

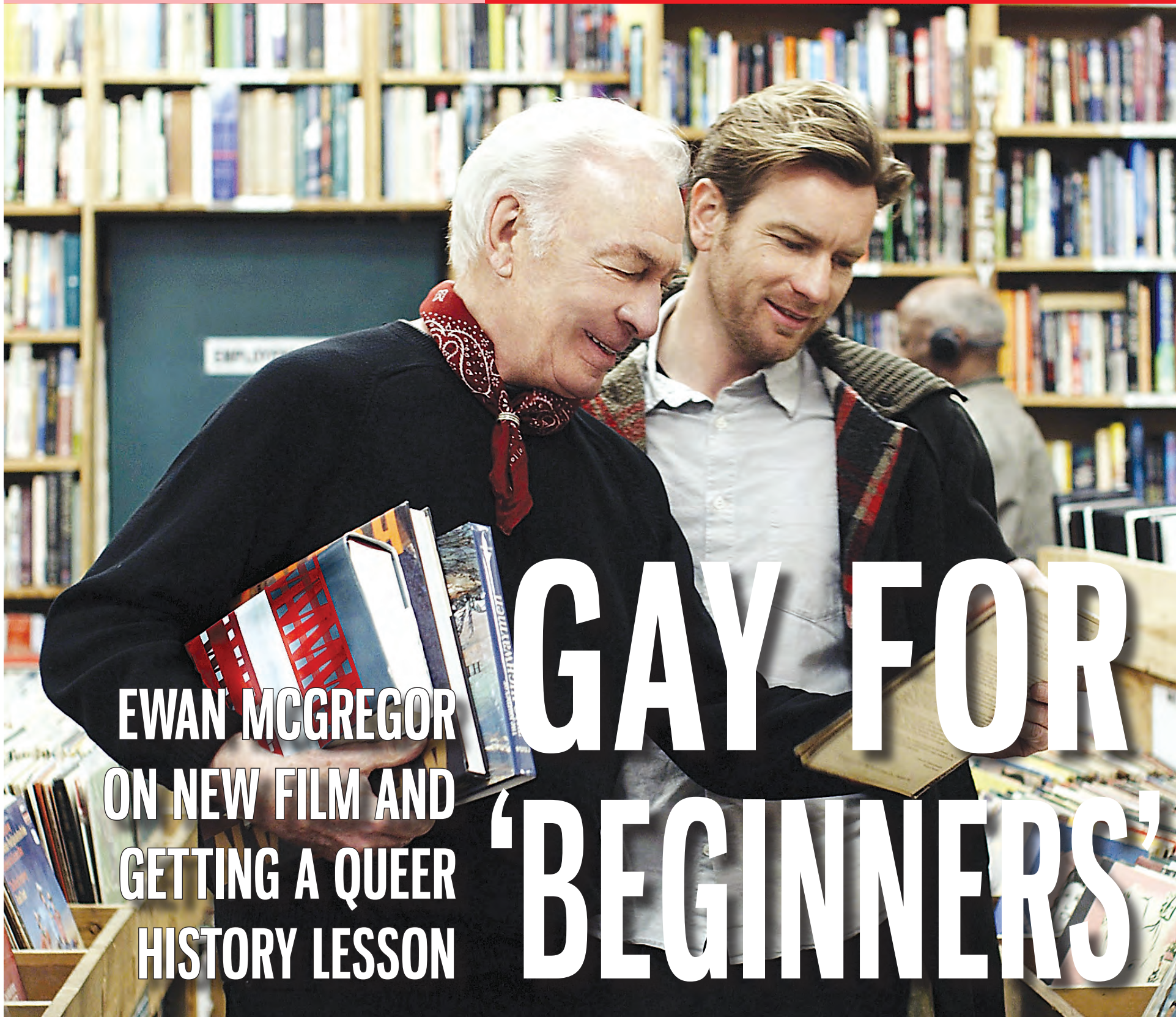
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Cover story

17 | Gay For 'Beginners'

Ewan McGregor and Christopher Plummer star in "Beginners," out June 17 at the Main Art Theatre in Royal Oak. Photo: Focus Features

News

5 | Between Ourselves

Kevin O'Brien

6 | One small ad, one big controversy

7 | Thousands rally for equality in Lansing

7 | A historic first for Michigan: Public safety supports Pride

8 | MDOC: Officer not allowed to wear uniform in Pride march

13 | Holland City Council to vote on protecting LGBTs

13 | 30 years of HIV/AIDS: The war still continues

13 | US gov't expresses support for gay student groups

14 | Gaga appears at Euro Pride

Opinions

9 | Creep of the Week

Tracy Morgan

10 | BTL Editorial

Homophobia must be called out

10 | Viewpoint

Why Prop 9 matters to everyone, not just Californians

11 | Parting Glances

Do not fold, mutilate or staple insertee

12 | S/he said

Sex scandals, 2012 presidential race

12 | Heard on Facebook

What do you think of Tracy Morgan's anti-gay tirade?

Life

19 | Cool Cities: Ann Arbor

UMS announces new director

22 | 'Glee' brings feel-good fun to Palace

Hit show's tour stop hits several high notes

23 | Mike Mills: My Gay Dad

The personal story behind 'Beginners'

24 | Book Marks

Bob Smith's transcendent new novel

25 | Curtain Calls

Review of "Next Fall"

26 | Happenings

Featured: Sing Out Detroit on June 17 in Madison Heights

Rear View

28 | Dear Jody

29 | Horoscopes

30 | Puzzle

31 | Classifieds

32 | Cocktail Chatter

34 | Deep Inside Hollywood

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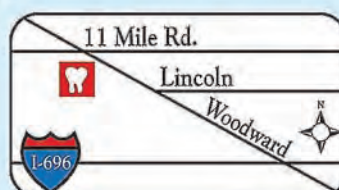
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taylor mac in concert

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pink martini

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ONLINE EXCLUSIVES



Videos: Michigan Pride in Lansing and Motor City Pride March video

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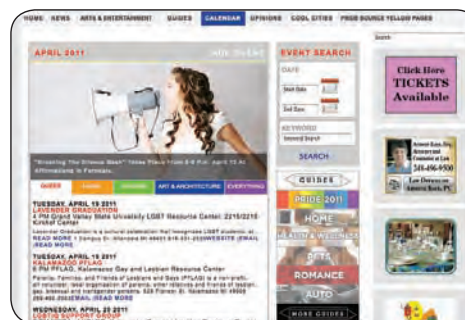
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Between Ourselves

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

Kevin O'Brien is a 20-year-old junior at Michigan State University. He's studying social relations and policy, and this summer he's working as an intern at the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion.



My parents are the most selfless people I know. I definitely want to follow in their footsteps and make as big of an impact as I can.

1 What do you do as an intern for the Michigan Roundtable?

I'm kind of all over the place. I'm trying to get a feel for all of the things the organization does. Through the summer, I'll be working with each staff member on different projects. I started helping my field experience supervisor, Steve Spreitzer, with equality for the LGBT movement. That's consumed my first three or four weeks on the job. I'll eventually switch over to help with some youth work, race relations and housing equity. Pretty much everything the organization does, I'll be getting a taste of this summer.

2 What are your career aspirations?

I am not positive at the moment. I'm kind of banking on the last two years of college to figure out what path I want to take. But law school is a prominent thought in my mind. I think it'd open a lot of doors for work in the future. I definitely want to work with social justice. I don't know if I'll use that law degree to be an attorney working for social justice, but after I get out of grad school it would definitely allow me to have a good base to continue the fight or pursuit for social justice.

3 What draws you to social justice?

My parents both work for nonprofit organizations and they've been serving the community around them and everyone that they can since before I was born. They're the most selfless people I know. I think they raised me to be the same way. I definitely want to follow in their footsteps and make as big of an impact as I can.

4 You recently attended a "Lobbying Day" in Lansing to encourage lawmakers to amend the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to protect LGBTs from discrimination. Can you explain the act to our readers?

It was passed in 1976, and it was meant to attack the discrimination that was pretty much the difference between black and white. There are obviously many more issues now. Now it protects against discriminatory practices in housing and employment based on race, religion, national origin, sex, age, weight, height, familial status and marital status. But it fails to protect sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. We don't want special rights, we want equal rights. It's amazing how many groups of people are protected, but not the more than 40,000 people who showed up at Hart Plaza (for Motor City Pride earlier this month). It's technically not illegal in Michigan to discriminate against humans in the LGBT community.

5 You're straight. Why are you so supportive of LGBT equality?

I'm on the side of the people that don't understand why you need to meddle in others' lives. Some opponents of gay rights say being gay is a choice. But it's the way they were born. What are you going to do to change the way someone was born? Being mean to someone just because of the way they were born is the same as being racist. It's outrageous. It makes no logical sense to me to not be an ally.

Between Ourselves is a bi-weekly feature that highlights those who work on behalf of Michigan's LGBT and allied community. To recommend someone for Between Ourselves, email our news editor Tara Cavanaugh at tara@pridesource.com.

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Securing Your Finances

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Individual event tickets are \$10 per person. This series is made possible through a generous grant from the Jewish Women's Foundation of Metropolitan Detroit.

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Thursday, June 16, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.

Celebrating our Diverse Community
Through Story and Song
Monday, June 20, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.

Jewish Community Center
6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield

The Modern Family lecture series is approved for
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For questions about this series, or to purchase tickets, please contact
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25th Annual Pride Banquet and Awards Ceremony

June 23, 6:30 p.m.
Ukrainian Cultural Center
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Come celebrate our local s/heroes in Michigan's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and allied community. Award categories include:

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- Volunteer Award
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The Annual Pride Banquet and Awards Ceremony is a collaborative event produced by the Forum Foundation, Affirmations, Equality Michigan, Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit, Just4Us, Gay/Lesbian Educators Association of Michigan, Black Pride Society, and Renaissance Unity.

Tickets are \$42 and are available at
www.GoAffirmations.org

One small ad, one big controversy

Why shouldn't high school students see an ad celebrating gay athletes?

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

David Garcia was an athlete when he was in high school, but he was too scared to be out. "I know what it's like in the locker rooms when coaches use words like faggot to motivate your team, to get you angry and go out there and 'kick those sissies' asses," the executive director of the Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center said.

"I didn't have one single example of a pro-gay athlete, and it would have meant the world to me."

So when the resource center tried to put an ad showing gay athletes in a local high school athletic guide, Garcia thought it was a great development for all student athletes.

But the ad received all sorts of pushback – and the worst part was, Garcia couldn't figure out from where.

Last week, BTL investigated the story, discovering just how much progress still needs to be made when combating homophobia – and how much progress can be made when people start asking questions.

Follow the clues

The story about the ad plays out a little like a murder mystery. There's a victim, there are suspects, and all the players involved choose their words carefully – or choose not to say anything at all.

First, let's meet the victim: The ad.

The full-page ad features five athletes, including an NFL player and a Detroit Tiger. The text on the ad asks, "What do these athletes have in common?" and answers: "All Pro, All Gay." The bottom of the ad affirms support for all athletes, gay and straight, and provides contact information for the Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center.

Royal Publishing was concerned about the ad when it ran last year in Kalamazoo's athletic guide for Loy Norrix High School.

The company, which sells ads and publishes athletic guides for schools around the state, was so concerned about the ad that a meeting was called last year. So Garcia met with the superintendent of Kalamazoo schools and its athletic director, who eventually reassured Royal Publishing that yes, the ad was appropriate.

Royal Publishing, which is based in Illinois, seemed to have gotten over its concern this year. One of its sales representatives, Brian Carlson, called Garcia last month and asked if he wanted to run the ad again, in another athletic guide in Parchment schools.

Garcia said yes. It helped that for some reason, the resource center had a huge credit on their account at Royal Publishing.

Now this is where the details get fuzzy.

Carlson called Garcia back, saying the ad could not run due to its controversial nature. Who said the ad was controversial? Carlson couldn't (or wouldn't) say.

So Garcia emailed Parchment Superintendent Matt Miller, who responded that Parchment had no contract with Royal Publishing. Miller said the same to BTL in an

What do these athletes have in common?

Billy Bean
Detroit Tigers OF
7 Major League Seasons

John Amaechi
NBA Center - 7 Seasons
English National Team

Greg Louganis
Olympic Diver
4 World Diving Titles
4 Olympic Gold Medals

Martina Naratilova
Champion Tennis Player
18 Grand Slam Singles Wins
41 Grand Slam Doubles Wins

Esera Tuaolo
Atlanta Falcons Nose Tackle
9 NFL Seasons
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**All-Pro
All Gay**

**The Resource Center supports all
student athletes, gay and straight**
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269.349.4234
contact@kgllrc.org

The Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center's ad, which was placed in a Kalamazoo high school athletic guide in 2010. The publishing company later refused to publish it in another sports guide.

interview. Miller has seen the ad, but said he didn't want to "get into hypotheticals" when asked if he would approve of the resource center's ad in the athletic guide.

But Carlson said Parchment currently has two orders for 1,000 athletic guides this year, one for fall and the other for winter. Carlson said Parchment has worked with the printing company for four years.

This means either Carlson or Miller isn't telling the truth.

Carlson said the name on Parchment's contract with the company is John Thompson, athletic director at Parchment and middle school principal.

BTL left a message for Thompson last Thursday and Friday and asked two questions: Do you have a contract with Royal Publishing for a student athletic guide? And did you reject an ad showing gay athletes?

As of press time, he hadn't called back.

BTL asked to see a copy of Royal

Publishing's contract with Parchment schools. "Absolutely not," Carlson said.

More about our suspects

Carlson, Miller and Thompson aren't the only players to watch carefully.

Enter: Pascal Maroon. He's the manager of Royal Publishing, and Carlson's supervisor in the Bloomington, Ill. office.

Maroon thought the company didn't publish Parchment's ad because one of the schools that ran the ad last year received complaints about it.

But then he retracted that, saying he'd have to look into it and call BTL back.

As of press time, he hadn't called back.

The only school that ran the ad last year was Kalamazoo's Loy Norrix High School. BTL asked Kalamazoo schools communications director Alex Lee about the complaints the ad received.

"That's just not correct," Lee said. There

were no complaints. In fact, "I'm certain we would run the ad again."

So is Royal Publishing the one who truly has a problem with the ad?

Garcia tried to check this out. He talked with Maroon, Carlson's supervisor at Royal Publishing.

Garcia describes the conversation in a letter he later sent to Royal Duncan, the president of Royal Publishing: "(Maroon) informed me the actual decision to refuse our ad was made not by the school district, but 'the administration of Royal Publishing.' Further, (Maroon) stated that the decision was made due to the controversial nature of gay issues and that Royal Publishing would also not publish ads from 'liquor stores or abortion clinics.'"

BTL followed up with Maroon: "Did you say that Royal Publishing would not publish ads from liquor stores or abortion clinics?"

Maroon confirmed he said that to Garcia.

BTL then asked: "Is an ad that shows five gay athletes the same as an ad for a liquor store or an abortion clinic?"

"You know what," Maroon said, "I'm going to end the conversation now."

Another victim

When Carlson first called Garcia last month to tell him about the large credit on his account, Garcia didn't think twice about it. He assumed perhaps the resource center had overpaid the company in the past.

It turns out the credit was from another ad that the center paid for last year that was rejected.

The same ad that was placed in Kalamazoo's 2010 athletic guide was also supposed to be placed in Plainwell schools' 2010 athletic guide. But it was never placed.

BTL talked with Plainwell's superintendent, Sue Wakefield, about the ad. She seemed genuinely flabbergasted – she'd never heard of or even seen the ad, she said.

Analyzing the evidence

So did Royal Publishing practice homophobic discrimination against a simple, factual ad? Did Royal Publishing not let schools decide for themselves if they wanted the ad? Or did Plainwell and Parchment reject the ad?

Perhaps our suspects hadn't considered running a gay ad before, and didn't know what to do.

John Johnson, the communications director at the Michigan High School Athletic Association, said the MHSAA has never had a problem with Royal Publishing's services. It's used the company for more than 20 years. But Johnson also admits it's never had to deal with an issue like this.

Johnson was careful not to speculate about the ad. But he said the MHSAA will have to figure out what it would do if offered a gay ad in one of its publications, and it will have to make its expectations clear with Royal Publishing.

"It certainly merits discussion," he said. "It

Thousands rally in Lansing for equality

Annual Michigan Pride Festival highlights need for basic protections, rights

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING— Nearly 2000 people from across Michigan rallied at the state Capitol on Saturday in support of LGBT equality.

The crowd arrived at the Capitol after a short march through downtown Lansing led by a Lansing Police suburban with its sirens and lights flashing. It was the first time in Michigan LGBT history that a law enforcement agency authorized its officers to participate in a gay pride event, while in uniform and using departmental vehicles. The Lansing Fire Department also participated, with Engine 42 proudly flying the rainbow flag.

Lansing Mayor Virg Benero — a longtime supporter of LGBT rights — addressed the crowd welcoming them to the city and the Capitol. Afterwards, he said he was unaware that the LPD and LFD had made history.

“It’s terrific. It’s a proud moment,” said Bernero, the 2010 Democratic nominee for governor. “I think what is so interesting about that is that this was not a top down thing. It was organic, it came from the ranks.”

Once at the Capitol, participants listened to music from the Michigan Pride Band and songs from the Lansing Gay Men’s Choir. They also heard speeches about LGBT issues from some of the leading voices fighting for equality in the state.

Judith Kovach, project director for the Michigan Project for Informed Public Policy, took aim at a year that saw several high profile

suicides of LGBT youth. As a psychologist, Kovach said the evidence of the damage bullying does is strong — regardless of what opponents say about bullying and LGBT youth.

“We need a safe Michigan. We need an inclusive Michigan. We need equality in Michigan.”

—Denise Brogan-Kator, interim executive director of Equality Michigan

“They are not entitled to dispose of the science and data,” she said of opponents of anti-bullying legislation. “And the data tells us LGBT students are suffering.”

Denise Brogan-Kator, interim executive director of Equality Michigan, also took aim at lawmakers. She called for passage of amendments to the state’s civil rights law, passage of hate crimes legislation and a fully enumerated anti-bullying bill. Senators moved legislation which she called “toothless” earlier this year, while leaving anti-bullying legislation introduced by Sen. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, untouched, and unheard in the



Michigan Pride festival's march to the Capitol. BTL Photo: Todd Heywood.

Senate Judiciary Committee.

“It is shameful that some politicians are willing to trade the safety of our youth for the support of extremist anti-gay groups and voters,” Brogan-Kator said.

“We need a safe Michigan. We need an inclusive Michigan. We need equality in Michigan,” she said. “We need to model the best practices of Illinois and Minnesota, not Mississippi.”

A historic first for Michigan: Public safety supports pride

Lansing Police and Fire Depts. march in Michigan Pride parade

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING— For the first time in Michigan LGBT history, members of a local law enforcement department participated in a gay pride march and parade while dressed in full uniform.

Lansing Police Department officers and commanders — both gay and straight — used Lansing police vehicles and wore their LPD uniforms to march in Saturday’s Michigan Pride March. The Lansing Fire Department also allowed a fire engine and fire fighting staff to be in the parade as well.

Penny Gardner, president of the Lansing Association for Human Rights, praised the move.

“It informs us that things are changing and that if we come into contact with the law, we will be treated fairly and with justice,” she said. “I think that we have grown up with and we live with the idea that perhaps we are not safe in the hands of the law enforcement department, or the police department in the past.”

Gardner said the move shows how relationships with local policy agencies are so important. She said LAHR has been around for more than 30 years, and during that time it has actively cultivated relationships with police. Last June, Lansing Police announced they were appointing a liaison to the LGBT community as

part of the department’s focus on community policing.

Det. Michelle Bryant of the department was appointed to the position. Bryant is an out lesbian on the Lansing police force. She also marched Saturday.

“It means a lot to me to have a number of my co-workers participate with me in this parade. There are very few ‘out’ people at our department. It’s kind of ironic and funny that we will have more straight people in the pride parade than gay. It’s always good to have allies! I am proud that my co-workers have respect for me and are willing to support me and the LGBT community,” Bryant said. “I have to give a lot

“We’re hopefully sending the message that we are everybody’s police department — including the LGBT community.”

—Lansing Police Department Captain Ray Hall

of credit to Capt. Ray Hall. He has gone out on a limb to support this effort. He is a progressive thinker. His influence and support is what has enabled the LPD to progress to where we are today. Without his support, the LPD would not have created a liaison officer position. He was able to sell the idea to the chief.

“This isn’t just a symbolic development, although symbols are important,” said David Holtz, executive director of Progress Michigan. “This involves an important civic event — a community gathering — that will now truly be about all of the community.”

For R. Cole Bouck, an administrative assistant in the Michigan Department of Corrections administrative offices and president of the year-old Michigan Gay Officers Action League, the move is groundbreaking.

“Seeing these Departments in the parade says two things: The Departments recognize



Lansing Police and Fire departments made history this year by marching in the parade for the first time. BTL photo: Todd Heywood.

LGBT persons as full citizens in the community, and want them to know that LGBT persons can count on the departments to serve them well; and that you can be LGBT and work in these professions — you are not excluded from serving as an officer just for being LGBT. And you can be open about it!” Bouck wrote in an email. “It also sends the very important message about the importance of allies; because they are so many, and they are so important, and we couldn’t do this without them.”

See LPD, page 8

MDOC: Officer not allowed to wear uniform while participating in Michigan Pride March

BY BTL STAFF

For the first time, Lansing Police and Fire departments participated in the last weekend's Michigan Pride parade. Officers marched in full uniform and the fire truck flew a rainbow flag.

But not all of the officers who wanted to fully participate were able to.

The Michigan Department of Corrections told corrections officer James Sims that he was not allowed to wear his uniform in Saturday's gay pride march in Lansing.

Sims, who works at the Cotton Correctional Facility in Jackson, made the request so he could be identified as a corrections officer while participating in the march with members of the newly formed Michigan Gay Officers Action League, also known as MI-GOAL. The group represents LGBT first responders, law enforcement agents and correctional facility officers.

Russ Marlan, spokesman for the department, said the decision was made based on departmental policy. The policy in question reads:

"Employees shall wear uniform items only in the performance of their official duties, during travel directly to and from their work site, and, with supervisory approval, when representing the Department in their official capacity. Employees are prohibited from wearing a uniform item which has a Department insignia while in any establishment which serves alcohol on the premises except

when representing the Department in their official capacity. Employees shall not purchase or consume alcoholic beverages while wearing a uniform item which has a Department insignia unless approved by

an administrative assistant in MDOC's Lansing offices – could result in the color guard marching in a pride march or event in the future.

While MDOC said no to its employees who wanted to wear their uniforms in the gay pride event, the city of Lansing authorized Lansing Police officers and firefighters to participate in the Michigan Pride March Saturday. Both departments also authorized the use of vehicles for the march. Both gay and straight officers from Lansing participated in the march.

In California earlier this month a corrections officer was denied permission to wear his uniform in a pride march, but the department reversed that decision after a public outcry.

"I am disappointed the officer was not permitted to wear his MDOC uniform in the event," Bouck said. "Over the past several years, the Department has received a great deal of well-deserved recognition for its progress on LGBT issues – relative to prisoners and staff. So in terms of further demonstrating that progress, this was an opportunity missed."

"I hope the Department will re-review its uniform policy to further consider such events in the future. I am encouraged that the Department has suggested MI-GOAL consider submitting a formal request next year, for the Department's Honor Guard participate as a group. While that had not occurred to us, we look forward to making that request."

"I am disappointed the officer was not permitted to wear his MDOC uniform in the event. This was an opportunity missed."

–R. Cole Bouck, president of the Michigan Gay Officers Action League

the Director at official functions."

Marlan said that only the department's honor guard is authorized to represent the MDOC in parades. He said it is possible that a request from MI-GOAL – whose president, R. Cole Bouck, works as

► LPD

Continued from p. 8

Bouck came to Lansing in 1982, and while working in the prisons in the 1990s was outed. That experience, he said, was "hell" but made him promise that the treatment he experienced would never be experienced again by MDOC staff.

"I want the message to get out to the Greater Lansing Community. We are everywhere!" Bryant said. "It is not our sexual orientation that should define us. That is only a small part of who we are. There are LGBT lawyers, judges, reporters, restaurant workers, bankers, etc. We are ordinary people. I put my pants on one leg at a time just like the next person. I am a police officer and I happen to be a lesbian. I support the Greater Lansing Community and I would ask for their support in return. As a police officer, or a firefighter, we serve the public. It doesn't matter if you are gay, straight, or in between. I understand that historically, the LGBT community hasn't always felt that they were protected by the police. I hope that by participating in the parade, we are showing our support to the LGBT community. I hope that helps to create a more open, trusting relationship."

Captain Ray Hall of the Lansing Police Department said the participation by his department was important.

"The message is that the LGBT community has our support and we will not allow anyone to harass or intimidate anyone because of the relationship they are in.

"We're hopefully sending the message that we are everybody's police department – including the LGBT community."

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Creep of the Week

Tracy Morgan

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Imagine you paid money to see some stand up comedy and the comedian was totally hilarious. He had this amazing bit about homosexuality where he said that gays are pussies for whining about bullying and that "Born This Way" was bullshit because kids learn to be gay from the media. What a crack up!



Tracy Morgan

But it gets better. He went on to say that if his son was gay and came home talking all high-pitched and funny he'd stab him to death with a knife! Stop, my sides, am I right? I mean, imagine it: stabbing your son with a knife because he's a fag. LOL!

The comedian then said he didn't fucking care if he pissed gay people off because if they can take a fucking dick up their asses they can take a fucking joke. ROTFLMAO!!!!

Awesome, huh? Man, I wish this guy were my dad.

Honestly, hearing anti-gay bullshit from a stand up comedy stage is really not that shocking. Stand up has a long and rather sordid history of homophobia. I did stand up for years and I can't even tell you how many jokes and bits and asides I heard at the expense of LGBT folks. Some of it was all in good fun. But most of it was not.

The thing that makes the kind of rabidly homophobic comments coming from a stand up comic shocking is that the comic in question isn't some amateur driving his mom's Mercury Sable to do a 20 minute set in Dayton, Ohio for \$25 in pizza coupons. This was Tracy "30 Rock" Morgan. Which leaves me asking, "What in the hell was he thinking?"

Did he really mean it? Does he really feel so hateful toward gay people? Only Morgan knows for sure. But even if he was just speaking his true feelings from his heart, what for? I mean, he's a national comedian doing stand up comedy which means that not only are his words very, very public but they're also supposed to be funny. Saying you're going to stab your son to death if he's gay is certainly not funny. But it certainly is something that's going to get repeated.

And, yeah, he pissed off gay people. And some people who aren't gay, too. "Stand up comics may have the right to 'work out' their material in its ugliest and rawest form in front of an audience, but the violent imagery of Tracy's rant was disturbing to me at a time when homophobic hate crimes continue to be a life-threatening issue for the GLBT community," said Tina Fey, "30 Rock" executive producer and co-star. Even Chris Rock, who initially tweeted support for Morgan's right to free speech, was disgusted when he learned what was said. "Wow I get it that shit wasn't called for and I don't support it at all," Rock said.

Jordan has issued an apology. Several, in fact.

"I'm sorry for what I said. I didn't mean it. I never want to use my comedy to hurt anyone," he said in part. "Parents should support and love their kids no matter what. Gay people deserve the same right to be happy in this country as everyone else. Our laws should support that. I hope that my fans gay, straight, whatever, forgive and I hope my family forgives me for this."

"I hope for his sake that Tracy's apology will be accepted as sincere by his gay and lesbian coworkers at '30 Rock,' without whom Tracy would not have lines to say, clothes to wear, sets to stand on, scene partners to act with, or a printed-out paycheck from accounting to put in his pocket," said Fey.

Not everyone is buying his apology. Unicorn Booty, the blog that broke the story, criticized Morgan for his "not-good-enough apology that he was shamed into making."

Is the apology good enough? I don't know. I mean, it all sounds nice. It's the exact right thing to say, I suppose. But it's kind of hard to buy it considering what he's apologizing for saying. Yes, he has a right to say what he wants, but others have the right to give him hell for it. No joke.

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BTL Editorial

Homophobia must be called out

Homophobia is homophobia, and it must be called out. Whether it's shouted from a stage or in a business' silent refusal to deal with a gay customer, homophobia is completely unacceptable.

You'll see two examples of calling out in this week's issue. In "Creep of the Week," you'll read about the much-publicized Tracy Morgan, the comedian who viciously attacked homosexuality in a stand up routine. He's been called out on it by fellow cast members, comedians and national organizations. He's issued several apologies, saying his bit about stabbing his son if he were gay was supposed to be funny, and wasn't supposed to hurt anyone.

You'll also read about a publishing company who refused to print an ad from the Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center. The publishing company was completely comfortable sounding off its homophobic beliefs with the customer. Then the company decided that silence was the best way to deal with inquisitive press. And then finally, the company relented, offered an apology and decided to run the ad.

Loud or quiet, big acts or small, homophobia is homophobia and it must be stopped.

The good news here is that homophobia is no longer an acceptable part of the status quo: when it goes public, it looks really bad. Tracy Morgan was just trying to make a bunch of people in a room laugh; he had no idea he would turn into a national disgrace. The aforementioned publishing company was just trying to ignore a customer with a pro-gay message; it had no idea it would receive negative attention for doing it.

If you need proof that things are changing for LGBTs, look no further than this very issue of the newspaper. It's not that homophobia doesn't exist anymore – obviously, it does – but it is no longer widely acceptable.

But it used to be widely acceptable. As our ever-clever writer, D'Anne Witkowski, points out in "Creep," comedians have joked about LGBTs for years. They've also poked fun at women, minorities and religion.

What's changing is this: Those comedians

know that they have to make those jokes carefully, that reception depends on the audience and what the comedian looks like too. Now, with the gays, it's no different. Tracy Jordon would never, ever threaten to kill a Chinese person or a Catholic. And now he knows that threatening to kill gays is unacceptable too. (Side note: Since when is joking about stabbing someone ever funny, really? Seems like Morgan needs to do some more brainstorming.)

Homophobia is no longer an acceptable part of the status quo: when it goes public, it looks really bad.

Homophobia used to be widely acceptable in business practices as well. The publishers of this very paper initially found it difficult to even find a printer who would physically print and assemble BTL.

It also is worth noting that the publishers in our feature story this week that refused to print the pro-gay ad did so covertly. When pressed by the press, it wasn't something they exactly wanted to own up to. You wouldn't believe the amount of rigamarole we had to hear when investigating the story. So on some level, the company knew what it was doing was not OK. It just thought it could get away with it. Probably just like Tracy Morgan.

But Morgan didn't get away with it, and neither did the publishing company. And that's because we officially live in an era when publicly, openly, loudly discriminating against our community is not OK. It's not socially acceptable anymore – except between members of the extreme right.

For us, this means that we should be glad that homophobia is something to hide. But it still happens, and we should still be vigilant. And when it happens to us, we are obligated – to ourselves, to our community and to our children – to call it out.



BTL Viewpoint

BY ABBY DEES

Why Prop 8 matters to everyone, not just Californians

Though many states have endured ugly voter initiatives to take away LGBT marriage rights, none has captured attention quite like California's Proposition 8. One reason is that California is in the unique position of having actually allowed people to marry (twice, if you count San Francisco in 2004) and then yanking marriage out from under us. There are currently thousands of same-sex married couples in California (including my partner and me), yet no more LGBT weddings are on the immediate horizon. We are in a peculiar limbo.

This bizarre division of marriage rights might be our ticket to equality if and when LGBT marriage gets to the U.S. Supreme Court, but I'll get back to that.

Another reason all eyes are on California, and not, say, Maine, which suffered a huge marriage loss at the polls, is that Prop 8 is now in the federal courts.

For those of you who are rusty on the whole states vs. feds thing, here's a refresher: When your state does something wacky, like vote away people's rights, you generally take it up in your state courts, under your state's constitution. Because the feds don't step into what they view essentially as a state squabble, the buck stops at the state Supreme Court, which is what happened to Prop 8 at first.

In a moment of astonishing wussiness, the California Supremes upheld Prop 8, tiptoeing quietly away from their inspiring ruling a year before that allowed people like me to marry. That seemed to be that for marriage in California.

Here's where things get interesting. The next day, two unlikely attorneys – Ted Olson and David Boies, who represented Bush and Gore, respectively, in Bush v. Gore – filed suit in federal court under the U.S. Constitution on behalf of two unmarried LGBT couples.

For years, the agreed-upon strategy by national LGBT organizations was to fight everything out at the state level first before moving into the high stakes conservative federal arena. But the state-by-state approach seems lately to have failed, as LGBT rights are being steadily voted away.

The federal court move was out of the blue. The usual LGBT advocates, such as Lambda Legal, were curiously mute about the whole thing – normally my email overflows with the latest picayune dispatches from the front lines. I can only imagine the arguing and anxious phone calls behind the scenes as two private attorneys without any obvious LGBT bona fides grabbed Prop 8 and ran with it, the end goal clearly being the U.S. Supreme Court.

As a community, we don't all agree on the Supreme Court strategy. It's like playing all your chips at once. Once the Court decides on same-sex marriage, the game is over for another generation at least. This conservative Court looks like bad odds to many.

On schedule, Prop 8 has been appealed to the

9th Circuit Court of Appeals, one level below the U.S. Supreme Court. Right now we are in what law professor Nan Hunter calls "a slugfest on gay marriage," as legal technicalities rise to the level of make-it-or-break-it issues. The most recent, and perhaps silliest, is Yes on 8's challenge to the original ruling based on Judge Walker's apparent homosexuality – they claim he should have recused himself. That hearing is set for June 13 and a ruling will likely be issued by the time you read this.

The biggest issue to be decided, however,

This messiness may give California, and the rest of the country, just the edge we need.

is who should have the right to represent Prop 8, which is California law now. Because the governor and attorney general have refused to defend the measure, the only ones left are the groups like Yes on 8 that put it on the ballot, and it's quite possible that they don't have legal standing to represent California's voters. The 9th Circuit has punted this one over to the California Supreme Court to answer. (Same-sex marriage does have a certain hot potato quality.)

If those Prop 8 groups don't have standing, then the case dies where it lies. Same sex marriage will be allowed again in California (good), but there will be no push to the Supreme Court. If the groups have standing, the 9th Circuit hears the case – the highest court to consider the issue. They could decide on marriage rights not only for California, but for 10 other states and territories.

Whatever happens at the 9th Circuit, the case will almost certainly be appealed to the Supreme Court. Our chances there weigh heavily on whether the case stays specific to California or becomes a larger question about same-sex marriage generally. Because California did have real, honest-to-God same-sex marriages, the implications of denying people a right that they once held in their hands are especially profound. Furthermore, all those existing same-sex marriages point out the folly of Prop 8 daily. The law doesn't like lots of mismatched rights among otherwise similar people. This messiness may give California, and the rest of the country, just the edge we need.

Abby Dees is a Los Angeles based civil rights attorney, editor and author. She has also been involved in lesbian, gay and bisexual rights and awareness work for 25 years. She's the author of *Queer Questions, Straight Talk*. To learn more, visit queerquestionsstraighttalk.com



Parting Glances Then and Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Do not fold, mutilate or staple insertee

I had a marvelous time at Hart Plaza during Motor City Pride 2011, in spite of unrelenting 90+ heat, blazing sun, cascading perspiration, non-stop rainbow reveling. (No phone numbers. No requests for autographs. No midnight fountain frivolity.)

I did come across this modest petition. Feel free to copy same. Circulate where appropriate.

"We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the Michigan House of Representatives and Senate to confer Honorary Second Class Citizenship on [insert name], who tirelessly works to deny civil rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgendered persons, regardless of LGBT nationality, race, age, education, Bridge, golf, block club, softball, or bowling league affiliation.

"We, the undersigned, further deem it fit that [insertee] shall be given opportunity to experience – with the mixed blessing of Democrats and Rebublicans – denials in housing, military service, employment, marriage, adoption, school safety, the afterlife – but only if such out-of-body status is conferred in violation of the State Constitution.

"[Insertee] shall merit Honorary Second Class Citizenship by his/her affiliation with one or more of these special interest agendas: American Family Association, Focus on the Family, The 700 Club, Ku Klux Klan, Cosa Nostra, Mormon Polygamists for Family Values, Corpus Christi Altar Boys Good Times Consortium.

"SUBSET 1: Should affiliation be covert due to clandestine theocratic oath-taking, promise of generous tax rebates, threat of hellfire damnation, or exposure of past celibate toilet training – candidate shall be deemed eligible by notarized statement of a victim that said candidate, in the course of his/her misguided life's mission, caused said LGBT person to be hated, mugged, prayed over (under/for/in the missionary position), maligned publicly, privately, or from a bully pulpit.

"Such maligning includes accusing an LGBT person of undermining the sanctity of heterosexual marriage (with attendant privileges of spousal abuse, separation, divorce, annulment, alimony, lifetime privileges of child-support neglect), and blaming him/her for the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, the 1929 Stock Market Crash, the mythic popularity of Judy Garland, Barbra Streisand, Madonna, Lady Gaga, recent international scandals occasioned by priests so-called abusing pre- and post-pubescent acolytes; politicians with weiner email or hotel maid solicitation Frenching agendas.

"Eligibility for candidate second-class status may include IQ scores (lower mid-70s), three-syllable word association skills, blood pressure readings (140/250 normative), erratic EKG readouts (arrhythmias, with occasional but unconvincing stoppages – none of such lasting duration to benefit society, the trickle-down economy, gas prices, or prevent Rebiblican recall petitions.)

"SUBSET 2: Candidates often exhibit these exotic traits: cerebral ice-over, skyward tweakings, zombie-like fixations, tremulous teeth chattering, holier-than-thou nit picking, beet-red blushing when sniffing out the joy of abstemious sex or its aromatic lack thereof (frequently in a front or back row phew, er, pew of their choice).

"Candidates employ clone-speak coupled with chapter-verse sonar echoing: Spare the rod, spoil the child; Love the sinner, hate the sin; Have a bless'd day; Burn, sinner, burn; Once saved, always saved; God loves a cheerful giver; Read my lips – One Nation, One Faith, One God in 501.C Three Persons.

"SUBSET 3: Second class status shall be conferred with yearly review. If married, that privilege shall be revoked, so that candidate may be denied spousal benefits, including hospital visitation rights, 1040 tax loophole advantages, weekly diaper deliveries, family reunion hand-holding sessions, Kmart wedding gift registry, joint bank account penalties with reoccurring ATM credit card snafus.

"FORM ADD-ON: It is modestly suggested that, in full accord with State bipartisan recognition, [insertee] shall have his/her mug shot prominently displayed in post offices, courtrooms, airports, popular, quickee truck stops, pages of Christianity Today, Lansing State Journal, Congressional Record, Casket & Sunny Side, the Police Gazette."

And – let's hear an amen! – BTL's "Creep of the Week."

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What do you think of Tracy Morgan's anti-gay tirade?

SAD. I just don't get it!
-Papi J Royce Peterson

Tina Fey seriously needs to think about some cast changes to her show. I may quit watching after this.
-Billy Barrett

Pathetic but not surprising. Some people find him funny but he seems to be a very disturbed person.
-Cindi Brody

I won't ever watch 30 Rock again. I'm going to email NBC. We all should, to let them know of my boycott.
-Brian McNitt

I will not watch 30 Rock until he is off the cast. This is a gross use of fame.
-Holly Weasel

Comments may be edited for grammar and length.

 **Join the conversation ...**
Search: "Between The Lines Newspaper"

Sex scandals, 2012 presidential race



Anthony Weiner

"I think that the appropriate liberal response to such things as the Anthony Weiner 'scandal' ... is a shrug: 'So they're human - big deal.' When someone is hypocritical, we should decry that hypocrisy (and that hypocrisy is my only criticism when it comes to the Republican sex 'scandals'). But otherwise, I think it is incumbent upon us to speak truth in a world that doesn't really care so much about truth as it does about creating a sensation ... I hope that in time everyone can be more like gay men: accepting of sex, indulgent of indiscretion, and aware that the previous two traits are at once integral to who we are and completely unrelated to the other things we seek to accomplish during this brief sojourn we call life."

-wecandoit7, in his blog titled "A Gay Man's Perspective on Anthony Weiner," about the New York Congressman's online sexual exchanges with young women, dailykos.com, June 8.



Mitt Romney

"What happened was that the gay community changed their perspective as to what they wanted. When I ran for governor, one of the big issues was marriage, gay marriage. My opponent said she'd sign a bill in favor of gay marriage. I said I would not, that I oppose same-sex marriage. At the same time, I would advance the - the, if you will, the efforts not to discriminate against people who are gay."

-Mitt Romney, Republican presidential candidate, in an interview, when asked which gay rights he supports, thinkprogress.org, June 8.



Rick Santorum

"I support a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. I think that marriage should be consistent thing across the country. Marriage is the union of one man and one woman. It's essential for the family. It's essential for the stability of our culture, to make sure that children are given the best hope, which is a mom and a dad. And if we lower our sights for those children, we're robbing children of - many children - of the potential of having a mom and a dad by changing the standard of what society believes in. I think it's important from the standpoint of religious liberty and standpoint of what our children are going to be taught in school."

-Rick Santorum, Republican presidential candidate, in an interview, when asked if, as president, he would push for a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, realclearpolitics.com, June 8.



James Darby and Patrick Bova

"Never thought it was going to happen. We've been dating for 47 years; it's finally going to be legitimate!"

-James Darby, 79, and Patrick Bova, 73, partners for 47 years, after their civil union ceremony with 31 other couples in Millennium Park on June 2 in Chicago, depauliaonline.com, June 5. Civil unions or their equivalent are now legal in Illinois, California, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon and Washington and the District of Columbia.

► **Gay Athletes**
Continued from p. 6

really does. Because you are talking about all students. And society has changed.”

Johnson wondered aloud if perhaps Royal Publishing or the schools weren't ready to think about homophobia in sports, and maybe found themselves in a “clumsy situation.”

A surprise ending

It's never a mystery without a twist. On Friday afternoon, Royal Publishing emailed Garcia, and cc'd BTL.

“Due to an internal processing mistake, we errantly cancelled your organization's advertisements that were to be placed in the fall and winter sports programs of Parchment High School. We apologize for the error, and we are pleased to inform you that your advertisements will be included in those publications.”

“(As a student), I didn't have one single example of a pro-gay athlete, and it would have meant the world to me.”

—Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center Director David Garcia

“We would like to make it clear that we have not communicated with Parchment High School about your advertisement, and Parchment High School did not ask us to cancel your advertisement.”

The letter came from Tanya Hollingsworth, Maroon's supervisor.

This letter was sent to Garcia after he and BTL separately contacted Royal Publishing's president, Maroon and Carlson. This letter was sent after BTL contacted Plainwell, Parchment and Kalamazoo school districts.

Garcia's not sure how he feels about this. It's a victory, sure, but what does it mean for future ads?

“Are they just trying to appease us with one more school? Will we be asked for other ads for other schools in the area?” he wondered.

“Maybe we can use this as a little bit of an olive branch, and keep going.”

Garcia responded to Hollingsworth's email and asked about last year's Plainwell ad that he was reimbursed for. He also wrote, “Systematic homophobia within institutions is unacceptable and while we appreciate that individuals may not themselves be homophobic, we are particularly interested in equal opportunity and expression from the systems of power that are in place – whether they be religious institutions, corporations, or government.”

Will Royal Publishing respond? Who knows?

For now, the only thing Garcia can be sure about is this: Kalamazoo Loy Norrix's GSA will have one heck of an end-of-the-year party. He signed the resource center's refund check from Royal Publishing, for \$265, over to the GSA on Thursday.

Holland to vote on protecting LGBTs
Local opinion split on anti-discrimination vote in conservative city

BY JEREMY MARTIN

HOLLAND— On Wednesday the Holland City Council will make a historic decision, one that could potentially alter the practices and thinking of all who reside within the city's borders.

The council will meet to decide whether or not to include the terms “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” in the city's code of ordinances, thereby extending civil rights coverage to Holland's LGBT community in matters of housing and hiring. Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, passed 35 years ago, does not declare LGBT discrimination illegal.

“We're being watched all over the state. They're saying ‘If Holland can do it, we can do it,’” said Don Bergman, a co-founder and board member of Holland's PFLAG, noting the conservative-leaning town of 33,000 on Michigan's west side.

Bergman, who plans to attend the Wednesday evening council session, said that public opinion of the amendment is currently

split nearly 50-50.

The meeting, taking place at 7 p.m. in the first floor council chambers of Holland's City Hall, comes on the heels of last week's “study session” that saw a wide swath of Holland's citizenry speak for and against the proposed amendment.

Some, such as Reverend Bernie Timmerman of Holland's Zion Chapel, feel an amendment of this nature will lead to “moral chaos.”

Despite outspoken opposition by groups both religious and otherwise, Bergman believes that Wednesday's vote could go in either direction.

“It's really going to be close; we really have no idea how it's going to go. Some people on the council make their views known and some don't,” Bergman said.

Messages left with council members were not immediately returned.

A majority yes vote from the eight member council would mean that the city attorney's office, along with the Holland Human Rights Commission, would begin drafting an amendment

“We're being watched all over the state. They're saying, ‘If Holland can do it, we can do it.’”

—Don Bergman, co-founder of Holland's PFLAG

to chapter fourteen of the city code of ordinances. Twenty cities in Michigan, including Kalamazoo and Ann Arbor, currently include the LGBT community in their housing and hiring ordinances.

For more information on the city council or to view the current codes, visit www.cityofholland.com.

30 Years of HIV/AIDS: The war still continues

BY RUCHI NARESH



Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sibelius

June marks the 30th year of the discovery of the still-incurable HIV/AIDS. Worldwide, the disease has claimed 30 million lives. On a June 6 conference call, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius addressed the progress being made in partnership with the

Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resources and Services Administration and the Center for Medicaid and State Operations.

Sebelius said HIV infections in the U.S. have decreased from 130,000 a year in the 1980s to 56,000 a year in the 1990s. She also said that

there are now more than 30 licensed drugs that are available in developed countries, and more people get tested for HIV.

But there's much more work to do. Dr. Thomas Frieden, the director of the CDC, said 1.1 million Americans are infected with the virus and too many are unaware of it.

Last July President Barack Obama launched a National HIV/AIDS Strategy. The strategy will help channel resources to the communities most in need with six government agencies taking the lead.

The HRSA started the Ryan White Program in 1990 in order to help those with the disease who do not have insurance. The \$2.3 billion program has been instrumental in funding treatments and other services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Today the program is available in every state and supports almost 1,300 sites. The grant includes the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, also known as ADAP. Mary Wakefield from the HRSA announced an additional \$50 million

funds for ADAP for the 2011 fiscal year. The CDC has also increased its domestic budget by \$31 million to re-work its overall portfolio. The CDC is working with Obama's National HIV/AIDS strategy on two initiatives: to expand HIV testing and care for people living with the disease, especially for men who have sex with men, which Frieden noted is the only group showing a steady increase in infection rates.

Frieden said the other initiative will encourage those who have HIV to decrease their risk of spreading the disease by taking medication consistently.

The conference call also addressed the important role of Medicaid. Beginning October 2011, Obama's Affordable Care Act will pay for certain community based services as well as other ones. The second option to the Care Act has already been in effect since January, providing care coordination for terminally ill patients including HIV individuals.

News NATIONAL

by Rex Wockner

U.S. gov't expresses support for gay student groups

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan said June 7 that the government supports formation of Gay-Straight Alliances in schools, according to a report from The Trevor Project.

He made the statement at the Federal LGBT Youth Summit, the organization said.

“Even though the formation of Gay-Straight Alliances has been protected under the federal Equal Access Act since 1984, youth in many communities across the country have been barred by their school districts from forming these supportive safe spaces,”

said Trevor CEO David McFarland. “Today Secretary Duncan has taken a stand to ensure that youth in public schools no longer have to go to court to start a GSA in their school.”

The Trevor Project is a national organization that provides crisis intervention and suicide-prevention services to LGBTQ youth.

HRC calls for action against LGBT violence in Puerto Rico

The Human Rights Campaign on June 8 urged federal and local officials and law-

enforcement authorities to strengthen efforts to address violence against LGBT people in Puerto Rico.

HRC cited reports that three LGBT Puerto Ricans were found dead in recent days and that 18 LGBT Puerto Ricans have been murdered in the past 18 months.

Ramón Salgado was found dead along a highway in Humacao, transwoman Karlota Gómez Sánchez was found shot to death at an intersection in Santurce, and Alejandro Torres Torres was found stabbed to death in Ponce, activist groups said.

“Puerto Rican government officials and

See National Briefs, page 14

Croatian gay pride parade attacked

The gay pride parade in Split, Croatia, was attacked June 11.

Activists said thousands of opponents hurled rocks, bottles, firecrackers, flares, tear gas, eggs, tomatoes, glass, bricks, shoes, paint, cigarette lighters and flowerpots at the 200 marchers.

They reportedly shouted, "Kill the gays."

Up to a dozen people were injured, including some reporters.

Hundreds of police officers arrested at least 135 people and escorted the marchers away from the conflict.

Organizers faulted the authorities for failing to protect LGBT marchers' right to freedom of assembly.

"None of it would have happened if they cleared the route properly," said one participant.

Gaga appears at Euro Pride

Lady Gaga addressed the Euro Pride rally in Rome June 11 and sang a down-tempo version of "Born This Way" accompanied only by her piano playing.

"It has become clear to me that my greater mission is to be part of the joyous mobilization of the LGBT community worldwide," she said in her address to the throngs at Circus Maximus park in the city center. "Today and every day we fight for freedom, we fight for justice, we beckon

for compassion, understanding and, above all, we want full equality now!"

"The stories of all my beautiful fans, the young soldiers, the homeless LGBT youth, anti-gay violence, the effect that the denial of gay marriage has on real families worldwide: These are the stories that must be told to the world," Gaga said. "These are the stories that will change the world. These are the stories that speak out in the defense of love. We are here today because we are not less valuable. We are here to proclaim our strength, our steadfastness and our intelligence. We will not be treated as anything less than human."

"I have spoken out all over the world,

"We fight for freedom, we fight for justice, we beckon for compassion, understanding and, above all, we want full equality now!"

—Lady Gaga

repeatedly and viciously, about these issues," she said. "I'm often questioned, 'Why so much gayspeak?' I am often questioned: 'How gay are you, Lady Gaga? Why is this question, why is this issue so important?' My answer is: I am a child of diversity, I am one with my generation, I feel a moral obligation as a woman, or a man, to exercise my revolutionary potential and make the world a better place. And, on a gay scale of 1 to 10, I'm a Judy Garland fucking 42."

"Let us give birth to a new and international ideology. Let us come together and synthesize our histories into today. Let us be revolutionaries of love and use our human powers, our very strong human powers, to save lives and encourage unity around the world."

Prior to the rally, some 400,000 people took part in the Euro Pride parade.

The event moves to a different European city yearly.

In Greece, meanwhile, some 10,000 people marched in the seventh Athens gay pride parade June 4. The turnout doubled last year's numbers.

Australians accept marriage equality

A national poll has found that 75 percent of Australians believe legalization of same-sex marriage is inevitable.

Marriage-equality advocates responded by calling on political leaders to act immediately.

"The tide of history is running towards equality and nothing can turn it back," said Alex Greenwich, national convener of the group Australian Marriage Equality. "Our plea to the nation's leaders is to get on with this reform instead of unnecessarily prolonging a debate."

National polls show about 60 percent support for amending the Marriage Act to allow same-sex marriage.

The new poll, conducted May 27-29 by Galaxy Research and commissioned by Australian Marriage Equality and by Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, found that 80 percent of women, 79 percent of people under age 50, 78 percent of people with young children, 71 percent of men and 68 percent of people over age 50 see legalization of same-sex marriage as inevitable.

The question asked was, "Do you believe it is inevitable that eventually the law will change in Australia to allow same-sex couples to marry?"

"Australia is ready for equality for our gay and lesbian children, so it's time for political leaders to act," said Shelley Argent, PFLAG's national spokeswoman.

Argent has launched a national TV ad campaign where she is seen decorating her son's wedding cake while expressing concern "we may never get to eat it."

"I'm ready, and so is the cake," she says. "Please, Julia ... give my son the choices and rights to emotional security and instant respect that comes from marriage."

Julia Gillard is the Australian prime minister. The ad is online at tinyurl.com/4397qys.

Galaxy Research questioned 1,052 Australians over age 18. Afterward, the data was weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the makeup of the country.

Transsexual takes seat in Madrid Assembly

Actress Carla Antonelli took her seat in the Madrid Assembly June 7, becoming the highest-ranking openly trans elected official in Spanish history.

"It's very exciting to be here, to see the room and be seated on the bench," Antonelli said.

Spain's State Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Transsexuals and Bisexuals said, "(We) hope that this appointment will serve as an example and is supported by companies so they get used to transsexual reality and permit transsexual people to compete for jobs on equal terms with everyone

else, without their gender identity being a factor."

Antonelli ran as a party-list candidate for the Madrid Socialist Party-Spanish Socialist Workers' Party.

Public opposition to Moscow Pride drops

A new poll has found that 61 percent of Russians agree with the Moscow city government's annual ban on the gay pride parade, down from 82 percent support for the ban a year ago.

The poll also found that 53 percent of Russians have heard about the efforts to stage the parade, up from 33 percent in a similar poll at the end of April.

The FOM poll, conducted nationwide June 4-5, found that 9 percent of Russians oppose the pride ban and 30 percent don't have an opinion on the matter.

"These results ... show that over the last years, 30 of us managed to make our voices heard by 75 million in a country which is well-known for its lack of free media," said activist Nikolai Alekseev.

Undeterred by an April ruling from the European Court of Human Rights that banning Moscow Pride is illegal, the city blocked the May 28 gay parade for the sixth time this year.

Activists responded by trying to rally near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and City Hall. They were violently arrested.

The Euro Court declared that banning pride violates the European Convention on Human Rights in the areas of freedom of assembly and association, the right to an effective remedy and prohibition of discrimination.

Samoa may decriminalize gays

Samoa's Law Reform Commission has told the government to legalize male-male sex and cross-dressing.

Current law bans gay sex and men's wearing women's clothes.

The government is likely to express support for the moves this month, after which repeal measures could be included in a bill updating criminal law.

► National Briefs

Continued from p. 13

law enforcement, as well as the U.S. Department of Justice, must ensure that LGBT people have the protection they need to survive," said HRC President Joe Solmonese.

According to HRC, in 2010 the Justice Department's Community Relations Service entered into an agreement with the Puerto Rico Civil Rights Commission, the Puerto Rico Police Department and the University College of Criminal Justice to develop and implement hate-crime training and civil-rights curriculum for the Puerto Rico Police Academy and the Puerto Rico Police Department.

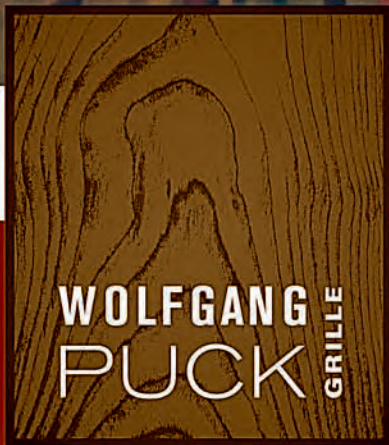
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'Beginners' actor on new film, the gay history lesson he got and getting naked again

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Ewan McGregor didn't mean to offend you. As the debonair actor sits down in Los Angeles to talk up his latest film "Beginners," he's genuinely upset if his last "gay" movie, "I Love You Phillip Morris," was insultingly stereotypical to the queer kind.

"Yeah," he says, pondering with a curious puppy-dog look (similar to the one that his adorable pet terrier, Arthur, offers in "Beginners"), "that's disappointing. I never felt they were making cheap stabs. That was his life."

And when you say that with as much innocent charm as McGregor, his dreamy blue eyes leave you no choice but to let that one slide (the Scottish accent helps, too). The 40-year-old's latest feature, the offbeat comedy-drama "Beginners" opening June 17 at the Main Art Theatre in Royal Oak, is a sophisticated look at gay life, as the film's father figure, Hal (Christopher Plummer), lives openly after almost a half-century in the closet. Now 75, and widowed after losing his wife, he's free as can be, and his son, Oliver (McGregor), has to make sense of it all — who's his dad now? Who was he then? And he only has so much time. Hal is dying.

"I thought the two opposing things were really interesting — where somebody is really living for the first time, and dying," says McGregor, whose grief-stricken character also falls for an equally-as-love-challenged woman, played by Mélanie Laurent.

"There's of course a lot about love and acceptance," he says. "It's a very moving film. It was a blessing for me to do as an actor, and I could only imagine that it has a very deep affect on you; it seems so real."

Because it actually did happen.

Director/writer Mike Mills based "Beginners," the follow-up to his 2005 debut "Thumbsucker," on his real-life father, who died shortly after coming out.

"What's maybe interesting for gay people about it is that it's an older gay man coming out and really embracing his sexuality and indulging in the gay world," McGregor says. "He really goes for it with this great gusto that he uses to approach his new gay life, which is really inspiring and lovely."

In the film, Mills links Hal's life to pivotal moments in American gay history, like Harvey Milk's assassination, to better explain why coming out then was so taboo.

"I think it must be very difficult for young gay men to imagine what life was like for a young gay man in the '50s," McGregor says. "I learned a lot about it. I don't think I was as aware of how difficult it was to be gay in that time, and how dangerous it was."

"That image of the older man being thrown in the back of that van because he's in a gay bar — it's difficult maybe for a young gay man to comprehend that, so it gives you a deeper understanding of what it might have been like to be gay in those days."

That even McGregor got a gay history lesson might surprise some — he's been playing gay (or some variation of it) for much of his life, since 1996's "The Pillow Book," in which his character was bisexual — and very naked. Two years later, McGregor was made up as an Iggy Pop-ish glam rocker in Todd Haynes' "Velvet Goldmine," making out with Jonathan Rhys Meyers in what's become a beloved moment in queer cinema. And just last year there was "I Love You Phillip Morris," about two cellmates — one played by McGregor, the other Jim Carrey — who fall madly in love.

When "Beginners" reached the actor, it didn't take him long to sign on for the role as the son of a late-blooming homosexual. McGregor met Mills at a Santa Monica cafe, where they didn't even discuss the film. Only his life.

"I just wanted to know more about his story," McGregor says. "That really shows that it's landed in you if you're hungry for all those details. Then, that was it. I was onboard."

McGregor noticed something almost immediately — how Mills refers to his father as if there were two of them. "When he talks about his father, he talks about his straight father and gay father and how wonderful his gay father was and how much more



Ewan McGregor and Christopher Plummer. Photo: Focus Features

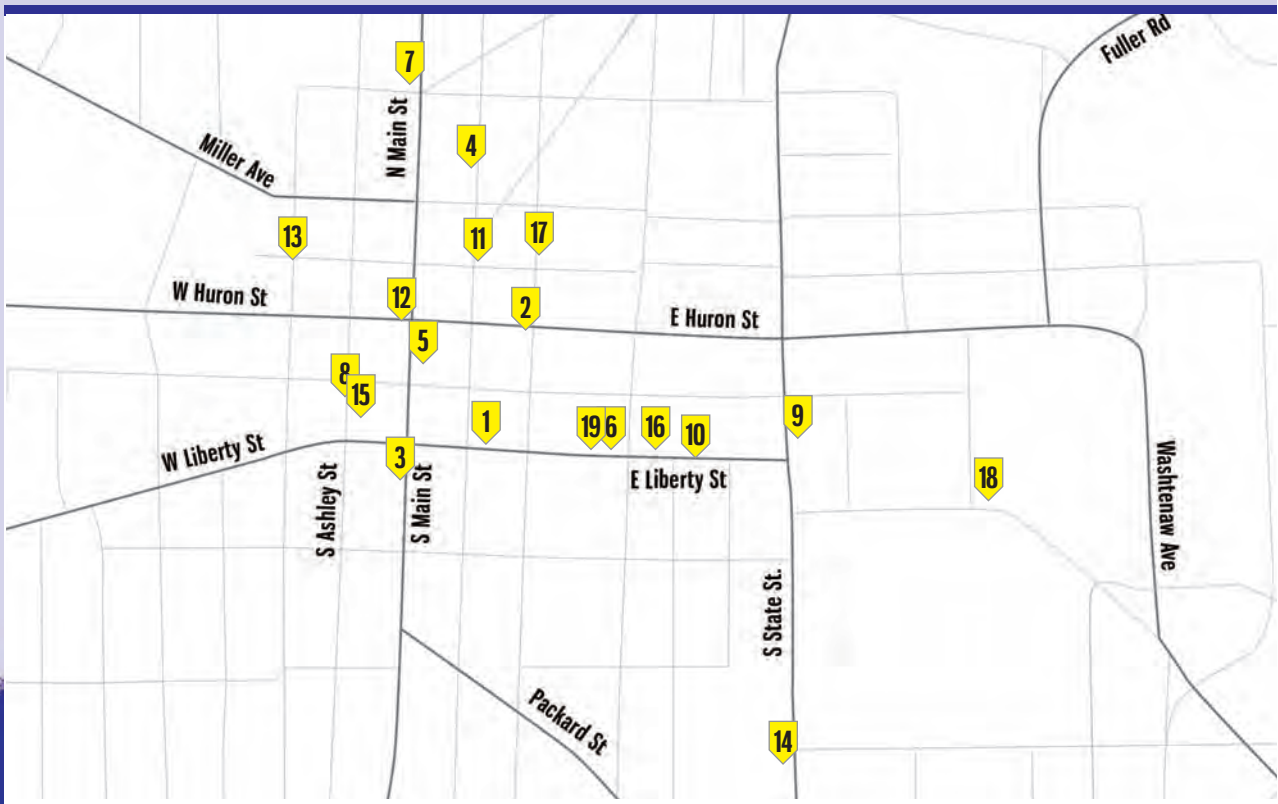
Ewan McGregor: 'I Learned a Lot'

See *Beginners*, page 23

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UMS announces new director

ANN ARBOR – The University Musical Society recently announced that Jim Leija has been named as the new director of education and community engagement. Leija (LAY-ha) has been with UMS since 2008. He currently serves as manager of new media and online initiatives (2010-11) and was previously public relations manager (2008-09).

In announcing Jim Leija's appointment, UMS President Kenneth C. Fischer noted, "During his time at UMS, every facet of our organization has benefited from Jim's leadership, vision and unique ability to connect the community with UMS programs in uncommon and engaging ways. I am confident that Jim Leija will continue to bring fresh insights and new approaches not only to our Education and Community Engagement activities, but to UMS as a whole."

Currently, Leija manages UMS's social media strategies and online community engagement, and over the past two years has served as project manager for the UMS Lobby, a project created through an "Innovation Lab" grant awarded by EmcArts with support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. He has been a popular consultant and peer educator with Ann Arbor's Nonprofit Enterprise at Work (NEW), serving a wide array of clients in the Southeast Michigan nonprofit sector. He brings to this role teaching experience and a background



Jim Leija

in curriculum development in fields as diverse as theater, art, sociology, women's studies and American culture. Leija holds three degrees from the University of Michigan: an MFA in Art & Design, BA in Sociology, and BFA in Musical Theatre.

"As a lifelong artist and arts advocate, I am so thrilled to have this opportunity to do such meaningful work within a community that I love," said Jim Leija. "One of the very special things about UMS is its enthusiastic and devoted network of partners and communities. I look forward to reconnecting with this network, forming new community

relationships and collaborating to create compelling and inspiring experiences. I will ensure UMS programs are as inclusive and accessible as possible, embracing new technologies as helpful conduits to serve us in this pursuit. Together we will evolve and re-imagine UMS Education and Community Engagement programs for a rapidly changing world, and lay a strong foundation for generations to come."

Recognized as an "emerging leader" by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (2009), Leija was also a Community of Scholars Fellow at the U-M Institute for Research on Women and Gender (2006) and has served as a grant review panelist for the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs.

In addition to his life as a performing arts administrator, workshop leader and peer educator, Leija is also a director, filmmaker and performance artist. His works have been seen at Dixon Place in New York City, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, the Performance Studies International Conference, as well as venues in Toronto and Chicago. His non-fiction essay "Dance or Die" was published in the anthology *Queer and Catholic* (Routledge Press, 2008). Jim is a Michigan native, and currently lives in Ann Arbor with his partner Aric Knuth, who is the Director of the New England Literature Program in U-M's Department of English Language & Literature.

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'Glee' brings feel-good fun to Palace

TV show's tour hits several high notes during local stop

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

The girl in me couldn't stop screaming on Monday night. Wait, let me back up. The "girl" was me, and she wrestled her way out when the "Glee" frenzy stormed the Palace of Auburn Hills earlier this week, aligning me with the rest of the show's sold-out crowd – giddy gays, tween girls and sketchy moms eager to hook their daughters up with the musical phenomenon's male cast (one mother's poster: "My daughter dreams of Darren" ... with a pic of breakout star Darren Criss and her much-too-young-for-him offspring).

But you couldn't help but squeal and gush like a schoolgirl when the McKinley High club proved to be as irresistibly campy as they are on TV. And hey, they *really* can sing. But before they did, Jane Lynch made a video cameo in typical Sue Sylvester fashion to remind Gleeeks how much this was about to suck. Hey, Sue, it didn't.

For the next 70-or-so minutes, it was delightfully, well, glee-ful and exactly how you'd imagine a touring show titled "Glee! Live! In Concert!" It! Was! So! Exciting!

After the New Directions "teens" (in real life, they're all in their 20s) turned around one by one during "Don't Stop Believin'," it was a "Glee" episode on steroids (too bad it was as long as one, too), complete with popping pyrotechnics and two stages at either end. There were fake-out slushies made of string confetti that erupted over the audience.

And, of course, a crowd-pleasing setlist that ran through some of the show's biggest numbers in wholesome, family-friendly style.

With the main squeezes in tow, and in character (no Quinn, though), the intro was an uplifting knockout, following up "Don't Stop Believin'" with "Dog Days Are Over" and "Sing." Then each "Glee" kid took the spotlight. Brittany, flanked by flashy dancers in feathery arm wear,



did Britney – who else? – so well on "I'm a Slave 4 U" that she could be Spears' stand-in for the star's July 23 Palace show. During "Firework," it was hard to determine which was bigger – Rachel's voice or the pyro bursts showering over her. Mercedes showcased her big voice, too, on Aretha Franklin's "Ain't No Way." But it was Kurt who gave a distinguished, elegant touch to

"I Want to Hold Your Hand" (and he did, reaching out to audience members). He also launched the spoken-word in "Born This Way," wearing his "Likes Boys" tee, and did a saucy "Single Ladies" dance for the encore. "Happy Days Are Here Again/Get Happy," which he performed with Rachel, was adorably sweet and one of the show's major standouts. Seriously, this kid is the cutest.

Halfway into the concert the Warblers, the

all-boys choir featuring Blaine (Criss), showed up to sing a trio of tunes: "Teenage Dream," "Silly Love Songs" and "Raise Your Glass." The University of Michigan graduate, who improved as the set moved along, worked the stage like a true pro and his charm was infectious.

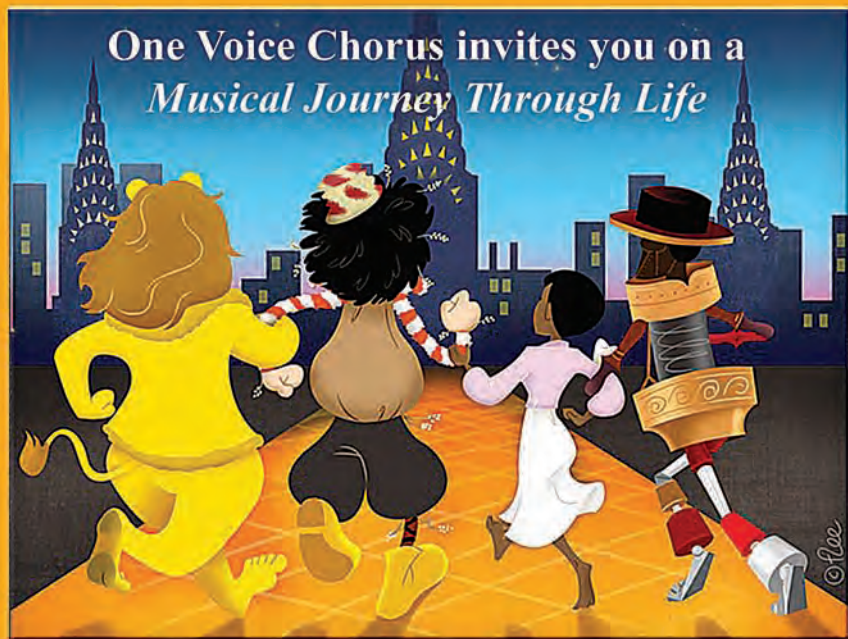
Laughs ensued from silly stage banter, with Brittany getting some performance tips from Mr. Schuester (Matthew Morrison via video) and wondering why she couldn't court Kurt on the last tour.

"This year," she said, "I decided to go for someone I could get."

Out comes Blaine. And then Kurt, who got all diva on her: "Brittany, are you flirting with my boyfriend?"

Nice to see so much gayness at a fairly family-ish event. What was missing, though? A solo showstopper from Rachel, who ditched "Don't Rain on My Parade," a setlist regular. And Madonna. After such an iconic homage to the diva during season one, not one song from the all-Madge episode was included. Sad. This is, after all, her hometown. How epic would it have been to hear "Like a Prayer" live?

But at least there was "Somebody to Love," which ended the show on a high note – and not just the one that came wailing out of Mercedes. Everything from the singing, often better than expected, to how the arena was transformed into one enormous classroom – even Sue Sylvester's video put-downs – had me totally gleeeked out.



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Mike Mills: My Gay Dad

The personal story behind 'Beginners'



Director Mike Mills. Photo: Focus Features

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Mike Mills didn't really know his father until he came out. When the director's dad came swooshing out of the closet at the ripe age of 75, after decades of being married to a woman, not a moment was wasted. He lived freely, wildly and, most of all, gayly. And then he died.

Mills' father lives on, though, through the director's very personal, deeply emotional "Beginners," which casts Christopher Plummer as out-and-proud Hal and Ewan McGregor as his son, Oliver.

When we met up with Mills in Los Angeles, sitting in a Four Seasons suite, the filmmaker spoke candidly about his dad-inspired dramedy – from dressing him in gay apparel to the gay porn they watched together.

How did you manage to portray the gay character, Hal, in such a non-stereotypical way? Did it have something to do with the fact that the character was very real to you?

Yeah – and Christopher didn't think of him as a gay character; he just thought of him as a man in love with another man.

Ewan said the other night, because people were asking him about that since he plays so many gay people, "I don't think of it as a gay character, because how do you play that? What would that be?"

How much of your father is actually in the movie?

A lot, and then also not very much. Christopher and my dad are pretty different. Hal is my semi-autobiographical father who's really a part of my personal life and connection to larger American history like Ginsberg and Milk. The film came to me because my gay dad and I would have these wonderful arguments, just more intense conversations about love. We were talking a lot about why I wasn't married, and I would ask, "You want me to get married and you were just married for 44 years to the wrong person?"

Do you always refer to your dad as two people – the gay one and the straight one?

Yeah, I have a gay dad and a straight dad, and they were pretty different people.

When your dad finally came out, how much did you have to school him in gay culture?

(Laughs) He jumped in real fast. And I think he wanted to have sex with a lot more guys than he had sex with, but he had a wonderful community of friends who really took care of him. I'm a straight guy, but I have a lot of gay friends and I lived in New York for 15 years during the '80s, so there were some things I knew.

That gay pride flag scene

happened to my sister and him. He had a bumper sticker on his car and he goes, "You know, that means gay pride." My sister's like, "Yes, Dad." He was pretty surprised, because he's so used to living in such a codified gay world. It was totally underground, and I remember he had this leather bracelet ring, like an S&M thing, and I was like, "Pop, you do know what that's for, right?" I'm still not sure if he knew. (Laughs)

What did you learn from him about the gay scene?

I think I knew this but it wasn't a part of my life: him being 75 and having crushes on all these younger guys and they were almost never reciprocated. It was really heartbreaking to watch.

He was trying to relive a part of life he was never able to live.

Or, like so many gay and straight men, we like the younger ones – especially in the gay scene, which is pretty ageist.

Elderly gay people are rarely portrayed in film. By having one in your movie, are you making some kind of statement?

I wasn't. I was just talking about my dad. I'm really happy to have the gay history in the movie and to have a gay-positive film, but as a straight guy, I wouldn't feel like I'd have the right to make a gay movie unless I had some access or something to report that was specific. So I love that it's really cool that I have an older gay guy in my movie – it just happens to be my dad, and that's how I got there. That it's even more unseen makes me all the more proud.

But you're gay adjacent.

I feel very gay adjacent. I moved to New York when I was 18. I had so many friends who were gay. So many teachers I admired were gay. All my classes were about heterosexism, so I felt very gay adjacent for a long time.

You mention how the movie makes historical references to gay culture. And to complement the film, there's your book, "Drawings from the Film Beginners," that documents many queer moments in history – including a favorite: the Anita Bryant pieing. Why did you include all these historically gay moments?

I wanted to have some queer history in there. To me, the history of love has to include the history of the gay struggle to be part of our understanding of

love. And I love everything about the Anita Bryant pieing. It's such an amazing American moment.

What do you remember most about your dad being gay? Is that in the movie?

My parents were very frugal, Depression-era kids, so I would upgrade him to, like, the Gap. Then when he came out he's all Club Monaco and French Connection. I remember all his friends a lot. All of a sudden the house was full of all these guys and there was a party every night – movie night, dinner club night, book night.

Did you hang around for those?

To be honest, I loved all my dad's gay friends and they were inclusive, but as the straight son I was a little out of the loop. My dad had such a hunger to talk to and be mirrored by other gay men, and it was amazing to see – and it was slightly non-inclusive, so it didn't always feel like it totally made sense for me to just be hanging out during movie night. (Laughs)

But I saw some movies – I wish I knew what this movie was. It had this crazy sex scene with this guy in a full latex S&M suit with a plug and all that. It was a pretty intense sex scene with this guy in a suit, you know, getting sodomized. And me and my dad and all his friends were watching it and having, like, lemonade. (Laughs)

When Hal came out, Oliver seemed genuinely happy for his dad, and he

processed it so well. Was that how you dealt with it, too?

Yeah. It's not easy to have the person who was married to your mom for 44 years change his identity – and not because he's gay, but just because you're like, "Whoa, what happened? Who were you?" My dad got so much more interesting and engaging and involved.

What were the most important real-life characteristics or moments for Christopher and Ewan to get into the film?

It's the energy, and Christopher had it from the get-go. I never had to tell Christopher anything about being gay. I would tell him lots of stories because he liked them. Everybody likes stories about my dad. But it was never with a goal of imitating or being like him. Christopher had said, "Tell me one of your stories. Let me steep myself in your father." And that was a really good word, because that's what it's like – you get infused with the energy, but he was still his own entity.

The thing that I most wanted them to get was just how much this guy went for it and how brave he was in lots of ways – not just with coming out, but being 75 and having a huge crush on this guy. So just being a 75-year-old guy in love, that's a lot right there. Then overcoming all the fear and self-loathing that he internalized from our culture about his gayness, those are things that were super key.

► Beginners

Continued from p. 17

accessible he was," McGregor says. "It's very interesting to hear him talk about that."

During filming, McGregor didn't try to mimic Mills, and he never felt any pressure to do so. But to get a feel for him, he had Mills record all the dialogue so he could play it back and really get into character.

"It was funny," he says, "because he was quite nervous about doing it. It was rather lovely to hear. He's a very, very open man and a very sensitive man. He's a fucking brilliant director, and I was just able to watch him and soak him up a bit."

He began to understand Mills' complicated situation, and how

a once-married parent coming out could cause so much second-guessing. "It isn't a straight-forward scenario," McGregor says, "and it was nice that we showed that, and that coming to terms of not his father's sexuality, but with what your childhood meant when you find out that your parents have been hiding this from you."

And if McGregor's been hiding anything, it's his notorious frontal bits, which haven't, uh, come out either in quite some time. Will we ever get another "Pillow Book"?

"I certainly haven't made any conscious decision not to (do nude scenes), but it's only ever if it's relevant to the film," he says. "I made a film called 'Perfect Sense' with David Mackenzie, who directed 'Young Adam,' and it's possible it might be in there."

What a relief.

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"Remembrance of Things I Forgot," by Bob Smith. Terrace Books/University of Wisconsin Press, 272 pages, \$26.95 hardcover.

Comic book dealer John Sherkson is a gay man with foiled dreams, liberal ideals and a faltering relationship. Instead of crafting stellar comics for new generations of fanboys, he sells the classics from a Manhattan storefront; the presidency of George W. Bush makes his skin crawl; and, worst of all, his physicist boyfriend of 15 years, Taylor Esgard, has morphed into a hard-core Republican. Breaking up is inevitable – until Taylor reveals that, as head of a top-secret government effort spanning decades, he has invented a time machine. Enter a malevolent-as-ever Dick Cheney, an unexpected trip back in time for John – where his 1986-era self flirts with both him and with a youthful, more progressive Taylor – and an effort by the three to change the course of history by heading off Bush's presidency. Smith juggles the paradoxes of time travel with the agility of a veteran science fiction writer, but this isn't just an SF novel. Part hilarious standup comedy routine, part tender gay romance, part caustic political satire and part emotional family drama, this multi-textured novel transcends the merely entertaining.

"Who I Am," by M.L. Rice. Bold Strokes Books/Soliloquy, 194 pages, \$14.95 paper.

After a childhood of shuttling from one school to another as a military brat, loner Devin Kelly and her widow mother land in Los Angeles for the young girl's senior

Featured Excerpt

Junior smiled as his eyes butterflyed around my arms and chest. It took me a second to figure out I was being cruised by myself, which was the most unsettling compliment I'd ever received. My smile widened slightly, wordlessly signaling that I appreciated the compliment while also reassuring him that I thought he was attractive as well. This was getting weird, but I was relieved that Junior liked me. (Of course, if he disliked me, what could I do? My only recourse would be to stop talking to myself.)

—from "Remembrance of Things I Forgot," by Bob Smith.

year. Beset by low self-esteem – she doesn't even accept that she's a stellar trumpet player – Devin is at first wary of the friendship offered by charismatic Melanie Parker, the most popular girl in the school, a fellow member of the school's marching band and an environmental-activist whirlwind. Complicating their evolving friendship is the menacing presence of Melanie's tuggish bully of a brother, Jason, who quickly pegs Devin as a dyke, even before she's ready to come out to herself, much less to the world. Rice's young adult debut covers the standard teen-angst tropes – troubled family life, school-hall harassment, sexual-orientation confusion, first-romance fumbling and, finally, the hurdling of emotional, physical and even geographic roadblocks to young love – with unforced and easygoing, albeit predictable, storytelling.

ruling the nation, and practiced a benign tolerance toward their black neighbors. Retief weaves his own sexual awakening through the tumultuous years leading to the overthrow of apartheid, marrying the personal and the political with lyrical potency. The title refers to cricket bats – "jacks" – wielded by bully boarding-school prefects, bloody whacks that left the author with searing psychological scars healed in this harrowing, redemptive account.

"The Truth of Yesterday," by Josh Aterovis. P.D. Publishing, Inc., 368 pages, \$22.99 paper.

Young Killian Kendall, the teenage PI who made his debut at 16 in "Bleeding Hearts" (followed by two more books), is now 18, and one busy youngster. He's a college freshman, juggling classes while staking out a case of domestic infidelity for Novak Investigations, where he now works. He's still a virgin, but deeply involved with boyfriend Micah, older by a few years and very patient. He's reluctant to engage with the mystery of his metaphysical Gifts, despite pressure from an equally Gifted aunt. And, hovering over his life is the ghost of his high school friend Seth, materializing at odd times with cautionary but confusing advice. Enter mystery one: Micah's former boyfriend, an escort agency callboy in Washington, D.C., has been murdered, and despite the strain it puts on their relationship, Micah – whose own past as a hustler unsettles Killian – asks the young sleuth to take the case. Enter mystery two: boyhood friend Jack is involved in something skeevey. Aterovis links the two storylines together with a bracing blend of appealing characters and intricate plotting.

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



"The Jack Bank: A Memoir of a South African Childhood," by Glen Retief. St. Martin's Press, 282 pages, \$24.99 hardcover.

For gay readers, the core of South African activist and author Retief's illuminating memoir lies in its universal queer moments: early erotic stirrings, suppressed sexual longing, horrific corporal punishment at a boy's boarding school, the dawning realization by a young white man of his attraction to black men and, ultimately, the author's involvement in the end-of-apartheid social revolution that resulted in LGBT rights. But just as fascinating is Retief's depiction of a society in turbulent evolution. As a youngster, he led a privileged minority within a minority life. His Roman Catholic family, progressive by any South African standard, lived in idyllic Kruger National Park amidst the dominant Afrikaners, then

confirmed Albee's queerness: "He has avoided gay subject matter throughout his career... people wonder if he's gay. Well, I'm here to tell you I picked him up at a party in 1960." The second Pioneer Award went to unquestionably queer Scottish mystery writer Val McDermid, who recalled that lesbians "were mythical, like mermaids," in her small town. Contributing to the night's star power were a bevy of non-literary presenters, including actress Stefanie Powers, former politician Jim McGreevey, Mr. Gay USA (Eddie Rabon) and Miss New York (Claire Buffie). More literarily, the Outstanding

Mid-Career Novelist Prize went to writers Susan Stinson and Alex Sanchez; a Publisher Achievement Award went to the University of Wisconsin Press; David Pratt ("Bob the Book") and Amber Dawn ("Sub Rosa") won in the Gay Fiction and Lesbian Fiction debut novel categories; and Eileen Myles ("Inferno: A Poet's Novel") and Adam Haslett ("Union Atlantic") won in the Gay Fiction and Lesbian Fiction categories. For winners in 22 other categories: lambdaliterary.org.



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Footnotes

Celebrity glamour collided with queer lit May 26 at the 23rd Annual Lambda Literary Awards in Manhattan. One Pioneer Award went to playwright Edward Albee, who caused a stir in 1990 at the LGBT literary conference OutWrite in San Francisco, when in his keynote address he declared that he was not a gay writer, merely a writer who was gay – a sentiment he repeated at the "Lammy" awards ceremony: "I'm a writer who happens to be gay." Fellow playwright Terrence McNally, who presented the award,

Love, religion and the law at the Network

BY DONALD V. CALAMIA

For centuries, science and religion have been at odds with one another. So too have religion and homosexuality. Mix the three together, and the result is "Next Fall," an intelligent and thought-provoking dramedy now playing at Ann Arbor's Performance Network Theatre. Written by first-time playwright Geoffrey Nauffts, "Next Fall" explores the five-year relationship between two gay men: an atheist and a deeply closeted Evangelical Christian. As you might expect, it's not a match made in heaven!

At first glance, most people would give Adam (Andrew Huff) and Luke (Kevin Young) little chance of surviving a single date, let alone a multi-year, live-in relationship. The two meet at a party thanks to the Heimlich Maneuver: Cater-waiter Luke performs it on attendee Adam. What follows is a one-night stand that quickly develops into something more – much to the chagrin of both their friends.

Adam, you see, is a 40-year-old hypochondriac with a sharp wit and even sharper tongue. Unhappy and working below his training and potential at a candle shop, Adam is an Average Joe who seems to have a track record of dooming anything good that comes into his life. That includes Luke, a 20-something hottie who left law school to pursue a career in acting. Although the two encounter the typical ups and downs most new couples experience, the most contentious is religion: Adam doesn't believe in God, and ridicules Luke for his strong and unquestioning faith. And Luke's failure to come out to his family adds to Adam's frustration.

So when Luke is seriously injured in



Andrew Huff and Kevin Young star as lovers in "Next Fall" at Performance Network Theatre.

REVIEW

Next Fall

Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Thursday-Sunday through July 3. \$22-\$41. 734-663-0681. www.performancenetwork.org

and willingly having sex with – that is, sinning with – your partner?

It's a subject rarely discussed on stage with such passion and frankness – although Evangelical Christians and those well-versed in Christian dogma may find fault with Nauffts' simplistic presentation of their faith. (Luke's rebukes to Adam's rants are rather light on theology.)

Also working in the script's favor are Nauffts' carefully drawn characters. And the groundwork he's laid is enriched by

his work in musicals and comedies, here he's called upon to play a strict and stern businessman whose life is guided totally by the bible. When he stuns his son with a racist and anti-gay statement, Luke's decision to come out of the closet is suddenly reversed. Instead, he burrows deeper into it. Although Seibert is playing against type, it's yet another noteworthy performance from this award-winning performer.

Fine support is provided by Courtney Myers as Adam's friend and boss, Holly, while Rob Pantano is memorable as Luke's friend, Brandon.

But the stars of the show are Huff and Young – two straight guys who fearlessly "play gay." Although they share only one significant kiss, the two are totally believable as a couple – from the way they look at one another to the playful ways they touch each other.

But of the two, Huff has the most difficult character to bring to life. Because of Adam's sarcastic temper and biting sense of humor, it would be easy for audiences to quickly dislike the character. But Huff finds Adam's humanity and lets it shine. And watch his every move: Each gesture is carefully planned, so that not only does every line of dialogue tell the story, so too does the body language. (I'm sure this didn't happen, but I'd swear on a stack of Butch's bibles that Huff studied a certain friend of mine when preparing for this role. It's THAT realistic!)

The story takes place on a two-level set by Monika Essen framed by three video screens onto which projections are flashed to help identify the location of each scene. Adding to the character of the show are lights by Janine Woods Thoma and sound by Ken Faulk.

One line in the play's second act implies "everyone needs something" – and that's certainly true in "Next Fall." But it also applies to theatergoers who enjoy a stimulating night at the theater. They need to head to Performance Network Theatre and check out what could be the most intellectually stimulating, yet thoroughly entertaining production of the summer.

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

The stars of the show are Huff and Young – two straight guys who fearlessly "play gay." Although they share only one significant kiss, the two are totally believable as a couple – from the way they look at one another to the playful ways they touch each other.

a traffic accident, Adam must deal with not only a hospital that doesn't recognize his relationship with their patient, but also Luke's out-of-town parents who swoop in and take charge of their son's care.

Neither sits well with the often-caustic Adam.

Nauffts' story unfolds in the present day, but uses a storytelling device that's become rather common in recent years to help flesh out the details: the flashback. It is a slickly constructed work that tries (and mostly succeeds) to shed light on issues that have come under the microscope in the years following the passage of anti-gay marriage laws throughout the country. It also draws attention to a spiritual struggle may gays and lesbians face: How do you follow a religion that some adherents believe teaches your relationship is sinful? And if you claim to be a practicing Christian, how do you justify knowingly

the fine work of director Ray Schultz and his team of designers and actors. From the smallest gestures to the props, much attention to detail defines this work. If there's a minor quibble, though, it's the two-hour running time that seems a little long. (That's mostly a script problem, however, not Schultz's.)

Several performances stand out – beginning with Barbara Coven's delicious performance as Arlene, Luke's mother. Divorced from Luke's father for 20 years, Arlene is a Southerner whose wild ways resulted in her son being raised by his father and eventual stepmother. As played by Coven, she's a delightfully colorful, but loving "character" who storms not only the hospital waiting room, but also the hearts of those seated in the audience.

In an unusual casting move, Luke's holier-than-thou father, Butch, is played by John Seibert. Known and loved for

NEXT FALL

BY GEOFFREY NAUFFTS

JUNE 2 - JULY 3

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Dear Jody

BY JODY VALLEY

Cut it out

Q: I've been involved with "Lisa" for almost five months. Both of us have had bad relationships in the past and have been moving slowly with each other. We don't want to repeat past mistakes. So far so good; we get along very well, enjoy the same kind of things, and have a lot of fun together. For my part, I've gotten to love so many things about Lisa. She's very sincere, but also has a great sense of humor. She's smart, responsible and not a drama mama – that last one is important to me, as my ex was so into the drama.

The other night Lisa made dinner for me at her place. It was very romantic. Lisa had cooked a gourmet dinner for me. She had candle, mood music, the works! I've never had anyone make me this kind of a dinner before. It was spectacular. I felt pampered, loved and courted – if I can use an old-fashioned word. (It was a surprise; I thought I was picking her up to take her out for dinner.)

We agreed early on to hold off on having sex. We wanted to make sure that it was part of our love, not just part of our lust. The dinner and candle light set a background for both of us to tell the other that we loved each other. No surprise, we made love that night.

That's also when I found out that Lisa cuts herself. Up until that night, I had never seen her bare arms as she always wore long sleeves. It never occurred to me to wonder why she never wore shorter sleeves. It's been winter and spring and it has been pretty cold since we've been together.

When I saw the scars on her arms, I thought something horrible happened to her. Then I was horrified when she told me she did that to herself – she actually cuts herself. When I asked her why she did that to herself, she said that she wasn't sure why, but she did it when she felt upset or under a lot of stress. She said that she has been seeing a therapist and feels like she's getting better, but that she still does it now and then.

I'm certainly not upset that she sees a therapist. It's my belief that most everyone needs to do some work on her- or himself, and I'd rather be with someone who has been in therapy than someone who should but hasn't. (I went into therapy after my last break-up.) However, I have to say that this cutting stuff is pretty scary to me. I don't know what I would

do or if I could take it if she cut herself around me.

Cutting or no cutting, I know that I love Lisa, though we are still going to take things slow, like no moving in at this time, give it a year or more. We both agree to that. But, I just don't know how to deal with Lisa doing this to herself. I've never heard of this, and I don't know what to do with it.

As I said, this isn't a deal breaker, but I need to know how to deal with Lisa around this issue, and I'd like to know more about it so maybe I could be helpful to her.

Befuddled and Horrified

A: Since your relationship has gone up a notch, and you appear to be on the way to working toward commitment, I think it would be a good idea if you went with Lisa to one of her counseling sessions with the idea of finding out and understanding more about Lisa's problem. Getting involved with her, you need this information. In order to do this, Lisa will need to agree to this and set up a specific session with her therapist for just dealing with your relationship with her. Don't expect or ask to know all the details of her life and how this all came about; let her tell you as she's ready and wanting to talk about it. Your emphasis should be on how this affects your relationship with her, not her past history.

I will also put on my Facebook page a link to some general information about cutting and self-harming behaviors. You might want to read up on it, even before you see her counselor.

Do you know someone who cuts him- or herself? Go to Dear Jody Valley on Facebook to find a link that will help you learn more about this behavior.

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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BTH Horoscopes

BY JACK FERTIG

Watch your tongue, Scorpio!

Mercury moves into Cancer, squaring Uranus and triggering all sorts of outbursts, mostly tempests in teapots, but Jupiter softens the square, offering practical wisdom that might be gleaned from those brainstorming and arguments. Mercury will also aspect Neptune and Pluto, drawing ideas and conversations to bizarre extremes; deep and inspiring perhaps, but be pragmatic!

ARIES (March 20 – April 19): Bold moves can prove extremely profitable, but keep your eyes forward. The difference between “bold” and reckless is the difference between success and disaster. Even your best instincts should be double-checked when possible.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20): Loquacious urges can reveal much more than you intended. That could be advantageous, relieving the pressure of needless secrets. For those you do need to keep quiet, have a chat with someone you trust.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20): In financial matters, family is more reliable than friends. Evaluate advice without giving away what you actually plan to do, unless you’re consulting an expert. Listen to your partner’s opinion respectfully, whether or not you agree.

CANCER (June 21- July 22): Opening up a bit can be good for you, but be careful. Friendly and conversational is good; you don’t need to reveal everything! What you do say could affect your professional reputation, even if you only intend to confide in friends.

LEO (July 23 – August 22): Dazzling your friends is too easy. Challenge yourself to be more truly creative and don’t worry who notices. You need some downtime to balance private desires and public expression. Consider what sacrifices are necessary to meet your goals.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22): Rising to economic challenges will help you go far. Your partner and friends may exaggerate your talents, but they’re not entirely wrong. Modesty includes acknowledging simply the range of your talents.

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22): Start talking up your ambitions and accomplishments. If you don’t take the lead on that topic, others

will! Count on colleagues to support you. Your partner’s good intentions in that regard could do more harm than good.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21): A sudden burst of outspokenness can get you in trouble with your colleagues. Watch your tongue at work, but don’t be shy with your partner or friends. In the right time and place your ribald wit could be brilliant.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20): Exploring new sexual techniques can unlock new avenues of creativity – or vice versa. Exciting as that is, watch what you discuss and where. Digging up family secrets can help keep you out of trouble and deepen that creative spurt.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19): Opening up about your feelings can cause some domestic havoc, but it is necessary to keep or find a lasting love. To solve problems at home, be clear and firm on your own behalf and creatively generous without compromising yourself.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18): You are becoming in the longer run even more outspoken and innovative. For now that can include seriously disruptive outbursts, distractions and accidents. Give yourself a safe outlet to be as outrageous as you like. Elsewhere, think ahead and cool it!

PISCES (February 19 – March 19): Feeling lost is the first step toward finding yourself. For now, expressing the questions is more important than finding the answers. There’s little if any logic to this quest. Find your way through art and mysticism. Let friends provide grounding.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available for personal and business consultations. He can be reached at 415-864-8302, through his website at www.starjack.com.



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Solution to puzzle from page 30

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T	E	A	R	O	O	I	N	A	H	O	L
A	C	T	E	D	U	P	S	E	N	O	R
T	Y	L	E	R	R	O	B	I	N	S	O
J	U	D	Y	C	O	R	A	L	E	L	K
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E	R	S	E	H	I	N	D	S	C	O	R



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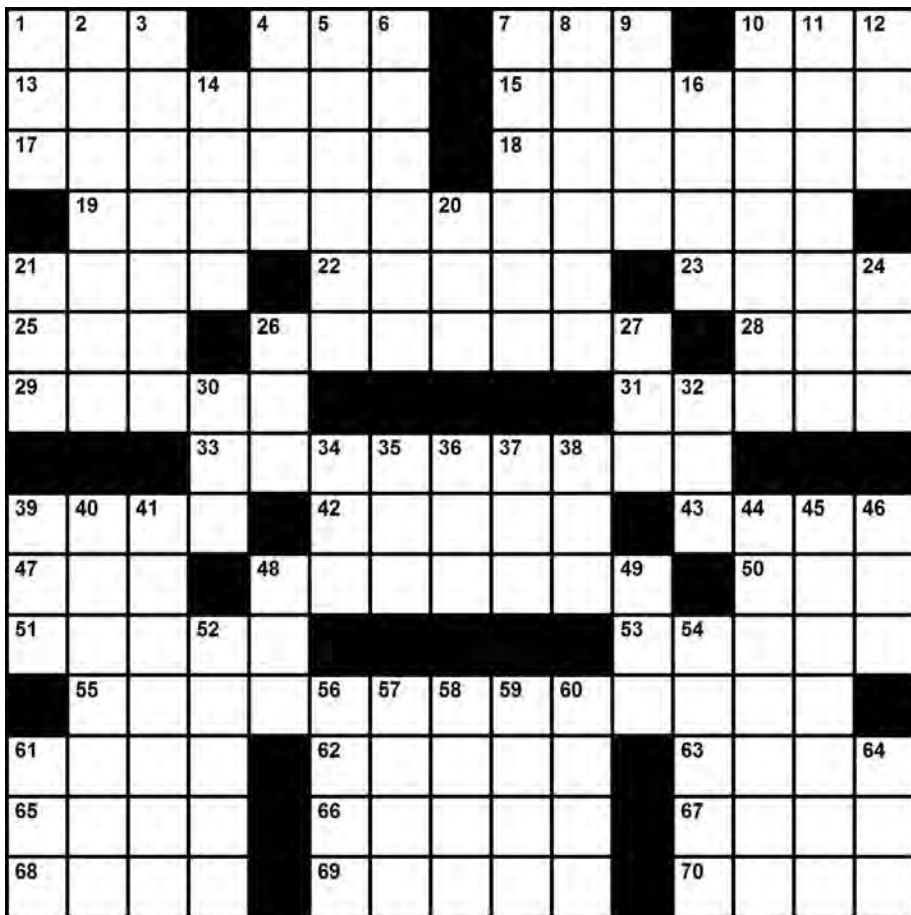
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The Voice

Across

- 1 "Horny" animal
- 4 CBS forensic drama
- 7 DeLuise who was in drag in "Haunted Honeymoon"
- 10 "Suzie Q" band, for short
- 13 Where they say "Ooh! Long!"
- 15 Behind, financially
- 17 Supported an org. for ending AIDS?
- 18 Kahlo and others
- 19 "The Voice" contestant
- 21 Liza's mother
- 22 Reef buildup
- 23 "It's Not the Size That Counts" star Sommer
- 25 Sitcom actress Meyers
- 26 With 33-Across, "The Voice" contestant
- 28 Matthew in "The Producers"
- 29 ___-wip topping
- 31 "Good grief!"
- 33 See 26-Across
- 39 Winkler role, with "the"

- 42 Triangle-shaped peninsula
- 43 A little, to Leonard Bernstein
- 47 The Crimson Tide's st.
- 48 Broadway title woman of 1925
- 50 *In Cold Blood* writer, to pals
- 51 Teeny-weeny
- 53 Operetta composer Franz ___
- 55 "The Voice" contestant
- 61 It was gauche, for Debussy
- 62 "The Voice" contestant
- 63 Nastase of the net
- 65 Romeo or Juliet
- 66 Giving a line to
- 67 Britten's beers
- 68 Gael's language
- 69 Forest females
- 70 Disney, e.g.

Down

- 1 JFK info
- 2 Tongue-lashing
- 3 Tiny chirper
- 4 Ian McKellen's "The Da

- Vinci ___"
- 5 Reporter's need
- 6 Cho activity
- 7 Bounce from Hung Jury?
- 8 "The Iceman Cometh" writer Eugene
- 9 "Death in Venice" author Thomas
- 10 Toyota model
- 11 Sounded like the Tin Man, maybe
- 12 Hi-___ graphics
- 14 Bank (on)
- 16 Part of a vacuum cleaner that sucks
- 20 Vein contents
- 21 Canning container
- 24 Shooter in Bruce Weber's field
- 26 Something to flick
- 27 Vote of support
- 30 Buffer area in a war, briefly
- 32 Total U.S. output, e.g.
- 34 Stonewall Jackson's land (abbr.)
- 35 Memorial designer Maya ___
- 36 WSW opposite

- 37 Caesar's lang.
- 38 Eng. class about Wilde
- 39 "Terrific!"
- 40 Lover of Kaye, some say
- 41 Mead studied them on Samoa
- 44 Moor green with jealousy
- 45 Less rational
- 46 Wilder's "___ Town"
- 48 B'way locale
- 49 Giant ball-handler Manning
- 52 Public spectacle
- 54 Seminal computer
- 56 "Hedwig and the Angry ___"
- 57 Romantic island for gay weddings
- 58 Of the same sort
- 59 Fruit cover
- 60 Puts out, like Billy Bean
- 61 Road atlas abbr.
- 64 Gaydar, for example

Solution on 29

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bitter girl sweating it out



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7:30 pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church Gay AA, 306 N. Division St. Closed/Discussion.

Bloomfield Hills-Thursday

7:00 pm, Sobriety in The Hills Gay AA, Kirk in The Hills Church, 1340 W. Long Lake Rd. Closed/Discussion.

Detroit-Tuesday / Friday

8:00 pm, Downtown Gay AA, Fort Street Presbyterian Church, 631 West Fort St. Closed/Discussion (Open 1st Friday of every month).

Farmington Hills-Monday

8:00 pm, Suburban West Gay AA, Universalist Unitarian Church, 25301 Halstead (Between 10 & 11 Mile Roads) Closed / Discussion.

Ferndale-Monday / Wednesday / Friday

11:30 a.m., Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.

Ferndale-Wednesday

8 p.m., Diversity Wednesday Gay AA, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 540 W. Lewiston @ Livernois. Closed/Discussion.

Ferndale-Saturday

1 p.m. Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.
8 p.m. Go After Your Sobriety Gay AA, Drayton Ave Presbyterian Church, 2441 Pinecrest. Closed/Discussion.

Livonia-Friday

8 p.m., West Side Story's Gay AA, Providence Medical Center, 7 Mile & Newburgh. Closed/Discussion.

Pontiac-Tuesday / Thursday / Sunday

8 p.m., Pontiac Gay AA, Shrine of St. Joseph, 400 West South Blvd. Closed/Discussion.

Warren-Monday

7:30 p.m., Eastside Serenity Gay AA, Faith-Trinity United Church of Christ, 12221 Martin Rd. East of Hoover. Closed/Discussion.

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From Stork to Finish

BTL Cocktail Chatter

BY ED SIKOV

The Bourbon Sour

An afternoon in June. Under a bright blue dome of a sky, boys paraded around like Speedo models and dressed accordingly. Cher's "Believe" wafted through the air from two different houses, off sync. Since it was only Thursday, our witless but ever-giggling, wretchedly visible neighbors weren't in residence yet. In a blazing stroke of architectural stupidity, our outdoor shower directly overlooks their deck. I'd done some heavy yardwork, and without the annoying onlookers – they either cheered or booed depending on the drugs they were on – I washed off in solitude under our outdoor shower. There's also a clean shot to the front gate, which opened, to my horror, just as I was washing my most rarely-seen-in-public region. Jack Fogg waved a cheery hello, raised his eyebrows, and disappeared into the house.

"Where's Sammy?" I asked when we met again upstairs, I having scooted into some gym trunks, Jack into his standard Madras shorts. "Don't mention that name," he snarled. "Yesterday I caught him in my own bed with the Indian delivery boy!" I tried to look sympathetic, but the mental image was like Spanish Fly. "He had the balls to tell me he had a craving for chicken vindaloo!" It's happened before. Sammy's insatiable. But *the delivery boy!*!"

Classic! Harvard '89 was offended not by Sammy's cheating but by the trick's caste! I said nothing but "You want a drink?" "Sure – what are you mixing?" "I dunno. Let's see what we have." I found some bourbon while Jack leaned into the open refrigerator. "Voila!" A hand emerged clutching a plastic lemon. "If there's sugar I'll make bourbon sours." "Snap to!" I barked. My command pulled Jack out of the fridge with a faint blush. "Syrup! Not sugar!" "Yes, sir," he replied, his cheeks reddening, and swiftly made us the most enormous bourbon sours I've ever seen. Sours go in 5-ounce glasses. Jack Fogg's required 12-ounce tumblers.

I plunked down on the couch. Jack Fogg plunked down right next to me. We clinked. "Cheers!"

I still harbor a robust jealousy toward Jack Fogg. He's well built and handsome and an Ivy League A-lister, whereas I'm Shrimp Boy from a two-bit town north of Pittsburgh who went to a college nobody's heard of. But there I was in gym trunks getting blotto next to an equally shirtless Jack Fogg, who, noticing that I kept

glancing at his blond chest hair, actually flexed. "These things are mighty fine!" I declared after emptying my glass. "Which?" he said with a leer. "The drinks or my peccs?"

Time began to careen: Jack returning with two more flagons of bourbon sours... guzzling them while rating our housemates' dicks... Jack's hand stroking my inner thigh... My head was spinning but the rest of me remained in firm control as I grabbed his wrists and leaned into him with enough force to pin him on his back with his arms over his head. Miracles occurred. Then I urged him onto his belly. So much shorter am I than he, I accessed his entire backside with ease and pulled down his Madras shorts, revealing his fuzzy perfection. Reader, I porked him.



Jack Fogg's Humongous... Bourbon Sour

2/3 cup bourbon
3 squirts lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon simple syrup

Mix the three together, add ice, be sure to have a couple of condoms and some lube in a nearby drawer, and serve. Avoid the conventional cherry unless you plan to do something very unconventional with it.

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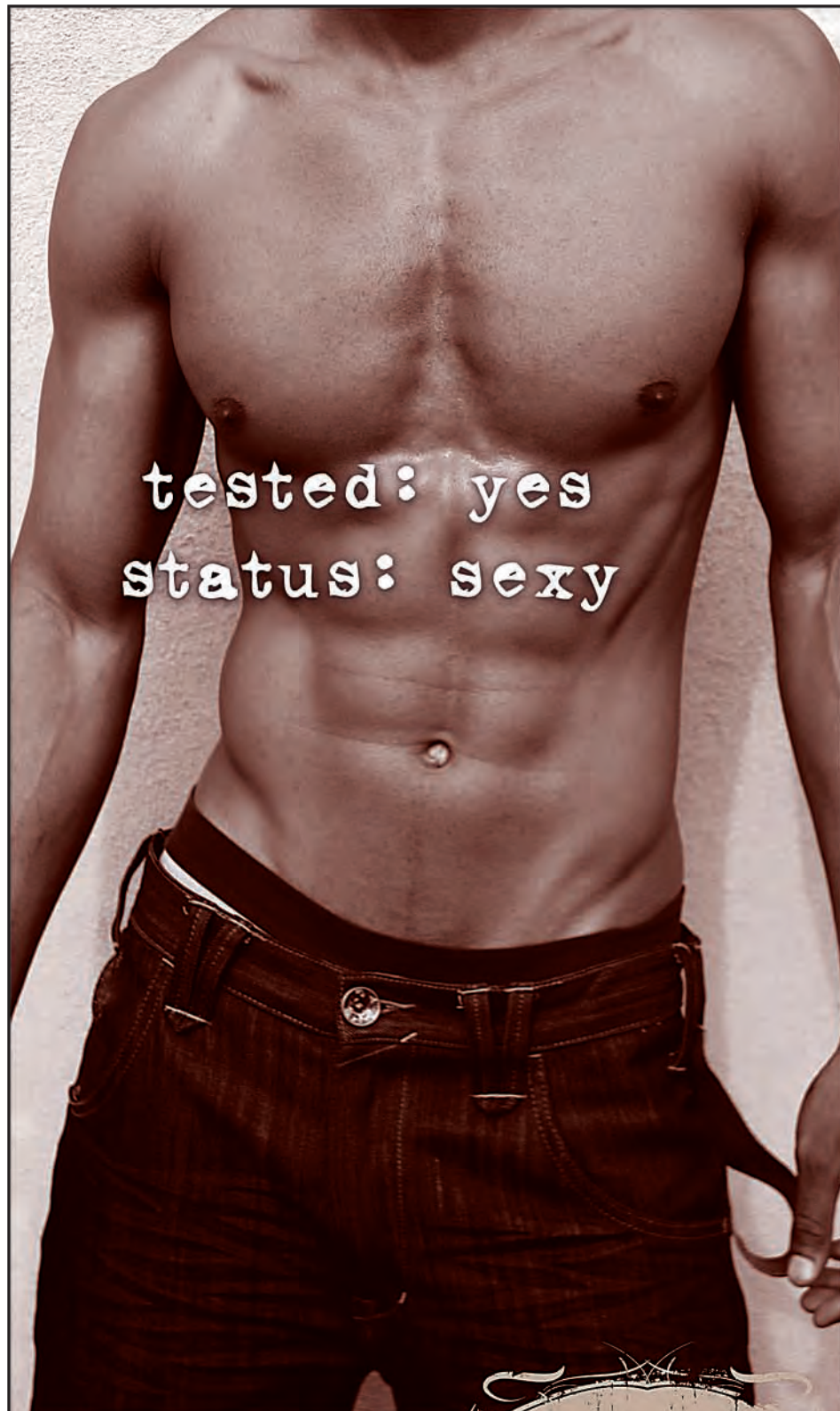


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RTT Deep Inside Hollywood



Elijah Wood. Photo: Magnolia Pictures

Elijah Wood will turn 'Saucy Gay'

Elijah Wood's suddenly very busy again. Now that the two "Lord of the Rings" prequels have titles ("The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey" and "The Hobbit: There and Back Again"), release dates (December 2012 and 2013, respectively) and a cast that includes co-stars like Ian McKellen, Stephen Fry and Lee Pace, Frodo's keeping at least one foot in real world. Wood will appear as the "saucy gay friend" in a new comedy called "Celeste and Jesse Forever." Starring "Parks and Recreation"'s Rashida Jones and "Saturday Night Live"'s Andy Samberg as a divorcing couple trying to stay friends in the process, Wood will be on hand to do all that stuff that saucy gay friends in movies do for their favorite gals: hand-holding, cocktail-prepping and shoe-shopping. We promise not to be offended by the stereotypes as long as his character is genuinely funny and gets to be more than a punchline himself. Got it, filmmakers?

Miley Cyrus has the last 'LOL'

Just a few days ago Miley Cyrus had some Twitter fun at the expense of anti-gay politician Rick Santorum by publicly scolding him online (she also went after conservative-owned/progressively-marketed chain Urban Outfitters) and made it clear that pop star support for LGBT rights doesn't begin and end with Madonna, Kylie and Gaga. So if anyone out there wants to support Miley where it counts, at the box office – her film career outside of projects with the name Hannah Montana attached hasn't exactly set the world on fire – it would help to be aware of her two upcoming projects. She's just finished shooting two comedies, one called "So Undercover," where she plays an FBI agent (OK, stop snickering) who goes undercover in a college sorority, and it co-stars "Glee"'s Mike O'Malley, Kelly Osbourne and Jeremy Piven. She's also wrapped "LOL," a high school saga of peer pressure, cell phones and parents who just don't understand. That one features Demi Moore, "Hung"'s Thomas Jane and Gina "Showgirls" Gershon. The kid has shown that she's all right, now let's hope her movies are, too.

Jane Lynch's Emmy plans are all set

With the Emmy Award telecast moving to Fox this September, it only makes sense that the network would want to build the brand by selecting one their own as host. No, not Ryan Seacrest. He's already juggling two dozen gigs. The powers that be have selected "Glee"'s Jane Lynch. And, really, who could be better? The Emmy-winning actor is a natural pick: effortlessly funny, appealing to a variety of demographic slices of the audience pie and in bad need of a venue to break out of the Sue Sylvester rut her show's been digging all season long (so don't expect any formal track suit/tux combo). She can also sing, so when that goofy "here are the nominees in song" bit that every award telecast thinks is so great comes along, they won't have to bring in the "Glee" kids to help her out. Come to think of it, though, it is Fox; they just might do that anyway. Find out Sept. 18.

Lisa 'Queen of Mean' Lampanelli heads to Broadway

We already loved comic Lisa Lampanelli for causing a one-woman ruckus in opposition to the Phelps family and their tax-exempt Westboro Baptist operation (a group she calls "a \$#!*!y sign-making company" instead of a church) by donating \$1,000 to Gay Men's Health Crisis for every protestor who came to her recent show in Topeka, Kansas, a move that earned the group \$50K. But now the self-described "Lovable Queen of Mean" plans to keep on giving as she heads to Broadway. There she'll co-create, along with writers from Billy Crystal's show "700 Sundays," a one-woman show based on her book "Chocolate, Please." No word on a date yet, but it's a lock that it won't feature any dangerous aerial stunts or annoying Bono songs. Save your ticket money for this one.

Romeo San Vicente's blindingly handsome face turns off the dark everywhere he goes. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.



COMING OUT JULY 7
STATE OF MICHIGAN'S
'RAINBOW FAMILIES'



AIDS/HIV ORGANIZATIONS

- AIDS Partnership Michigan.....33
- Detroit Department of Health & Wellness.....34
- Oakland County Health Division.....16
- SGS North America2

ATTORNEYS

- Lynn B. D'Orio,21
- Frego & Brodsky & Associates.....3
- Steven Gittleman,11
- Lisa J. Peterson,20
- Robert Pierce,9
- Rasor Law Firm8

AUTO REPAIR

- Dependable Collision Center21

AUTO/DEALER

- Jorgensen Ford.....32
- Page Toyota Scion.....35

BANK

- Bank of America36

BARS & CLUBS

- aut Bar18
- Diplomat Health Club31

CAMPUS GROUPS

- Grand Rapids Community College.....11

CARPET CLEANERS

- Hagopian Cleaning Services.....20

CHIROPRACTORS

- Be Well Chiropractic Center.....11
- Triangle Chiropractic.....29

COUNSELING

- Christine Cantrell, Ph.D.,LLC,29
- Clark Institute (The).....24
- Denise Joseph, Ph.D.,9
- Rosemary Jozwiak,29

DENTISTS

- Peter R. Drescher,21
- Ron T. Williamson DDS,3

EROTICA

- Blue Moon Video/DVD33
- Just 4 Us28
- Progressive Computing, LLC31

EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS

- Ann Arbor Summer Festival.....4
- Jewish Gay Network Speakers Series.....5
- One Voice Chorus.....22
- Pride Banquet.....5
- Rainbow Family14
- West Michigan Pride 8 & 29

FENCE SALES/INSTALLATION

- Alto Fencing Services LLC.....11

FERTILITY SERVICES

- Trillium Birth Services.....19

FLORIST/FLORAL DESIGN

- Ashley's Flowers.....11

FURNITURE

- Mitchell Gold & Bob Williams At Three Chairs21

GROCCERS

- People's Food Co-op and Cafe Verde21

HYDROPONICS

- Garden Connections.....20

INSURANCE

- Insurance Exchange.....11

JEWELERS

- Abracadabra Jewelry & Gem Gallery.....19

LAMPS

- Top Of The Lamp.....21

LANDSCAPING/NURSERIES

- Rock Shoppe20

MASSAGE

- David Rosenberg,31

MATTRESSES

- American Mattress Gallery Inc9

MEDIATION

- Mediation Training & Consultation Institute21

MORTGAGES

- Citizens Bank.....19

OPTICIANS/OPTOMETRISTS

- Bennett Optometry.....18

PET SERVICES - GROOMING

- Groom N Go21

PHARMACY

- Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy....33
- Direct Rx.....34

PHOTOGRAPHY

- Katherine Thelen Photography ..24

PHYSICIANS

- Dr. Curtis Hunt,9
- Kobold, D.O. and Smith, D.O., P.C.32
- UMHS-Comprehensive Gender Services Program20

REAL ESTATE

- REMAX Suncrest.....2
- Shoreline Realtors.....29

RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL

- Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit24
- Reconciliation Metropolitan Community Church22

RESTAURANTS

- Pete's Place Cafe8
- The Elwood.....25
- Tios Mexican Cafe20

THEATERS

- Performance Network25
- Purple Rose Theatre Company2

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

- RJ Reynolds - SNUS.....15

VETERINARIANS

- Arbor Pointe Veterinary Hospital 11

WINDOW COVERINGS & FLOORS

- Esquire Interiors.....21

WOMEN'S GROUPS

- S.P.I.C.E.29

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