But I think that it's really time for the world to embrace diversity. There are all kinds of families in the world. There are always going to be all kinds of families in the world. And why not celebrate that?

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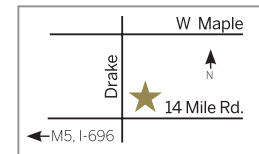
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# Just Jessie

English import talks debut and sets the record straight on her sexuality

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

“**W**ho You Are” is the title of Jessie J’s debut album, but it’s also what everyone’s been wondering about the English artist herself. Outside of the short black bob and that ear-wormy, gender-bending single “Do It Like a Dude,” everyone has something to say about the cute 23-year-old crooner – she’s a lesbian, she’s a man-hater, she’s a dude.

We went straight to the source for the answers, recently chatting with the singer-songwriter about her buzzed-about sexuality, the songs she’s written for Miley and Britney, and her love letter to the gay community.

**Gays love you. Have you been a gay magnet your whole life?**

(Laughs) I would do clubs and bars and I’d always attract those who loved the divanness of the voice. Gay fans are the most loyal. If they love you, they’ll stick by you forever. If they hate you, they let you know. I had my first turn at G-A-Y Club (in London), and it was a super fun gig. Lots of confetti and wind and explosions randomly throughout the set.

**So in other words, very gay.**

Yes!

See *Jessie*, page 31

Jessie J’s debut album, “Who You Are,” is available now. Photo: Lee Broomfield

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► **Jessie**

Continued from p. 29

**Everywhere you go you seem to have to address your sexuality.**

It makes me laugh that it's become such an exclusivity thing. It's not exclusive to who I am and I've never hidden it. I'm very proud of who I am, and I think that night I had to talk about it just because it's G-A-Y – you know, to see if there were any hotties in the crowd. (Laughs)

**It's been said that you don't like labels, that you're bisexual, that you're lesbian. Set the record straight – or as straight as you can.**

It's not like I'm 100 percent bisexual or lesbian. I fall in love with who I fall in love with. It's society who says that people have to fall into categories. I've never felt like I've had to say, "Hi, I'm Jessie J and I'm bisexual."

My family and friends never made me feel like I had to put a label on it. The same goes for my music. I don't feel like I have to say I'm pop or I'm rock or I'm hip-hop. I make music – and if people like it, they like it. And I think it gets people frustrated because they need to pigeonhole me, but I won't allow them to, because I just think it's about being who you are.

**That explains the name of the album.**

Exactly. But not just that. It's about how you live once and if you spend your whole life apologizing for things that make you happy and always feeling like you have to explain yourself or justify what you love, then life's no fun. I got to a point where I was like, "This is my girlfriend, and I'm going to introduce her to people. It is what it is."

I wanted to sing about what I wanted to sing about, and not be half naked next to a rapper, like, "Hey, I'm in the club shaking my booty." And I have to stand for what I stand for, and it's a hard thing to do in this industry. "Who You Are" definitely sums up the journey that I've had and the journey that I've wanted to explore with other people.

**This album is just being released and you're already working on your second. Are you crazy?**

You have to be prepared, and I've realized you spend so much time promoting your current one and then it's kind of done and you're like, "Shit, I haven't done anything for the new one." And I don't want it to be a slice of what my life is in those six weeks that I write. I want to write it while I'm still on my journey and learning and growing as a person, and I think it's really important to have that. It's obviously very tiring writing on the airplane or when I get a half hour to myself, but it's important and I think I'll be happy I did it in the end. I've had six years to write this current one, and I'm not going to do the next one in six weeks.

**During the G-A-Y gig, you dedicated the song "L-O-V-E" to a girl. Are you with a woman right now?**

That's a mystery! (Laughs) I need to love myself right now. (This career) doesn't really lend itself to being in a serious relationship, but I'm very excited for – I won't say all of my girlfriends, but anyone that I've had in my life that I've loved. There's no drama, and I'm happy to write songs about people that I love.

**But you're going to leave us hanging?**

I'm very honest about my love life in my music, and I don't feel I need to talk about it any more than what it is in the songs. And at the end of the day, I'm the one who's in the spotlight and it's not fair to risk their safety to talk about it in more detail than I do in the songs. Songs last forever, so that's the best kind of dedication you can give to love.

**People are quick to write off artists who use their sexuality, and maybe fake it, to gain attention.**

I know; I hate it.

**Because of that, do you feel like you have something to prove regarding your sexual orientation?**

I've never hidden it, and I've been in this industry for six years. I've had partners with me all the time. I've introduced them to everybody – every producer, every songwriter. I've never hidden



it; it's only since I've come into the limelight that it's been made the media thing.

You can never prove it, and people are going to think what they want to think, but I know the truth. I know that I would never, ever do that because I wouldn't want my sexuality to define my music and I wouldn't want it to define me. It's only now that I talk about it because people feel the need to hear about it. And I'm honest about it. Why should I lie?

**It's all Katy Perry's fault for not actually kissing a girl.**

(Laughs) Yeah – I should do the X-rated version of "I Kissed a Girl."

**How did "Do It Like a Dude" come about?**

I was writing some songs in the studio, but I was bored with the song I was writing and there were two boys – two producers called Parker and James – and one of them wears (his) trousers ridiculously low. So I just started free styling like a dude, and it was fun. I wanted to write a song that was tongue-in-cheek and a parody of a stereotypical male. But also, I wanted the song to be empowering for girls, but not kind of an "I hate men" song – because I don't, and I don't say that in the song. It's about feeling hardcore.

**Please explain what it means to get your dollar licked.**

So many people ask that, but it's purely when guys flash their money at the club. A lot of people think there's a secret meaning to it, but it's because I was initially writing the song for Rihanna that I put the dollar thing in it. I was going to take it out because, obviously, I'm English and I would say, "You need to lick my pound," but it doesn't really have the same vibe. (Laughs)

**"Do It Like a Dude" has a cool gender-bending element to it. Were you a tomboy? Do you have masculine tendencies?**

Not at all. I wasn't someone who played with dolls or did the typical girly things, but I was always the girl who was a bit ballsy and quite rebellious and I always had something to say. You know how some girls were all like, "Everybody looks lovely and I love everything"? Well, I was kind of like, "No. I don't like that." If I wanted to play football with the boys, I would. But I wasn't a tomboy. I love being a girl, so I think it was more a personality thing. I didn't care if I looked stupid or my nail split. I wasn't that kind of obsessive girly Barbie doll.

**Are there things you think you do better than a dude?**

I don't know. It's funny, people say to me, "What can a guy do that a girl can't?" We can't wee standing up. But we can, it's just quite messy. (Laughs) There's not really much difference. I won't point out the obvious. A lot of the replies (to the song) are very funny to me, because a lot of the guys' responses are very sexual and it's funny, because I wasn't actually talking like that at all in "Do It Like a Dude." It wasn't like that at all. I think it definitely bruised some egos.

**You've written for some big names, like Miley Cyrus and Britney Spears. Are there songs that you've written for people that you regret giving up?**

No. I was always so emotionally attached to my songs – "oh, this is my baby" – but after a while you have to realize that you have to know what's for you and what isn't for you. I made sure that I kept some of the great ones for me and just gave away a few special ones to help pay my bills. Miley Cyrus took "Party in the U.S.A." to a place that I don't think I could've taken it to. It just suited her so well.

**The track you wrote for Britney, "Being Britney," didn't make the cut for her new album, "Femme Fatale." What will you do with that song now?**

It's a very, very Britney track, but I'm thinking about "Being RiRi," or "Being BeBe" – for Beyoncé – or... "Being Pinky." (Laughs)

**Is the song "Rainbow" a love letter to the gay community?**

Definitely. Whatever your sexuality, whatever your culture, whatever your race, everybody's the same. It's about – not everyone being gay, because that's not true, but everybody being from the same rainbow. We all have to share a pot of gold; we're all on the same yellow brick road.

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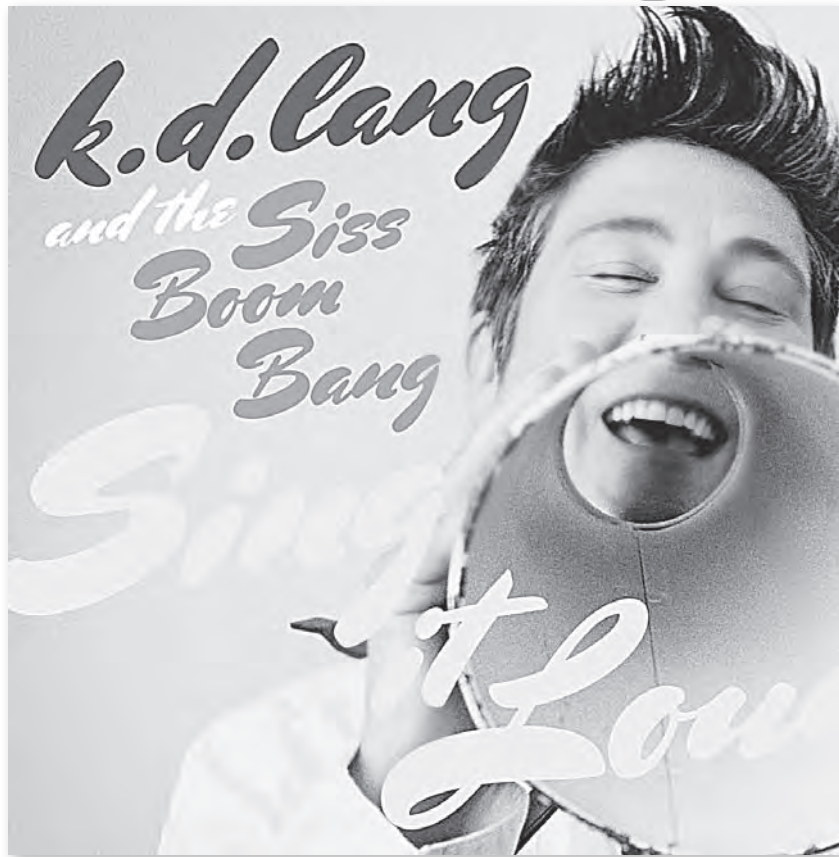
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# k.d. lang sings it loud – and lovely. Plus: Christina Perri’s darling debut



**k.d. lang and the Siss Boom Bang, 'Sing it Loud'**

On “Sing it Loud,” k.d. lang’s first album in 20 years with a core band, she does just that – blasting through the big-sounding shell of opener “I Confess” with that creamy croon of hers. It’s like lang sprung from a slumber – that of the solid-but-sleepy “Watershed,” released three years ago – and woke up as Roy Orbison, whom the song mirrors. Reaching back to her country roots, first earning her fame in the early ’90s, the next nine tracks are as close as we’ll probably ever get to “Absolute Torch and Twang,” the last straight-up country album of the Canadian’s career. And that’s still not very close. Sure, there’s banjo on “Habit of Mind” and slide guitar on her dreamy interpretation of the Talking Heads’ “Heaven” (the only song not with a k.d. credit), but “Sing it Loud” marries many of the musical meanders of lang’s career. She’s in top form when she’s recalling an old flame on “The Water’s Edge,” a sophisticated love song with a melodic sweetness that lang pulls off effortlessly. It’s that ease that makes “Sing it Loud” such a pleasantly cushy listen. The Siss Boom Bang, an alt-country collective that shakes up the arrangements without sacrificing the fluid feel of the album, helps make that long-coveted voice not just new again, but more thrilling than it’s been in years. *Grade: B+*



**Christina Perri, 'lovestrong.'**

From tip-making waitress to hit-making songstress, Christina Perri’s first single, “jar of hearts,” turned her into an overnight name. No wonder: The barebones piano ballad is a been-there-done-that doozy – someone loves you, dumps you, wants you back – and is a fine showcase for the 24-year-old’s precocious voice that’s part Regina Spektor and part Sara Bareilles. That sound is particularly present on “mine,” a song mixed by Michael Brauer – one of Spektor’s song smiths – that could easily be an outtake from Spektor’s “Far.” The fetching “bang bang bang,” a jaunty song that takes girl power to a new pistol-packin’ level, is a biting Bareilles-like kiss-off. That’s as upbeat as it gets, but the mid-tempo “Arms,” the second

single, is a guitar-grower that thumps and charms with telling lyrics like, “I hope that you see right through my walls.” She doesn’t break through many, but suckers for sappy pop love songs – from the cute “miles” to the pretty, soul-searching “bluebird” – should find Perri pretty easy on the ears. Even if she’s only truly pushing outside the pop confines she – or her label – are comfortable with on the loose power ballad “the lonely” and “tragedy,” both moody orchestrations, there’s no question that “love” is strong. *Grade: B*

## Also Out



**'Glee': The Music Presents The Warblers**

McKinley High’s competition, The Warblers, on the TV juggernaut

“Glee” isn’t actually competition at all. This season, the Darren Criss-as-Blaine machine, with Chris Colfer’s Kurt and a bunch of other boys, is sucking up all the performance points. And now they have their own CD, which is more listenable than any of the actual “Glee” season two compilations. The real bust is the Criss-Colfer duet on “Candles,” which never sparks. But otherwise, the a cappella arrangements are clever takes on big pop hits, like “Bills, Bills, Bills” and “Teenage Dream.” They even take a Keane song somewhere only they know.



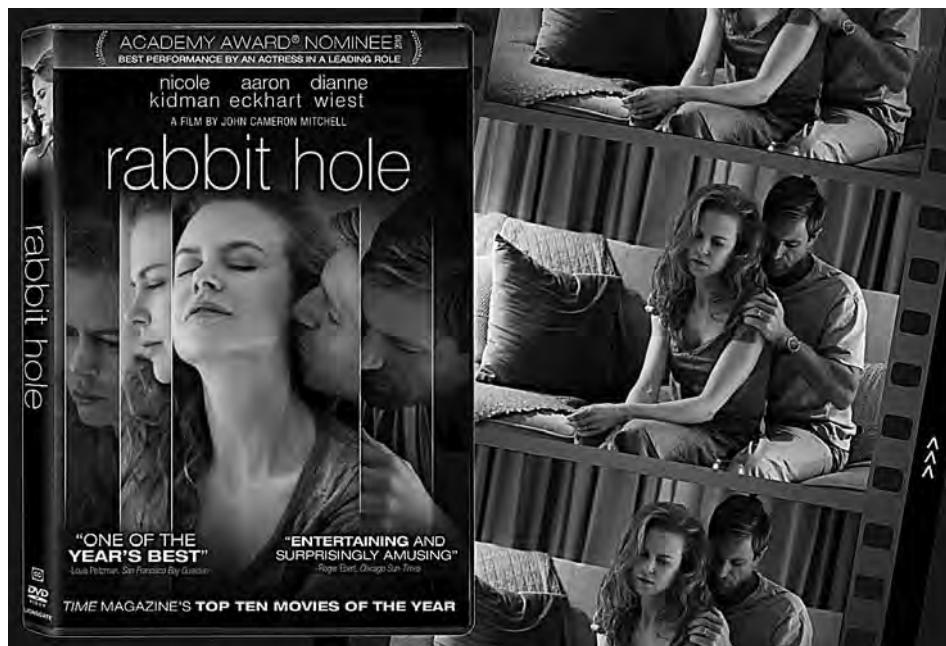
**Alison Krauss & Union Station, 'Paper Airplane'**

One of the best voices of any genre belongs to Alison Krauss, who reunites with

Union Station for a follow-up to their 2004 critical darling “Lonely Runs Both Ways.” “Every silver lining always seems to have a cloud that comes my way,” she sings with a meek sadness on the moving title track. But it’s not just darkness that’s still hanging around; many of the Americana ditties – from Dan Tyminski’s earthy “Dust Bowl Children” to Krauss’ gorgeous-but-dragging “Dimming of the Day” – sound intent on recapturing old magic. But you know how it is, sequels rarely do. “Paper Airplane” is proof.

Reach Chris Azzopardi at [chris@pridesource.com](mailto:chris@pridesource.com).

# 'Rabbit Hole,' 'Black Swan' and 'Phillip Morris'



## 'Rabbit Hole': Death drama done right

For his third film, John Cameron Mitchell pulls back from the flamboyancy and sexiness marking his directing repertoire, which includes "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" and "Shortbus," for this guileless meditation on grief. Nicole Kidman and Aaron Eckhart play a suburban couple reeling from their 4-year-old's death in a car accident eight months ago. Now everything's changed – their now-rocky relationship, interacting with family, a simple grocery store stop. Cameron's film is a painful portrait that captures one family's hopeful recovery so realistically – and, with its poetic cinematography, beautifully – that it feels both very exclusive and universal. There's a sensitivity that's never overdone, resisting

melodrama that would otherwise cheapen this artful piece of poignant greatness. Kidman and Eckhart, both terrific, are deep rooted into their roles as their grief throws them into isolation – she wants to move on by moving out, and he feels like she's erasing their son's memory. Fights break out, and the best resolution the movie can hope for is hope itself. That comes in a stirring monologue from scene-stealer Dianne Wiest, Kidman's onscreen mother who's also lost a son. It's a beautiful act of grace. But death's aftermath isn't one-note, and much like "Six Feet Under" handled mortality, so does "Rabbit Hole" play scribe/screenwriter David Lindsay-Abaire – with a witty bite that's hilariously inappropriate (especially during the awkward group therapy sessions). The anguish-humor duality is a genius balance in a genius movie.



## 'Black Swan': Killing me softly

The who-danced-what hoopla surrounding the berserk ballerina movie Natalie Portman won a Best Actress Oscar for is inconsequential to how fantastically she plays a self-destructive dancer. Whether the actress did little footwork in Darren Aronofsky's artistically maniacal masterpiece, as a dance double recently alleged, it's the intensity of the transformative acting – particularly Portman's haunting metamorphosis into a darker version of herself (i.e. full-blown nutcase) – that's unshakable. As Nina Sayers, Portman is pushed relentlessly by her artistic director (Vincent Cassel) and smother mother (Barbara Hershey) to perfect her part in "Swan Lake," enveloping the innocent and ominous extremities of the role. The pressure takes hold of her, especially when a rival dancer (Mila Kunis) becomes her understudy/wet dream fodder, and throws Nina into out-of-character craziness. What transpires is so nightmarish it might as well be horror – haunting hallucinations, nail-biting melodramatics and a disturbing mother-daughter relationship. Portman is profound, as deep into Nina as possible, and so are many of the supporting actors: Hershey excels doing deranged mom from hell (watch her face go from blissful to ice cold in a finger snap), and Winona Ryder, in just a few scenes, turns in a scary performance as a washed-up diva. The "Black Swan" cast reflects on their roles during a three-part special feature, "Metamorphosis," a long look at day-to-day production that's an intriguing supplement to one of the best films of last year.



## 'I Love You Phillip Morris': Jailhouse cock

A queer love story in prison is just the kind of wackiness that would attract someone like Jim Carrey, who plays Steven Russell, a married family man whose epiphany drives him to gaydom. Now one-hundred percent homo (see: expensive taste and a move to South Beach), he falls for a genuine gentleman, Phillip Morris (an adorable Ewan McGregor), in the lock-up library, where the two men forge a sweet romantic chemistry. This crazy thing called love gets much, much crazier when Morris is released and Russell devises outlandish schemes – one involving AIDS that's particularly disturbing – to reunite with him. McGregor and Carrey fit together like a puzzle; they're the yin and yang of love. But not without a few missing pieces, like Russell's trouble-making shenanigans, that strain their lovebird attachment. And here's the real kicker: This one's based on a true story. Yep, Russell exists. Keep that in mind during some of the unrealistic ridiculousness that the same writers of "Bad Santa," another overlooked dark comedy, work into the well-balanced, offbeat script. A love-or-hate hoot, "I Love You Phillip Morris" manages to be as absurdly unsettling as rompy and raunchy, with a stereotypical commentary on gay lifestyle and an endearing love story that somehow ends up sweeter than it should be. Bummer that there's not more to love in the features department, with just a filmmaker commentary, a typical making of and a handful of dull deleted scenes. Don't they know that gays like to accessorize?

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# BTL Happenings

## Editor's Picks

### Outings

There is only one place to get your Saturday dose of sequins, sparkles and sass: Drag Queen Bingo at Five15 Media Mojo & More.

Hosted weekly by metro area drag queens such as Sabin, Trixie Deluxe and September Murphy, Drag Queen Bingo promises the quips and backsass of Royal Oak's favorite hostesses as well as good food, entertainment and prizes. One thing's for sure: "This Ain't Your Grandma's Bingo."

Drag Queen Bingo begins at 8 p.m. every Saturday, as well as every first and third Friday of the month, at 515 S. Washington Ave. in Royal Oak. Doors open at 7 p.m. and reservations may be made ahead via phone at 248-515-2551.



### Music & More

Poetry House Entertainment has partnered with Ke Event Designs to bring together a project, Poetically Speaking Detroit: Politics vs. Religion – The Separation of Church and State, created to fuse the art of both poetry and theater.

Politics vs. Religion consists of an evening of Detroit's performance poets giving their take on the current state of politics and religion as well as a musical performance by Monica Blaire. The local R&B/pop/soul performer describes herself as "firmly rooted in the sound of early soul music and inspired by an unconventional sense of rhythm and melodies."

Politics vs. Religion begins 8 p.m. April 29 at the Boll Family Theatre. Tickets are \$15 at the door. For more information, call Tylice Harrison at 313-778-2981.



### Theater



Ann Arbor Civic Theatre will present Noel Coward's classic comedy "Hay Fever," directed by Wendy Wright, May 5-8 at UM's Arthur Miller Theatre.

In "Hay Fever," an eccentric theater family invites four unsuspecting guests to their home in the English countryside for the weekend. By the end of the holiday the family is alternately flirting with the guests and feuding with each other, and the hapless guests are desperate to escape any way they can.

Performances are at 8 p.m. May 5-7 and 2 p.m. May 8. Tickets are \$15 Thursday and \$20 Friday through Sunday. A special Mother's Day brunch and theater combination features special seating and pricing for both a brunch at Carson's American Bistro and the Sunday matinee. Call 734-971-2228 for information and reservations.

## OUTINGS

### Wednesday, April 27

**Caring Caregiver**, 6:30 p.m. A support group for anyone who is caring for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia. This group is open to family, friends, spouses and partners. Everyone is welcome! Alzheimer's Association and Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

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

### Thursday, April 28

**CARES' 3rd Annual Dining Out for Life**, 6 a.m. Participating restaurants donate 25% or more of what you eat and drink back to CARES, Southwest Michigan's AIDS Service Organization. Restaurant list available online. CARES, Various Addresses, **Kalamazoo**. 269-381-2437 ext.22. diningoutforlife.com/kalamazoo/participating

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

### Friday, April 29

**Womyn's Film Night**, 7 p.m. Film: D.E.B.S. Encrypted within the SAT is a secret test that measures a girl's potential for espionage. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

### Saturday, April 30

**Queer for Books**, 2 p.m. Book club for gay men. Reading Will Grayson by John Green and David Levithan. Ferndale Public Library, 222 E. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-547-6008. d.c.hellenberg@gmail.com

**Detroit Wig Out**, 7:30 p.m. Detroit's iconic Magic Stick Lounge for the third annual one-night celebration of alternate identities, hair fashion, and eye-popping wig wearing. Tickets: \$10. Detroit Wig Out, 4120 Woodward Ave, **Detroit**. 248-588-0891. detroitwigout.com

**Drag Queen Bingo**, 8 p.m. "This ain't your grandma's bingo." Hosts Sabin, Trixie Deluxe or September Murphy. Open to all 18+. Refreshments and bingo food fare. Reservations available by phone. Five15, 515 S. Washington, **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. five15.net

### Sunday, May 1

**20Something's Bowling**, 1 p.m. Group welcomes members ages 18-33. Provide opportunities to meet new people, socialize & discuss age-relevant issues. Admission: \$3 per game, \$2 for shoe rental. Metro Detroit LGBT 20 Somethings, 600 E. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. the20somethings.org

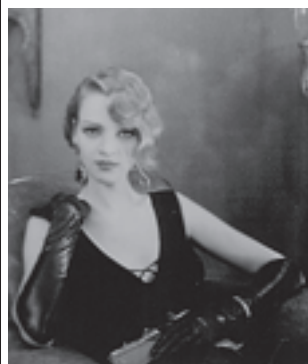
**Michigan Same-Sex Wedding Expo**, 3 p.m. Getting married? Thinking about getting married? Need LGBT-friendly vendors for your next party? BTL offers 40 vendors, including caterers, jewelers, salons, photographers, officiants, churches, florists, gift registries, clothiers, printers, travel agents and entertainers. Free food of Sweet Lorraines. Admission: \$10 at the door. Between The Lines, 17100 Laurel Park Drive N., **Livonia**. 734-293-7200 ext.22. pridesource.com

### Thursday, May 5

**Euchre Tournament**, 7 p.m. Euchre tournament fundraiser to benefit Out Loud Chorus, Washtenaw county's original GLBT chorus. \$10 entry, cash prizes. Out Loud Chorus, 1950 S. Industrial Hwy., **Ann Arbor**. 734-973-6084. olc.org

### Friday, May 6

**2nd Annual Cheers to HELP Wine Tasting**, 6:30 p.m. Directly benefits the clients HELP serves and improves ability to assist HIV positive individuals living in Michigan access medical care and other essential resources. Tickets: \$50 available online. HELP, 222 Sherman Dr., **Royal Oak**. 313-832-3300. helpoffice.org



Uma Thurman as June Miller in "Henry and June"

**Gender Variance Expression in Children**, 6:30 p.m. Kim Pearson, Executive Director of Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA) will speak. No cost, however donations for TYFA will be accepted. GSA Alliance of Southeast Michigan, Affirmations, GLSEN, Transgender Michigan, Transgender Detroit, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-716-0106. glsensemi@gmail.com

**Womyn's Film Night**, 6:30 p.m. Film: Henry and June. Based on real events, Anas Nin embarks on a professional relationship with famed American author Henry Miller. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

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

### Saturday, May 7

**Healing Detroit**, 9 a.m. African American LGBT initiative developed to address barriers and social constraints that have impacted the growth and development of Detroit's black LGBT community. KICK-The Agency for LGBT African-Americans, 2930 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 313-285-9733. healingdetroit@yahoo.com

**Detroit Derby Girls**, 6:30 p.m. Tickets: \$15-20. 1 Washington Blvd, **Detroit**. 313-877-8777. olympiaentertainment.com

## MUSIC

### CLASSICAL

**Kerrytown Concert House** "Parnas/Kohlberg Trio" Chamber music trio. Tickets: \$5-25. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor.

8 p.m. April 28. 734-769-2999. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

**MSU College of Music** "Verdi Requiem" Tickets: \$20, \$10 for students. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts at Michigan State University, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 8 p.m. April 30. 517-353-1982 ext. 14. msu.edu

### CONCERTS

**Ariana Gallery** "Hot Glass & Cool Jazz" Ariana Gallery's 22nd Michigan Glass Month Exhibition with live jazz music. Ariana Gallery, 119 S. Main St., Royal Oak. 6 p.m. April 29. 248-546-8810. arianagallery.com

**Cabaret Detroit** "Cabaret Detroit" Starring Caren Kapson and Roy Sexton. Presents stories told in song, featuring selections from the American songbook, musical theater and contemporary song writers. Cocktails served during the show. Bastone, 419 S. Main Street, Royal Oak. April 7-May 8. 248-383-5460. cabaretdetroit.com

**Detroit Fox Theatre** "Neil Young" Spring Solo Tour. Tickets: \$45-85. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. 7:30 p.m. May 4. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

**Ferndale Public Library** "First Stop Friday" Local bands "Computer Perfection" and "Electric Lion Soundwave Experiment". Free and all ages are welcome. Ferndale Public Library, 222 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 5:30 p.m. May 6. 248-547-6008.

**Kerrytown Concert House** "All About The Trio" Ellen Rowe and her trio present a concert/lecture series exploring various aspects of the jazz piano trio. Tickets: \$10-25, \$5 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 2 p.m. May 1. 734-769-2999. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

**Olympia Entertainment** "Billy Ocean" Tickets: \$30-\$35. Motor City Casino Soundboard, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. May 6. 313-471-3200. olympiaentertainment.com

**Royal Oak Music Theatre** "Coheed & Cambria" Tickets: \$27. Available online. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St. Royal Oak. 8 p.m. April 29. 248-399-2980. purchase.tickets.com

**The Ark** "Colin Hay" Tickets: \$33-40. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. April 28, 8 p.m. April 29. 734-761-1800. theark.org

**The Detroit Institute of Arts** "Annual Detroit Public Schools Student Exhibition" Art by Detroit Public School students, from kindergartners to high school seniors, is showcased in this annual exhibition. Among the variety of objects on view are paintings, drawings, ceramics, collages, photographs, videos, and jewelry. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward, Detroit. May 1-July 16. 313-833-7900. dia.org

**The Detroit Symphony Orchestra** "Disney in Concert" One of the DSO's first concerts since returning from strike. Features memorable tunes of Disney classics such as The Lion King, Beauty and the Beast, and the Little Mermaid.



Michigan Same-Sex Wedding Expo

Tickets: \$20. The DSO, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. April 29-May 1. 313-576-5111. [detroitso.com](http://detroitso.com)

**The Detroit Symphony Orchestra** "Abba The Concert" Pop music masterpieces from Dancing Queen to Mamma Mia. Tickets: \$15+. The DSO, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. May 4. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org)

**The Detroit Symphony Orchestra** "New Beginnings" 25 of Detroit's finest jazz artists perform music by Doug Halladay under the direction of Buddy Budson and Keith Vreeland, to fight Leukemia. Tickets: \$10+. The DSO, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. May 5. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org)

## FILM & VIDEO

**Detroit Institute of Arts** "DFT 101: Wooden Crosses" Masterwork from one of the cinema's unsung giants. Tickets: \$5 or free for DIA members. Detroit Film Theater, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 4 p.m. April 30. 313-833-7900. [dia.org](http://dia.org)

**Detroit Institute of Arts** "Queen to Play" Dramatic comedy of new found passions and mid-life triumphs, set on the shores of Corsica. Tickets: \$7.50. Detroit Film Theater, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. April 22-May 1. 313-833-7900. [dia.org](http://dia.org)

**Penn Theatre** "The Incredible Shrinking Man" "Sci-fi Month." Tickets: \$3. Penn Theatre, 760 Penniman Ave., Plymouth. 7 p.m. April 28. 734-453-0870. [penntheatre.org](http://penntheatre.org)

**Penn Theatre** "The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer" Tickets: \$3. Cary Grant Month. Penn Theatre, 760 Penniman Ave., Plymouth. 6:30 p.m. May 5. 734-453-0870. [penntheatre.com](http://penntheatre.com)

## OTHER

**Henry Ford Culinary Institute For Health and Healing** "Food Happiness 101" Healthy cooking demonstrations. Registration: \$139 one day, \$250 both. Henry Ford Culinary Institute For Health and Healing, Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital's Demonstration Kitchen, West Bloomfield. 10 a.m. April 30, 10 a.m. May 1. 248-325-3890. [dfk@hfhs.org](http://dfk@hfhs.org)

**The Henry Ford** "Day Out With Thomas: Leader of the Track Tour 2011" Thomas the Tank Engine rolls into Greenfield Village. 20-minute ride through Henry Ford. Tickets: \$11.75-32.75. The Henry Ford, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. April 30-May 15. 313-982-6001. [thehenryford.org](http://thehenryford.org)

**Spirit of Hope: Detroit** "Sunday Worship" Seeks to empower people of all races, genders and gender expressions, sexual orientations, physical abilities, denominational or religious backgrounds, to serve one another as God has gifted us to do. From all over Metro Detroit to enjoy upbeat worship, preaching, community outreach, and fellowship. Spirit of Hope Church, 1519 Martin Luther King Dr, Detroit. March 6-Aug. 28. 313-964-3113. [spiritofhopedetroit.org](http://spiritofhopedetroit.org)

**Windover Women's Resort** "Royal Wedding Reception" Celebration of the royal wedding. Refreshments and light snacks. Windover Women's Resort, 3596 Blakely Road, Owendale. 4 p.m. April 29, 4 p.m. April 30. 989-375-2586. [windoverwomensresort.com](http://windoverwomensresort.com)

# THEATER

## CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

**Distraction** A play reading. Contains adult language and themes. Free; donations welcome. Center Stage Jackson at Ella Sharp Museum, 3225 Fourth St., Jackson. May 7-8. 517-499-4086. [centerstagejackson.org](http://centerstagejackson.org)

**Distraction** \$10-\$22. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Parish Theatre, 426 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Through May 1. 269-343-1313. [kazoo.org](http://kazoo.org)

**Doubt, A Parable** \$10-\$12. SRO Productions at The Historic Burgh, 26060 Berg Road, Southfield. April 29- May 15.

248-796-4645. [srotheater.org](http://srotheater.org)

**Grey Gardens** \$16-\$18. Stagecrafters, Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette St., Royal Oak. April 29- May 14. 248-541-6430. [stagecrafters.org](http://stagecrafters.org)

**Hay Fever** \$20. Ann Arbor Civic Theater at Arthur Miller Theater, 1226 Murrin Ave., Ann Arbor. May 5- 8. 734-971-2228. [a2ct.org](http://a2ct.org)

**Lips Together, Teeth Apart** \$16. Barefoot Productions, 240 N. Main St., Plymouth. May 6- May 22. 734-582-9688. [justgobarefoot.com](http://justgobarefoot.com)

**The Drowsy Chaperone** Get ready to be transported to a magical, wonderful world - a world where the critics are in awe, the audiences are in heaven and the neighborhood is buzzing with excitement. \$18-\$22 adult, \$15-\$19 senior & student. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. May 6- May 22. 269-343-1313. [kazoo.org](http://kazoo.org)

**The Drowsy Chaperone** \$18. The Players Guild of Dearborn, 21730 Madison St., Dearborn. May 6- 29. 313-561-TKTS. [playersguildofdearborn.org](http://playersguildofdearborn.org)

**The Hallelujah Girls** Reservations required for dinner & show. Dinner served at 6:30 p.m. \$30; show only tickets are \$15. Starlight Dinner Theatre at Waverly East Intermediate School, 3131 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing. May 6- 14. 517-243-6040. [starlightdinnertheatre.com](http://starlightdinnertheatre.com)

**The Producers** \$16-\$18. The Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. April 29- May 21. 248-553-2955. [farmingtonplayers.org](http://farmingtonplayers.org)

**The Vagina Monologues** \$10. Barefoot Productions, 240 N. Main St., Plymouth. April 29- 30. 734-582-9688. [justgobarefoot.com](http://justgobarefoot.com)

**Vincent in Brixton** \$12-\$14; Thursdays only \$8-\$10. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. April 28- May 8. 517-482-5700. [RiverwalkTheatre.com](http://RiverwalkTheatre.com)

**You Can't Take it With You** \$5. Kalamazoo Civic Senior Class Reader's Theatre at Carver Center Studio, 426 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. April 29- May 1. 269-343-1313. [kazoo.org](http://kazoo.org)

## COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY THEATER

**Savage in Limbo** \$10-\$12. Wayne State University Studio Theatre at Hilberry Rehearsal Studio, 480 W. Hancock St., 4th floor, Detroit. Through April 30. 313-577-2972. [wsustudio.com](http://wsustudio.com)

**SG: PROFESSIONAL THEATER**  
**'night, Mother** \$20. Breathe Art Theatre Project at Mackenzie Hotel, 3277 Sandwich St., Windsor. May 5- 7. 519-255-7600. [breathearththeatre.com](http://breathearththeatre.com)

**'night, Mother** \$20. Breathe Art Theatre Project at The Furniture Factory, 4126 3rd St., Detroit. Through May 1. 248-982-4121. [breathearththeatre.com](http://breathearththeatre.com)

**A Musical Salute to Vaudeville and Burlesque** \$16. Broadway Onstage Live Theatre, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Through May 14. 586-771-6333. [broadwayonstage.com](http://broadwayonstage.com)

**A Prairie Home Companion with Garrison Keillor** \$38.50-\$68.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 5:45 p.m. May 7. 313-471-6611. [olympiaentertainment.com](http://olympiaentertainment.com)

**Almost, Maine** \$15. Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. May 6- 21. [michiganactorsstudio.com/2011-theatre-season/](http://michiganactorsstudio.com/2011-theatre-season/)

**April Foolery** \$10-\$15. Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley St., Detroit. Through May 1. 313-967-0599. [matrixtheatre.org](http://matrixtheatre.org)

**Cabaret Detroit** \$15. Cabaret Detroit at Bastone, 419 S. Main Street, Royal Oak. Through May 8. [cabaretdetroit.com](http://cabaretdetroit.com)

**Cancer! The Musical** \$20. Park Bar, 2040 Park Ave., Detroit. May 6- 21. 313-437-2040. [parkbardetroit.com](http://parkbardetroit.com)

**Circle Mirror Transformation**

Previews April 28 (\$10-\$32). \$22-\$41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through May 22. 734-663-0681. [performancenetwork.org](http://performancenetwork.org)

**Doubt, A Parable** Previews May 6-8. \$15-\$20. What A Do Theatre at First United Methodist Church, 111 E. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek. May 6- 22. [whatado.org](http://whatado.org)

**Ernie** \$20-\$25. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. April 28- June 26. 313-471-6611. [olympiaentertainment.com](http://olympiaentertainment.com)

**Fahrenheit 451** \$12-\$30. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Through April 30. 810-237-7333. [thewhiting.com](http://thewhiting.com)

**Fires of Beltane** \$20. Detroit Fire Guild at Crofoot Ballroom, 1 South Saginaw, Pontiac. 9 p.m. April 30. 248-858-9333. [detroitfireguild.com/events.html](http://detroitfireguild.com/events.html)

**Forever Plaid** \$25-\$28. Encore Musical Theater Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Through May 15. 734-268-6200. [theencoretheatre.org](http://theencoretheatre.org)

**Forgiving John Lennon** \$17 in advance; \$20 at the door. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through May 22. 313-868-1347. [detroitreptheatre.com](http://detroitreptheatre.com)

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

**I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change** \$30-\$35; Dinner and Show Packages are \$79.95-\$89.95 per couple. Andiamo Novi Theatre, 42705 Grand River Ave., Novi. April 29- May 22. 248-348-4448. [andiamonovitheatre.com](http://andiamonovitheatre.com)

**No Show \$8.** Wharton Center at Michigan State University, East Lansing. May 1. 1-800-Wharton. [whartoncenter.com](http://whartoncenter.com)

**Salvage** \$20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Through May 14. 313-365-4948. [planetant.com](http://planetant.com)

**Seascape** Previews April 28-30 (\$10-\$29). \$15-\$25. Blackbird Theatre, 325 Braun Ct, Ann Arbor. April 28- May 28. 734-332-3848. [blackbirdtheatre.org](http://blackbirdtheatre.org)

**Shout! The Mod Musical** \$30-\$39. Meadow Brook Theatre, 207 Wilson Hall, Rochester. Through May 15. 248-377-3300. [mbtheatre.com](http://mbtheatre.com)

**Some Couples May...** \$25-\$40. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through May 28. 734-433-7673. [purplerosetheatre.org](http://purplerosetheatre.org)

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

**The Cider House Rules, Part I: Here in St. Cloud's** \$25-\$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Plays in repertory through May 12. 313-577-2972. [hilberry.com](http://hilberry.com)

**The Cider House Rules, Part II: In Other Parts of the World** \$25-\$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Plays in repertory through May 14. 313-577-2972. [hilberry.com](http://hilberry.com)

**The Cocktail Hour** \$26-\$30. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Through April 30. 248-347-0003. [tippingpointtheatre.com](http://tippingpointtheatre.com)

**The Everyman Project** \$15. The New Theatre Project, 220 Felch St., Unit 5, Ann Arbor. April 26- May 15. 734-645-9886. [thenewtheatreproject.org](http://thenewtheatreproject.org)

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

**Waiting for Godot** Admission by donation. The Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette Ave. #113, Detroit. Through May 7. 313-485-0217. [theabreact.com](http://theabreact.com)

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



"US Route 66: The Death of an American Icon"

## THEATER FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

**Honk!** \$12 adult, \$10 student & senior. Downriver Youth Performing Arts Center at Trenton Village Theatre, 2447 W. Jefferson Ave., Trenton. April 29- May 7. 734-362-8153. [dypac.com](http://dypac.com)

**Madagascar Live** \$15.50-\$38.50, VIP \$85.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. April 29- May 1. 1-800-745-3000. [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

**The Crane Maiden** \$10 adult, \$5 children. PuppetART, 25 E. Grand River, Detroit. Saturdays through April 30. 313-961-7777. [puppetart.org](http://puppetart.org)

# ART 'N' AROUND

**323 East** "BASK Solo Exhibition" Czech-born agent provocateur of countless "thought crimes" headlines new exhibition Saturday Night Special. 323 East, 323 E. Fourth St., Royal Oak. April 23 - May 23. 866-756-6538. [323east.com](http://323east.com)

**Cass Cafe** "5w-30" Three-artist exhibit within the Cass Cafe thought of as a synonym for a sort of psychological endurance typified by living in Detroit and Michigan. Cass Cafe, 4620 Cass Ave., Detroit. April 16 - June 11. 313-831-1400. [casscafe.com](http://casscafe.com)

**College for Creative Studies** "Eight Continents in Collaboration" A workspace for dialogue and interaction. Using material from the first eight weeks of the 2011 Economist magazines, collaborators Mira Burack and Narine Kchikian engage the community in conversation about contemporary global/political issues, gestures and iconography. Center Galleries, Alumni & Faculty Hall, 301 Frederick Douglass St., Detroit. April 1 - April 30. 313-664-7800. [theeconomostseries.com](http://theeconomostseries.com)

**Detroit Artist's Market** "Northern Michigan Artists" The Detroit Artists Market is now taking a voyage to bring to the DAM an exhibition of northern Michigan artists who express themselves in a variety of media and who have been touched by the Northern Lights. John F. Korachis, Curator Detroit Artist's Market, 4719 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. April 28 - May 28. 313-832-8540. [detroitartistsmarket.org](http://detroitartistsmarket.org)

**Downriver Council for the Arts** "Cheryl Phillips and Betty Prudden" Exhibitions are free and open to the public. Downriver Council for the Arts, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. April 15 - May 27. 734-720-0671. [downriverarts.org](http://downriverarts.org)

**Gallery Project** "Unhooked From Time" Multimedia exhibit in which 28 local, regional and national artists examine how society has lost its sense of the cycles of nature, and how it has artificially hooked ourselves to linear digital time. Gallery Project, 215 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. April 3 - May 5. 734-997-7012. [thegalleryproject.com](http://thegalleryproject.com)

**Kerrytown Concert House** "Denise Rohde Exhibit" Uses traditional training in photographic processes, while embracing digital editing to create unique style.

By deconstructing and reconstructing familiar subjects, Rohde's photographs have a dream-like quality that can appeal to a broad range of viewers. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 North Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor. April 5 - May 1. 734-769-2999. [kerrytownconcerthouse.com](http://kerrytownconcerthouse.com)

**Kerrytown Concert House** "Ebb and Flow" Laura Seligman's work explores color, fluid lines and texture through the lens of a camera as well as the luminosity of hand-dyed silk. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. May 3 - May 31. 734-769-2999. [kerrytownconcerthouse.com](http://kerrytownconcerthouse.com)

**Kresge Art Museum** "Hiraki Sawa: Other Dwellings" Sawa's videos are intimate, sometimes hermetic meditations on place and the wonderfully odd activities that can occur in imaginative dimensions. MSU, Auditorium & Physics Road, East Lansing. April 30 - July 21. [artmuseum.msu.edu](http://artmuseum.msu.edu) 517-884-0659

**Kresge Art Museum** "Devil in the Details" Undergraduate students' assembled and curated exhibit: Student Perspectives - Devil in the Details. The exhibition of approximately 26 pieces presents a variety of subjects and mediums that explore the devil in different contexts. Perspectives Gallery, Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing. April 21 - May 8. 517-884-0659. [artmuseum.msu.edu](http://artmuseum.msu.edu)

**Lawrence Street Gallery** "Exposures: Photography 2011" Fifteenth annual photography exhibit, a juried show expected to draw submissions from approximately 100 area photographers. Dunes Resort, 22620 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. April 1 - April 29. 248-544-0394. [lawrencestreetgallery.com](http://lawrencestreetgallery.com)

**Lawrence Street Gallery** "US Route 66: The Death of an American Icon" Fascinating and hauntingly beautiful photo documentary on US Route 66 by Arnold Berkman. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward, Ferndale. May 5 - May 28. 248-544-0294. [lawrencestreetgallery.com](http://lawrencestreetgallery.com)

**Mardigan Library at UM-Dearborn** "Toledo Studio Art Glass: New Generations" Participating in the 2011 Michigan Glass Month with an exhibition celebrating new generations of contemporary studio glass artists from Toledo. Alfred Berkowitz Gallery, 4901 Evergreen Road, Dearborn. April 1 - May 12. 313-593-3592. [umd.umich.edu](http://umd.umich.edu)

**Poetry House Entertainment** "Poetically Speaking Detroit" Politics vs. Religion - Separation of Church and State. Musical performance by Monica Blaire. Tickets: \$15. Boll Family Theatre, 1401 Broadway, Detroit. 8 p.m. April 29. 313-778-2981.

**River's Edge Gallery** "From Paris to Detroit" Etienne Yver captures mundane moments in the visual language of his art. River's Edge Gallery, 3024 Biddle Ave., Wyandotte. April 15 - May 20. 734-246-9880. [artattheedge.com](http://artattheedge.com)

**Riverside Arts Center** "Figuratively Speaking" Interpretations of the Human Form. A 2D and 3D exhibit. Reception May 7. Riverside Arts Center, 76 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti. May 5 - May 28. 734-480-2787. [riversidearts.org](http://riversidearts.org)

**Riverside Arts Center Gallery** "Docent Exhibition" Featuring the work of local artists, including drawings, woodwork, prints, glass work and more. Artist reception will be held 5-7 p.m. April 2. Riverside Arts Center Gallery, 76 N. Huron , Ypsilanti. March 1 - April 30. [riversideartscenter.org](http://riversideartscenter.org)

**Scarab Club Gallery** "Working Class Heroes" An all-media juried exhibition honoring the working class, inspired by ML Liebler's book Working Words: Punching the Timeclock and Kicking Out the Jams, a compilation of writing from local, national and international poets and writers. Scarab Club Gallery, 217 Farnsworth St., Detroit. April 1 - May 15. 313-831-1250. [scarabclub.org](http://scarabclub.org)

**The Ann Arbor Art Center** "Potential!" Annual all-media juried art exhibition that showcases and celebrates the talent of local teen visual artists. Ann Arbor Art Center, 117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. April 26 - May 8. 734-995-8004. [annarborcenter.org](http://annarborcenter.org)

**University of Michigan Museum of Art** "Life in Ceramics: Five Contemporary Korean Artists" This exhibition focuses on five artists with well established reputations in Korea, whose visually stunning ceramic objects acknowledge and engage with Korean clay traditions yet embody innovative, unexpected art making and conceptual approaches. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State St, Ann Arbor. April 1 - June 26. 734-647-0524. [umma.umich.edu](http://umma.umich.edu)

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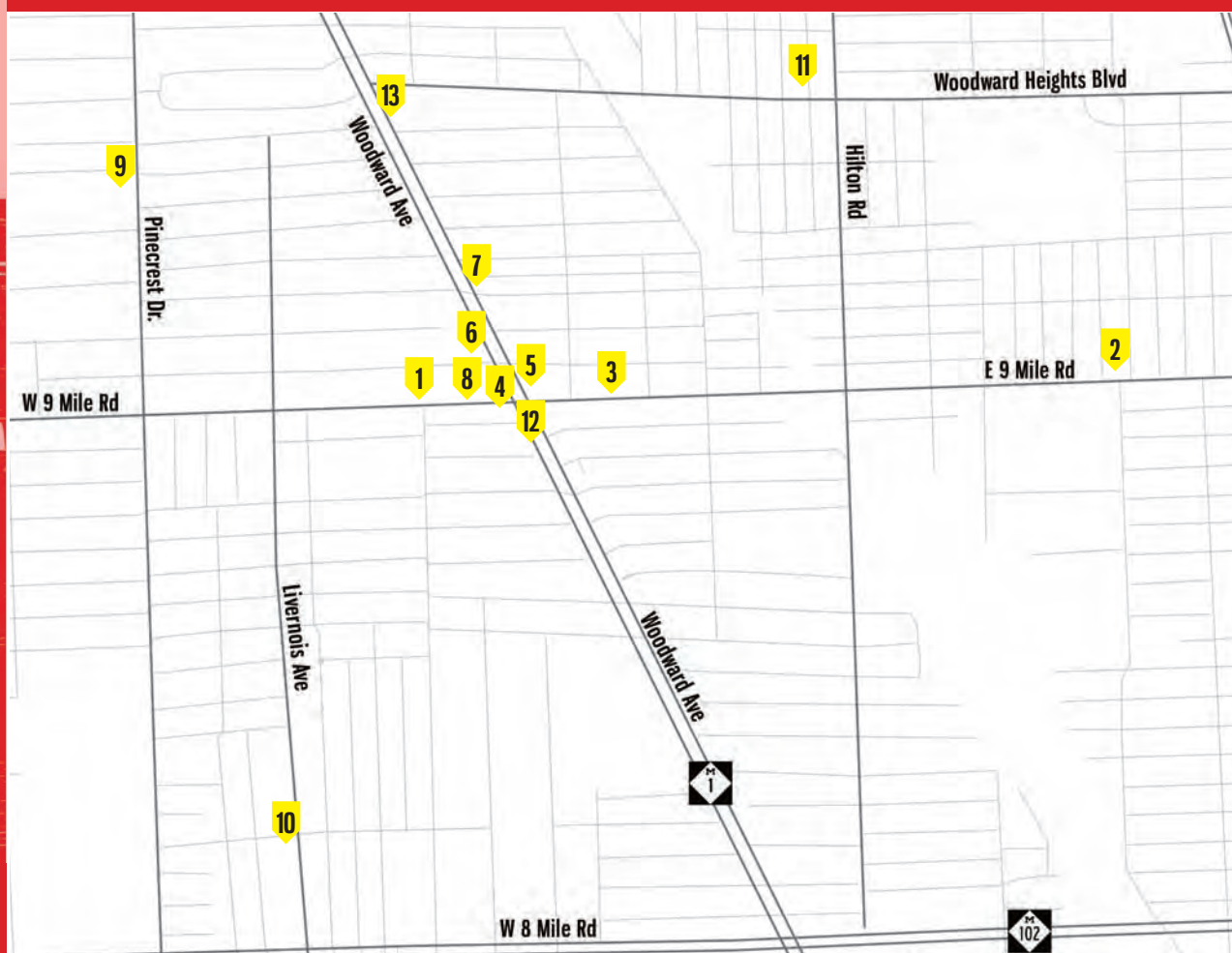
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## Plaids politely seduce Encore's audience

BY BRIDGETTE M. REDMAN

There are many reasons that "Forever Plaid" is a perennial crowd pleaser, and the cast and crew at Encore Musical Theater are quick to capitalize on all of them in their production.

Perhaps the most crucial element of the show's success is the way it co-opts the audience into encouraging its nervous Plaids and coaxing them into believing that they are loved. The four Plaids at Encore, Steve DeBruyne (Frankie), Phill Harmer (Smudge), Sebastian Gerstner (Sparky) and Leo Daignault (Jinx), excel at this duty. They charm the audience with their adorable insecurity from Jinx's stiff fear to Sparky's eager amazement at the audience's applause.

Having just stepped out of a nexus where they've hung out in limbo since being killed by a bus of parochial students

### REVIEW

#### Forever Plaid

The Encore Musical Theater Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Thursday-Sunday through May 15. \$25-\$28. 734-268-6200. [theencoretheatre.org](http://theencoretheatre.org)

while they were on their way to a gig, they've got their one shot at the big time before they have to go back to the silence of the dead. They're back to put on the concert that they were on their way to perform, and it doesn't take long for the audience to see that the foursome is more than a little nervous.

The second crowd-pleaser is the trip down memory lane, especially for those who still remember the "Ed Sullivan Show" and musical concerts before the Beatles revolutionized rock 'n' roll. The Plaids perform the hits of yesteryear along with



"Forever Plaid" continues through May 15 at The Encore Musical Theatre. Photo: Diana Obradovich

the coordinated, exaggerated dance moves that were popular in the '50s. With just a piano and string bass for accompaniment and microphones the only electronica in sight, the Plaids sing such numbers as "Moments to Remember," "No, Not Much" and "Catch a Falling Star."

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

## 'Salvage' fun to look at; needs more substance

BY JENN MCKEE

Local playwright Joe Zettelmaier obviously has a soft spot for pop culture nerds, as evidenced once again by his newest play, "Salvage," now having its world premiere at Hamtramck's Planet Ant Theatre.

Focusing on an economically struggling basement collectibles store owner in Detroit, Jason (Rob Pantano) – whom you could easily imagine trading war stories with the "Star Wars" geeks featured in Zettelmaier's "All Childish Things" trilogy – "Salvage" is set in motion when a mysterious woman, Anna (Alysia Kolaszcz), enters Jason's store with a rare sports memorabilia item to sell.

Anna explains that she found the item among her recently deceased father's things. Jason offers to find a buyer for her, and as he does, a romantic relationship develops between the two. Soon, after learning about Jason's financial straits,

### REVIEW

#### Salvage

Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Friday-Sunday through May 14, plus Tuesday, May 3. \$20. 313-365-4948. [www.planetant.com](http://www.planetant.com)

Anna brings him a trunk of additional collectibles from her father's house. But what initially appears to be Jason's salvation ends up being a test of his character.

What catches your eye before "Salvage" even starts – because you essentially walk through Jason's "store" on your way to a seat – is Inga Wilson and Milan Filipek's scenic design, filled out by Kirstin Bianchi's copious props. Packed with pop culture ephemera your eyes can't quite stop pouring over (a "Dukes of Hazzard" lunchbox, a Betsy Ross lamp,



Rob Pantano and Alysia Kolaszcz star in Joseph Zettelmaier's "Salvage." Photo: Planet Ant Theatre

troll dolls, a Darth Vader action figure carrying case, etc.), the set provides a nicely realized version of the store, which is more a nostalgic haven for Jason than it is a business.

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

## Meadow Brook's 'Shout!' out to the '60s

BY JOHN QUINN

Forgive me if I've gotten a little Anglophobic lately. The only "Royal Wedding" that interests me featured Jane Powell and Fred Astaire. But since the Meadow Brook Theatre's latest offering, "Shout! The Mod Musical," is a tribute to pop music from over four decades ago, it seemed likely to provide some relief from Windsor-Middleton burnout. That it did.

"Shout!" is a revue by Phillip George and David Lowenstein, interwoven with continuity ("Mod Musings" and "Groovy Gab") by Mr. George and Peter Charles Morris. The roles are nameless – sort of Georgy Girl as Everygirl. The five Carnaby-clad characters are identified by the primary colors they wear: orange, green, blue, yellow and red. The "girls," respectively, are Liz Griffith, Katie Hardy, Allison Hunt, Renee Turner and Charis

### REVIEW

#### Shout! The Mod Musical

Meadow Brook Theatre, 207 Wilson Hall, Rochester. Wednesday-Sunday through May 15. \$30-\$39. 248-377-3300. [www.mbtheatre.com](http://www.mbtheatre.com)

Vaughn. These bright colored "birds" (ah, the slang of the era – groovy, baby!) revive 24 or so songs associated with girl singers of the Mod movement. Dusty Springfield, Petula Clark, Marianne Faithfull, Lulu and Shirley Bassey were little ladies with diaphragms to die for, and the show is quite the blast from the past. It does have another, deeper theme, though. While the sexual revolution hit early in the decade, other social conventions didn't keep up. As the years roll by, the songs and stories



"Shout! The Mod Musical" takes audiences back in time and across the ocean with favorite songs from the 1960s. Photo: Rick Smith

reflect a growing frustration with the status quo that would break out in the feminist movements of the 1970s.

Given some really dreadful one-liners and amusing monologues, one might be reminded of "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-in" with a whole lot of music. It's an easy comparison.

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

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## BTL Dear Jody

BY JODY VALLEY

### A smoky situation

**Q.** My partner "Ellie" and I have two kids – three months and 3-years-old. We are trying to raise our children the best we know how, which I assume most parents do. We feed them organic foods – as much as we can afford to – don't allow very much TV, and generally try to do healthy things with them.

This summer we are going to be visiting my parents who live in Wyoming. They have not seen the kids and are very anxious to meet them. I feel especially fortunate that my mother and father – in fact, my whole family – is very accepting of me and my partner. They all live in Wyoming and have not seen our kids yet, except for my older sister who came when our second child was born.

My parents want us to stay with them in their home, and are helping to pay for our plane tickets. I appreciate their wanting us, but the problem is that they both smoke – and they smoke in their home. They are smokers who claim they have a right to smoke; you know the "smoker's rights" types. (They actually belong to a smoker's rights organization.) They really get upset when they think someone is treading on what they consider their "God-given rights."

Recently, my brother told my dad that everything that came into my parent's house ended up smelling like an ashtray. That resulted in my father telling my brother that he didn't need to come over, ever again. Then, my mother got upset because there is a big family event scheduled when we go home.

Elle and I don't want to expose our kids to all that smoke, and frankly, I've spent enough of my life exposed to a smoky environment. (My sister is willing to let us stay with her family.)

I don't know what to do since I don't want my family exposed to a smoky environment, yet I don't want to hurt my parents or make my dad angry. Do you have any ideas how we can handle this?

*To Dwell in Smoke or Not*

**A.** You will have to make a decision as to what is more important to you and Elle: keeping your family out of a smokey environment, or possibly hurting or upsetting your parents. If you decide to stay with your sister, you can let your parents know in a kinder, more delicate way than your brother did

with this comment about smelling like an ashtray. Let them know, in a nonjudgmental way, that it is a health issue for your family. Then, you have to let it go because you can't control how your parents react, nor be controlled by it.

### I can't commit

**Q.** I've been with "Hal" for two years; that is, we have been dating fairly regularly for those two years. Hal wants me to make things more serious, which to him means that we move in together and be an official couple. He also wants a commitment ceremony, but says he's willing to wait on that, at least for awhile.

For me, I don't know if I'm ready for moving in and the big commitment thing. I don't know why I'm not into this, and I can't give Hal a good reason why I'm not. Now we're fighting about this because he thinks that I must be seeing someone else, but I'm not. And, he's asking me: "If you're not seeing someone, what's wrong with you?" How do I answer that? I don't know what's wrong with me.

I don't think that I have "commitment issues," like Hal has suggested, because I committed to another relationship nine years ago that lasted four years.

*Afraid of Commitment?*

**A.** You didn't say that you were "in love" with Hal or anything else about your relationship with him: things you like about him, how you feel connected to him, and on and on. That makes me wonder. I'm going to assume that you don't have commitment issues – from what you've said, I see no evidence of that. However, I'm struck by the fact that you haven't said anything about being "in love" with Hal, or that you enjoy him in your life. I've posted a test on my Facebook page that might help you figure out whether you are ready for a commitment. Check it out (search: 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. Reach Jody at DearJodyValley@hotmail.com. The "Dear Jody" column appears weekly.*

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# BTL Horoscopes

BY JACK FERTIG

## Be careful, Cancer!

*Mars, Jupiter and Eris are all lining up together in Aries. This is a very rare triple conjunction that increases impulsiveness, aggression and competitiveness. Fights and wars are very likely to break out. As ethnic and sexual/gender communities become more assertive there is likely to be a strong reaction. Think ahead and keep your eyes open!*

**ARIES (March 20 – April 19):** In the race to get ahead, never forget the people who have helped you along. Even your opponents deserve respect at the very least for how they've challenged you and forced you to improve.

**TAURUS (April 20 – May 20):** Whatever personal problems you've put on the back burner are liable to boil over. Current upsets could, in a few months, prove to be blessings in disguise. For now, swallow your pride and get help, or get perspective by helping others.

**GEMINI (May 21- June 20):** Your friends' support can help you achieve anything, but are you supporting them as well? Rather than going off half-cocked, talk with them to see how your intentions dovetail and overlap. Generosity and synergy are keys to success.

**CANCER (June 21- July 22):** A little audacity goes a long way, but be careful! In your eagerness for success you could easily come off way too hard and sabotage yourself. Study "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu, not the march-and-slaughter techniques of General Ulysses Grant.

**LEO (July 23 – August 22):** The more you keep your mouth shut and your ears open the more you will understand where your opportunities really are. There is a time to roar, loud and fierce, but time it correctly. Think surgical, not sledgehammer.

**VIRGO (August 23 – September 22):** Mirror, mirror on the wall says you're the hottest of them all. Trying to convince others undermines the effect. If you have to tell people you're hot, you're not. Just knowing it and feeling it will carry the message.

**LIBRA (September 23 – October 22):** What most people overlook about Libras is that you can be very shrewd competitors. A fierce side is coming out that can be helpful

if used judiciously. Especially if you're struggling with or for your partner, rein in that passion and think ahead!

**SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21):** Focus on doing your best work. Trying to best others will arouse anger among colleagues. Keep that attitude also in your exercise. Pushing yourself too hard is dangerous, and pushing others aside could start a fight.

**SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20):** In sports it's way too easy to get overly aggressive and hurt someone, probably yourself. Find a creative way to express your fierceness, in writing, song or onstage. Any artistic medium is good, but if it involves sharps, flames or chemicals, be careful!

**CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19):** Are you channeling Scarlett O'Hara? Fight for your home or community, but pick your battles carefully and be careful not to cross swords needlessly with those closest to you.

**AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18):** Your mouth is more dangerous than ever. Efforts to be witty, provocative and incisive can go way over the top before you realize half of what you said. If it's too brilliant, write it down.

**PISCES (February 19 – March 19):** Your finances could skyrocket or just blow up in your face. Discipline and hard work are the key. You may need to think fast and move fast, but be sure to think first. Guard against impulse.

*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 email at [QScopes@qsyndicate.com](mailto:QScopes@qsyndicate.com).*

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**Solution to puzzle from page 42**

S	H	O	O	E	W	E	S	B	A	T	E	S
H	A	N	D	N	A	S	A	O	N	I	C	E
U	M	P	O	F	C	L	A	Y	N	I	E	C
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P	A	R	E	E		E	A	R	L		S	L
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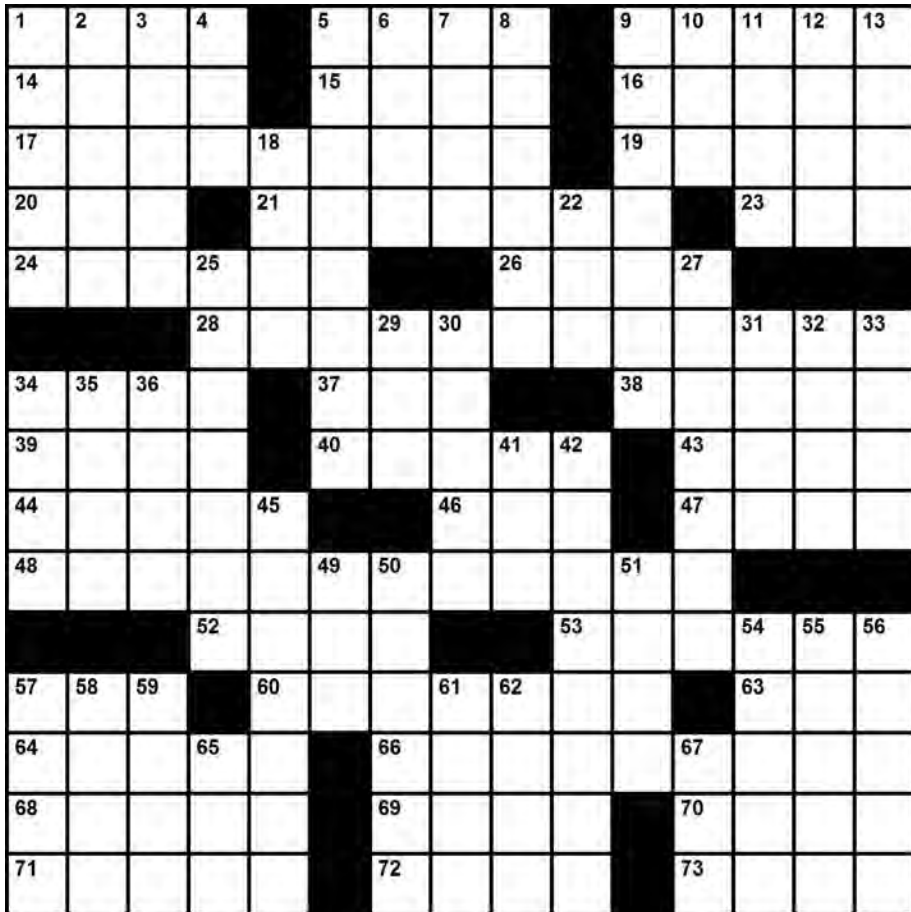
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# For Lanford Wilson: Stolen Letter



## Across

- 1 "Beat it!"
- 5 Some of Mary's lambs
- 9 Perkins' "Psycho" role
- 14 Full house, e.g.
- 15 Org. that has never been to Uranus
- 16 Place for champagne
- 17 Ceramic likeness of Dave Pallone?
- 19 Dorothy, to Em
- 20 Bloom of "The Producers"
- 21 Manhandled
- 23 Radiation dosage
- 24 Peruvian that may climb ev'ry mountain
- 26 Mild censure on the wrist
- 28 Overhang at Whitman's hatch hut?
- 34 Noted lab assistant
- 37 Old Spanish queen
- 38 Causing goosebumps
- 39 Chaplin partner
- 40 Edna Ferber novel
- 43 Elizabeth of "Transamerica"
- 44 It's queerer than fiction

- 46 Tony Randall's "7 Faces of Dr. \_\_\_\_"
- 47 Puts it to
- 48 Place for souvenirs of Mychal Judge?
- 52 "The Great Masturbator" painter
- 53 S&M namesake
- 57 Like some stares
- 60 Responds to Margaret Cho
- 63 "Once Upon a Mattress" legume
- 64 Florida State rival
- 66 Gay guy's "Uh-oh ..."?
- 68 Cole Porter title city
- 69 British peer
- 70 Gin type
- 71 Rufus Wainwright output
- 72 In two parts
- 73 Lanford Wilson inn, and a hint about a stolen letter

## Down

- 1 Longtime Dolphins coach Don
- 2 "Hill Street Blues" regular Veronica

- 3 Where to hop, in a Dr. Seuss book
- 4 Auberjonois on "Deep Space Nine"
- 5 The Castro and Dupont Circle
- 6 Where pictures are hung
- 7 Birthright seller of the Bible
- 8 Lays down the law
- 9 Being tied down by a lover
- 10 "Not a Pretty Girl" singer Di Franco
- 11 Opera house level
- 12 Latin homo leader?
- 13 Appear to be
- 18 Soc. Security fund source
- 22 Subordinate Claus
- 25 Like hot tub water
- 27 Ponies up in advance
- 29 New Age music pioneer
- 30 Liberace's choice of fur
- 31 Deity on "Xena"
- 32 Go to the bottom
- 33 Sailors cruise on them

- 34 "I" of Socrates
- 35 Hiker's snack
- 36 Obligation, in court
- 41 "\_\_\_\_ Spartacus!"
- 42 Disposition to kindness
- 45 Heroes that get eaten
- 49 Kind of shot
- 50 Out of sorts
- 51 Silence for Tchaikovsky
- 54 Ohno of Geert Blanchart's sport
- 55 Place for a pickup
- 56 Canvas site
- 57 Shakespeare's Puck, and others
- 58 "See ya!" to Marcella Hazan
- 59 Laying for a kitten
- 61 Wife in Rilke's homeland
- 62 Princess Diana had one
- 65 Gig fraction
- 67 Prefix in a kids' clothing line

Solution on 41

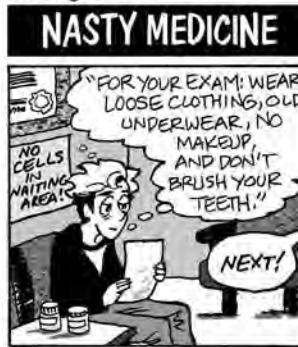
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# Cocktail Chatter

## To everything there is a cocktail

BY ED SIKOV

Since we closed the beach house in late October, 310,692 Americans died of heart disease or coronaries. 9,992 people got murdered. 17,962 people killed themselves – 9,679 used guns, 4,272 chose hanging or other forms of suffocation, 3,810 poisoned themselves (Drano, Clorox, Taco Bell). And 851 left the planet by way of a miscellany of theatrical means ranging from the operatic (stabbing, drowning) to such spectacle-oriented last scenes as hurling themselves off skyscrapers and, my personal favorite – it really makes a bold statement – setting themselves on fire. In short, it was time to open up the house in Fire Island Pines.

Housemate Frankie, the speed-talking restaurant manager, told me that herbal simple syrups were all the rage among Manhattan bartenders.

Why so morbid? Like much of the country, Dan and I barely survived a truly rough winter in New York City. The temperature was beyond bitter (at least for us) that the city's indigenous Common Grumpy (*grumpus vulgarus*) morphed into the mutant Ticking Time Bomb (*explosivus imminentus*). We all waited for the Post headline: "Massapequa Music Teacher Kills 7 at 'Addams Family' Matinee."

It stopped being funny in February, when two friends died. They were, like me, in their 50s. The first to make his off-cue exit was my high school pal from back home in western Pennsylvania. We'd both wanted to become writers; one did, the other stayed in Natrona Heights. The second was my first serious boyfriend, the endlessly recovering substance user. They each ended up alone on the floors of their apartments. I had to get to the beach fast or I'd go insane.

I made my suitcase-laden way alone in a freezing rain to the Pines. Dan refused to join me, using terms like "crazy" and "self-destructive mourning" to describe my desperate journey of solitude, grief and (I hoped) renewal on such a crummy weekend. The weather was no big deal. I built a fire, made a vast amount of absurdly spicy

chili, and developed a new cocktail in beautiful seclusion.

Housemate Frankie, the speed-talking restaurant manager, told me that herbal simple syrups were all the rage among Manhattan bartenders. So I adapted the traditional time-wasting (not-so-) Simple Syrup to my own move-fast, drink-faster pace: the Really Simple Syrup with Lavender. Here's the result – a cousin of the Aviation. It's tasteful and refined, something the Gillian Girl would order at an exclusive club in Beverly Hills. In memory of my "Valley of the Dolls" – loving Michael – it's called the Anne Welles.



### The Anne Welles

1/2 cup of Absolut (with two dead friends you get the Big Gulp)  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
2 teaspoon Creme de Violette  
1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon Really Simple Lavender Syrup – in other words, to taste.\*

Chill a martini glass. Put all ingredients into a cocktail shaker and chill in the freezer for five or 10 minutes. Add a few ice cubes to the shaker, and shake hard. As with the Aviation, strain into the frosty glass and hope that a few shards of ice rise to the top. Admire the color; serve.

\*Lavender Syrup: Brew 2/3 cup of strong lavender tea. (OK, you may not find lavender blossoms at Piggly Wiggly. You may have to go to a New Age store. Try not to throw up.) Strain out the blossoms, and pour the tea into a jar; add 2/3-cup sugar. Put the lid on and shake until the sugar dissolves. Store in the refrigerator.

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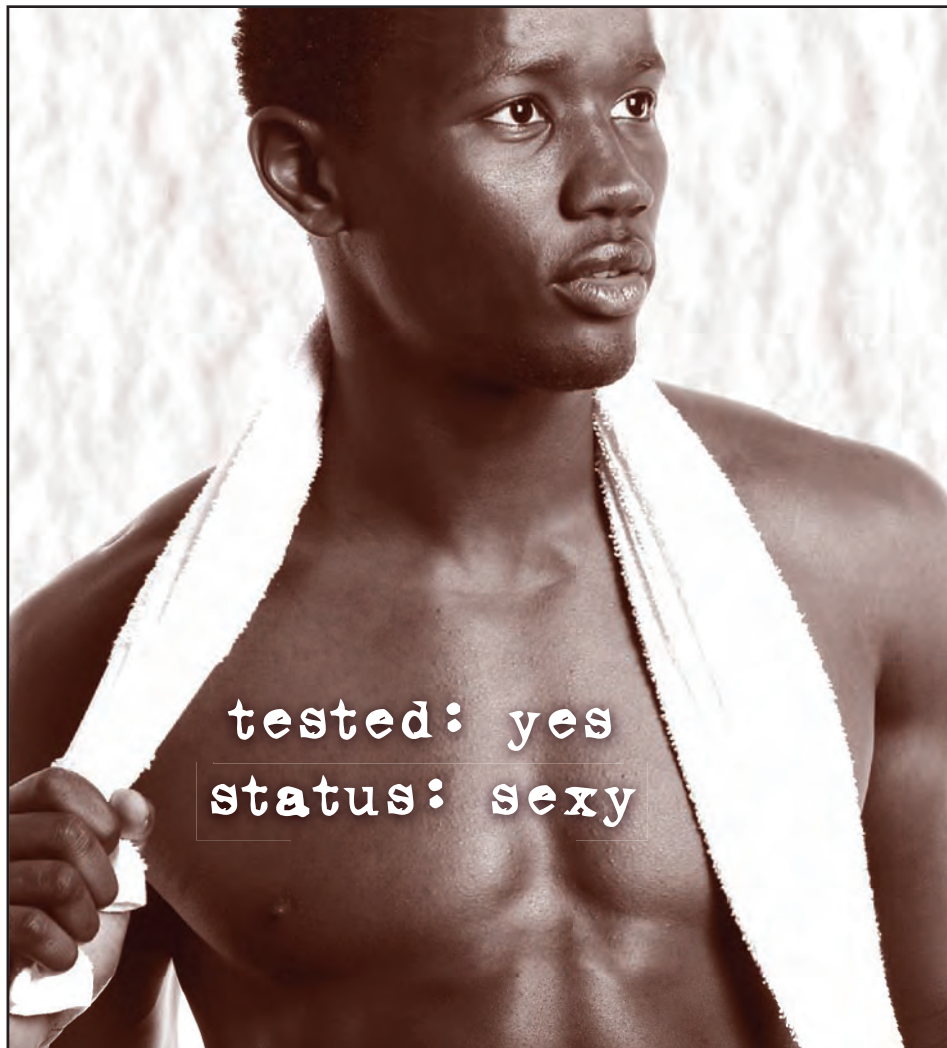


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# BT Deep Inside Hollywood



Emma Watson. Photo: Warner Bros./Jaap Buitendijk

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## 'Wallflower' dances with Emma Watson

Stephen Chbosky's "The Perks of Being a Wallflower" is one of those beloved young-adult novels that always turns up on the lists of Most Frequently Banned Books, since it deals with (gasp) homosexuality, suicide and drug use. And now you can expect the book to become even more famous because it's going to be a movie. Logan Lerman ("Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief") will play Charlie, a high-school outcast whose horizons are expanded when he is befriended by two unusual seniors, step-siblings Patrick and Samantha. The beautiful and uninhibited Samantha will be played by Emma Watson, in one of her first major post-"Harry Potter" roles, but no actor has yet been chosen to play Patrick, a gay student who's having a secret affair with a closeted football player. Chbosky will adapt and direct his own novel for producer John Malkovich, and Mae Whitman ("Scott Pilgrim vs. the World") co-stars. Let the protests resume. Not among uptight parents, mind you, but among real life wallflowers resentful that they're always being portrayed in movies by astoundingly attractive young actors.

## Whose presence will be felt in 'The Muppets'?

There's been so much rumor and speculation about what stars will pop up in "The Muppets" – the upcoming reboot of the film franchise featuring Kermit, Miss Piggy, Fozzie Bear and the rest of the crew – that it seems like this movie's been shooting since "The Muppets Take Manhattan" came out back in 1984. But the long wait is nearly over – the new Muppet epic, starring and co-written by Jason Segel ("How I Met Your Mother," "Forgetting Sarah Marshall"), is in post-production and will be in theaters before year's end. But who else will star? It's been confirmed that funny ladies Amy Adams, Emily Blunt and Rashida Jones are in the cast, but the still-officially-under-wraps bit players are even more queer-adjacent; the celebrity cameos allegedly include Wanda Sykes, "Modern Family"'s Eric Stonestreet, girl-kisser Katy Perry, bear magnet Zach Galifianakis, tart-tongued diva Kathy Griffin, and the mother of them all, Liza Minnelli. Here's what Romeo really wants to know, though: Will Scooter finally come out?

## Staring back at Marina Abramovic

You don't have to have stood in line with Bjork and James Franco at New York's Museum of Modern Art last year to have heard about the 700-hour-long staring contest that Serbian performance artist Marina Abramovic undertook with anyone and everyone willing to sit opposite her and gaze into her eyes. The piece made headlines outside of the art world for its sheer audacity (and, yes, its celebrity fans).

The next step for Abramovic, then, feels exactly right: she will collaborate with Willem Dafoe and some high-profile gays for a theater piece about herself. "The Life and Death of Marina Abramovic" will have its world premiere this summer in Manchester, England and will be directed by avant-garde A-lister Robert Wilson, with musical input from Antony of Antony and The Johnsons, as well as experimental electronic band Matmos (comprised of M.C. Schmidt and Drew Daniel, partners in life as well as music). In other words, big stars to people whose tastes run well outside the mainstream. And you know what that means: Bjork is going to scoop up all the front row seats unless you fans of weird stuff book your tickets – both for the theater and for the flight to England – now.

## Sean Hayes a fine choice for 'The Three Stooges'

Two stooges down, one Moe to go – that's the latest casting news from the production camp of "The Three Stooges," the upcoming feature about the knuckleheaded kings of physical comedy from filmmakers Peter and Bobby Farrelly. Curly came along first in the form of Will Sasso ("\$#! My Dad Says") and now Sean Hayes has signed on to play Larry. It makes perfect sense, of course, since Hayes has a strong physical comedy background from his time spent as the exuberant Jack on "Will & Grace." And there's even a slight resemblance to the former boxer-turned-comic actor, minus all that frizzy hair. No word yet about whose names appear on the Moe short list, but no matter who winds up with the weird bowl haircut, the Farrelly brothers have already made a solemn vow that there will be "non-stop slapping" when this thing eventually hits multiplex screens. Finally, a biopic with its priorities in line.

Romeo San Vicente thinks Curly was the sexy one. And the less said about Shemp the better. He can be reached care of this publication or at [DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com](mailto:DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com).

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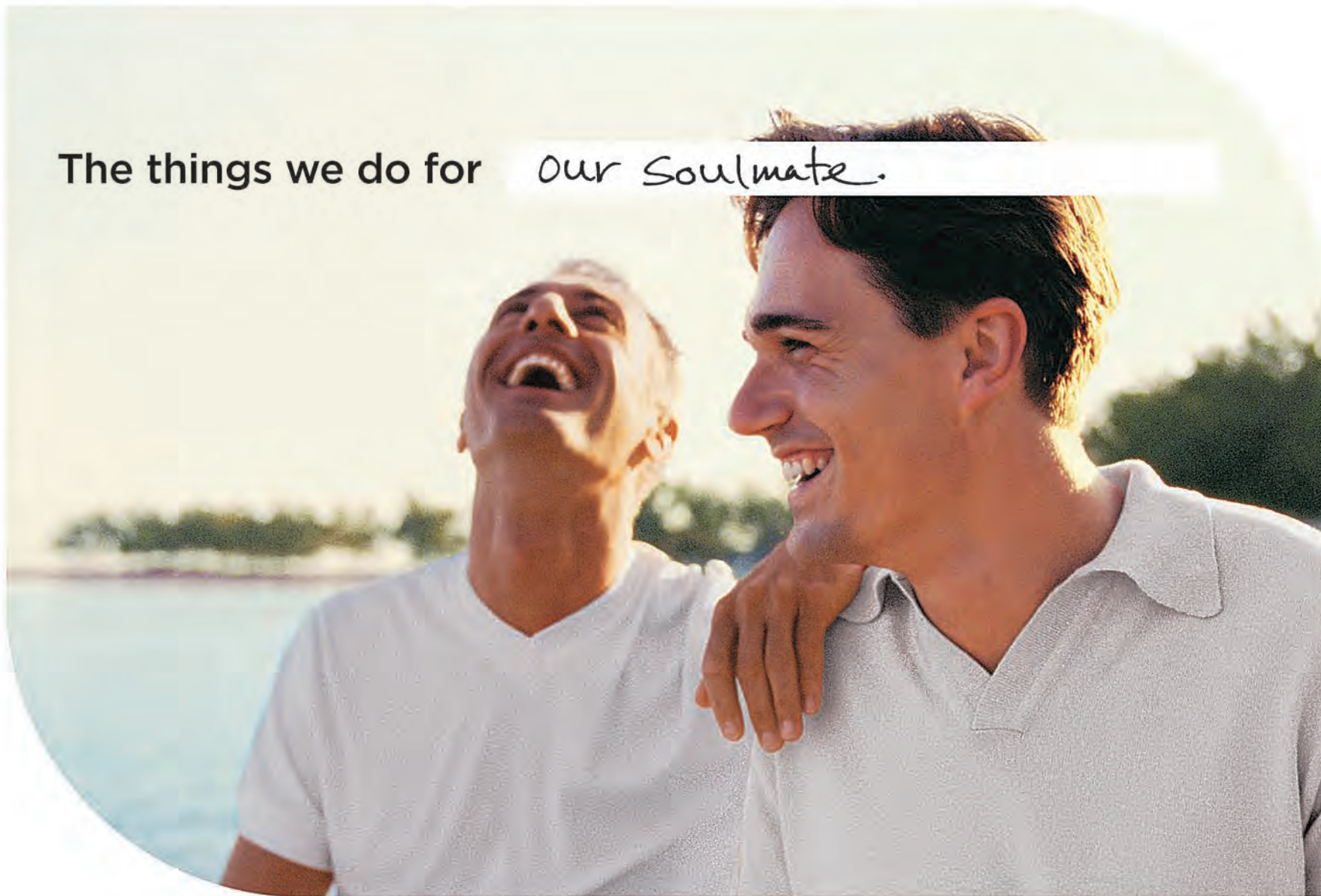
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