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ONLINE EXCLUSIVES



Photo slideshow: Wilde Awards 2011

The OutField: Austin Snyder's long run

National and international news: Gay activist Lt. Dan Choi faces prison time for DADT protest, Anti-gay Puerto Rico senator resigns in Grindr photo controversy

WEB WINS

Tickets to "The Christmas Story" on Nov. 16 at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit!

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Pending legislation making sex change operations on Michigan inmates illegal

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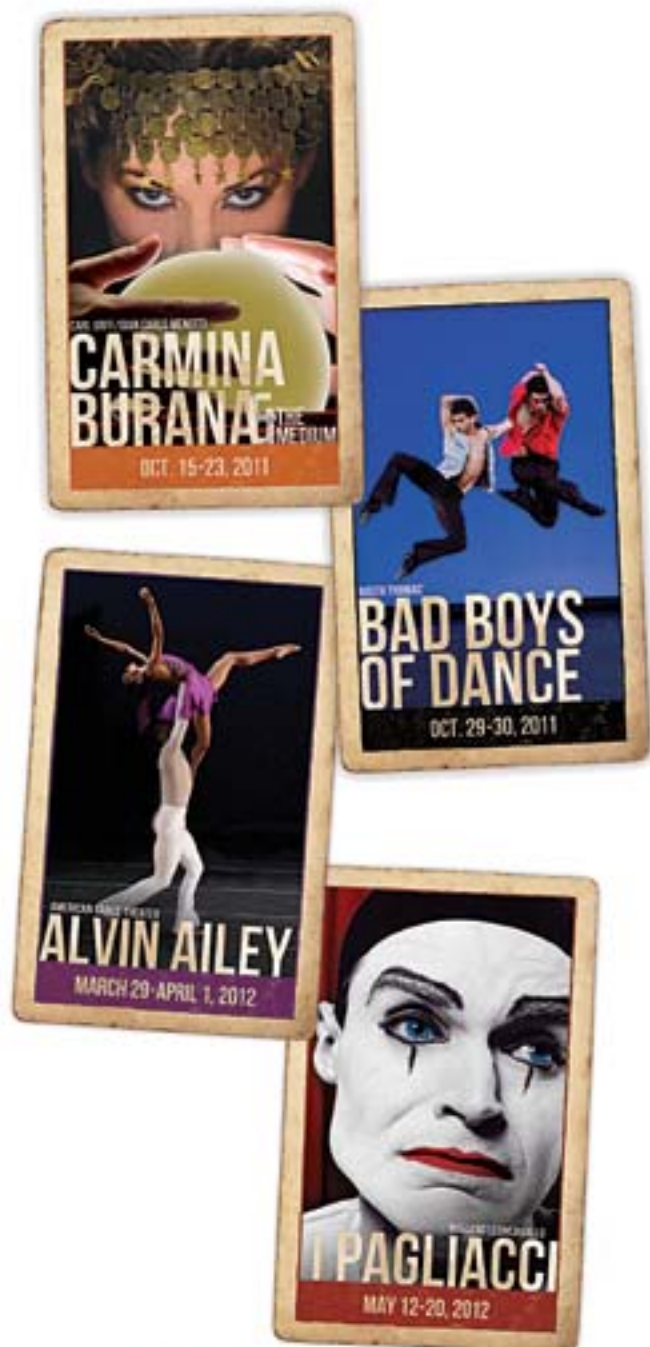
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Sunday November 27, at 2:30 p.m.

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Sunday April 1, at 2:30 p.m.

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Saturday April 14, at 7:30 p.m.
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I PAGLIACCI

BY RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO

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Featuring the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra

Saturday May 12, at 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday May 16, at 7:30 p.m.
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BTI Speak Out

BY ERIC RADER

Fall back into politics

The summer of 2011 is drawing to a close, and the warmer days will soon give way to crisp autumn weather. While fall marks the end of the growing season in this part of the country, it is also a time for new beginnings. In Washington, D.C., members of Congress and President Obama are coming back from their summer breaks and will soon consider new legislation to deal with the unresolved economic and foreign policy challenges facing our nation. In early August, the president and congressional leaders reached an agreement on the nation's debt ceiling, avoiding what would have been an unprecedented and calamitous default by the U.S. on its debt obligations. The Republican presidential field has taken shape over the past few months, and now the GOP candidates will intensify their campaign efforts as the first primaries appear on the horizon. At the same time, President Obama has begun to focus on his own reelection effort for 2012, and he is crafting policy proposals to combat the persistently high unemployment rate.

While there are legitimate and profound policy differences between President Obama and his Republican adversaries

over how to handle the economic and foreign policy challenges facing our nation, it seems that some GOP candidates would like to make this campaign about social issues. Most of the Republican candidates for president have made statements that are obviously designed to appeal to the most intolerant elements of the GOP electorate. One of the candidates, Texas Gov. Rick Perry, believes the U.S. Constitution should be amended to ban same-sex marriage and squash the successful effort in New York to extend equality to gay and lesbian citizens, contravening his own belief that states should decide important social issues like marriage. Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachmann, another presidential candidate, built her early political career on a homophobic platform, and has made comments linking homosexuality to the devil and enslavement, while her husband runs a psychology clinic that offers so-called "reparative therapy" to gays and lesbians who wish to change their sexual orientation. Former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum has argued that marriage cannot be redefined as something other than male-female, making the ridiculous statement that a person can call a cup of tea a basketball, but the cup of tea doesn't become something else just because someone redefines it. Santorum has also likened homosexuality to bestiality and incest.

All of these statements and many others reveal how far the modern-day Republican Party has moved to the extreme political right on almost every issue. At one time, Republicans were the "Party of Lincoln," where tolerance and respect for civil rights was a proud legacy of the father

of the party. Former President Ronald Reagan – certainly no friend of the LGBT community – argued that the Republican Party should be a big tent where divergent points of view could exist together. Now, it seems, many Republicans believe that to be conservative means to attack and demean citizens who are "different" from the majority. It is somewhat ironic that the most moderate Republican candidate for president this year is a Mormon who once served as governor of Utah, Jon Huntsman. Huntsman supports civil unions for same-sex couples and has decried some of the more outlandish views of some of his Republican competitors, especially Perry's hostility to the scientific evidence of global climate change and evolution.

Over the coming months, the political debate will likely become even sharper than it has been over the past few months. It seems that congressional Republicans will oppose anything

President Obama does or says, even if his positions make sense. The president has probably been too acquiescent in his dealings with the right-wing Republicans who control Congress. Many Obama supporters would like

Fair-minded citizens should remind the GOP that all people deserve to be treated with dignity.

to see the president fight back against the vicious and divisive agenda of the GOP. The next 14 months will give Americans a chance to evaluate the contrasts between the president and his opponents. Fair-minded citizens should remind the Republicans that all people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and that public policy should be based on evidence and reason. The great threat to our nation today is high unemployment and economic stagnation, something that many Republicans seem to want to ignore in favor of social issues. Unfortunately, Republican intransigence during the debt-ceiling debate created an unnecessary crisis, and the resulting compromise may actually make our nation's economic problems worse. Ultimately, the voters will decide who is most capable of leading this nation toward peace, prosperity, and unity in the years ahead. President Obama should now stand firm against Republican extremism, and work to advance a pro-growth, inclusive agenda for all of America's citizens. If he does this, then America will be stronger than ever in the years ahead.

Human Rights Campaign's information on the "National Organization for Marriage," a group supported by some of the Republican Presidential candidates:

<http://www.hrc.org/15844.htm>

President Obama's statement in support of the Respect for Marriage Act, legislation that would repeal the Defense of Marriage Act:

<http://tinyurl.com/3ob2udz>



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From Stork to Finish

Wilde Awards celebrates decade of wild adventures, milestones

Tears, cheers mark ceremony recognizing achievements of Michigan's theater community

BY ZACH CHILDREE

DETROIT- As a thunderstorm loomed outside, members of the Michigan theater community gathered at the historic Gem Theater on Wednesday, Aug. 24 for the annual Wilde Awards. The ceremony, which recognizes the achievements of Michigan's finest actors, writers, designers and directors, also had another reason to celebrate: its tenth anniversary.

"One of the things that's important about art and that make art valuable is when it's true" BTL publisher Jan Stevenson said to the audience. "One of the biggest challenges for gay and lesbian people is for the truth of our lives to come out – and true theater, good theater does that."

The audience also viewed a video that featured interviews with Stevenson, BTL Theater Editor Donald Calamia and others involved over the past ten years of the Wilde Awards.

Calamia, serving as co-host, thanked those who had helped produce the awards. As a faint clap of thunder echoed from outside, he laughed: "Apparently there is a tornado watch tonight. We like our audience to be blown away, but not like that!"

Joe Plambeck took home the most awards for his acting work in "Love! Valour! Compassion!" and for

his work on "Mercury Fur," which took home the plaques for Best Lighting Design and Best Play Featuring LGBT Themes or Characters. Plambeck accepted his awards wearing a bright red T-shirt emblazoned with the word "Fruitcake."

Another highlight of the evening was the Wilde-r Awards, which acknowledged special moments in the past year in theater that don't quite fit into the regular awards program.

This year's Wilde-r Awards featured categories such as "Best Accidental Decapitation," and "Best Naked Male Wrestling Not at the Male Box."

Later, The Actor's Company took to the stage to perform "It's a Very Nice Awards Show," a song poking fun at the length of the show, Calamia's costumes and the best way to get the attention of the Wilde Awards: show "wiener" in your play (sang as the cast held up various pictures of former New York Congressman Anthony Weiner). The cast finished the rousing song wearing large masks of Don Calamia's face.

One of the biggest laughs of the evening came when Cheryl VanDuzen took the stage to accept the award for Best Music Direction for her work on "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." VanDuzen was surprised and flustered as she held the award. "I want to thank all of the wonderful



The Actor's Company performed "It's a Very Nice Awards Show," poking fun at the length of the ceremony and at Don Calamia. Joe Plambeck took home awards for acting in "Love! Valour! Compassion!" and for his work in the production of "Mercury Fur." BTL photos: Andrew Potter.



singers I've worked with and all the musicians who've been in my pits," she said, then looked mortified as the audience howled with laughter.

Later, as Dixie Longate accepted the award for best actress in a comedy, she looked out at VanDuzen in the audience and quipped in her southern accent "You know, I would be honored to be in your pit. But, I don't even play an instrument!"

A touching moment came at the end of the awards when the Critics Choice Award was given to Carolyn Hayes, known as the "Rogue Critic," for her tireless efforts in reviewing shows. Hayes received a standing ovation. Calamia gave her the award but stopped her from going back to her seat before presenting her with another gift: a gas card worth more than \$1,000, purchased by members

of the theater community to show their appreciation for her reviews. Hayes was shocked as she accepted the card and graciously thanked those who had contributed. "I'm so surprised," she said. "I really had no idea. The Rogue Honda Civic will really appreciate this too!"

For a full slideshow of the Wilde Awards, log on to www.pridesource.com.

And the winners of the 2011 Wilde Awards are...

Best Comedy

Circle Mirror Transformation
John Seibert, director
Performance Network Theatre

Best Drama

Oedipus
Tony Caselli, director
Williamston Theatre

Best Musical

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
Kurt Stamm, director
Mason Street Warehouse

Best Original One-Act Comedy or One-Person Show

Fish Dinner
Dave Davies, director
Planet Ant Theatre

Best Play with LGBT Themes or Characters

Mercury Fur
Joe Plambeck, director
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Best Touring Production

Dreamgirls
Fox Theatre

Best Production of a New Script

Corktown
Guy Sanville, director
The Purple Rose Theatre Company

Best Performance, Actor - Comedy

Joel Mitchell
Christmas on Mars
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Best Performance, Actor - Drama

John M. Manfredi
Oedipus
Williamston Theatre

Best Performance, Actor - Musical

Phil Powers
The Drowsy Chaperone
Performance Network Theatre

Best Performance, Actor - Original One-Act Comedy or One-Person Show

Quintin Hicks
Fish Dinner
Planet Ant Theatre

Best Performance, Actor - LGBT Themes or Characters

Joe Plambeck
Love! Valour! Compassion!
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Best Performance, Actress - Comedy

Laurel Hufano
The Model Apartment
The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company

Best Performance, Actress - Drama

Kelly Komlen
Proof
Tipping Point Theatre

Best Performance, Actress - Musical

Barbara Marineau
A Catered Affair
Farmers Alley Theatre

Best Performance, Actress - Original One-Act Comedy or One-Person Show

Dixie Longate

Dixie's Tupperware Party
Mason Street Warehouse
Best Performance, Actress - LGBT Themes or Characters

Suzan M. Jacokes
The Little Dog Laughed
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Best Teamwork

Chris Korte & Eric W. Maher
True West
The Abreact

Best Ensemble

Scott Barnhardt, Bradley Beahen,
Jared Gertner, Kevin Vortmann
Plaid Tidings
The Gem Theatre

Best New Script

Kim Carney
The War Since Eve
Performance Network Theatre

Best Design - Costumes

Dominique Rhea Glaros
An Italian Straw Hat
Hope Summer Repertory Theatre

Best Design - Lights

Joe Plambeck
Mercury Fur
Who Wants Cake? Theatre

Best Design - Sets

Brian Kessler
Dracula, A Rock Opera
Meadow Brook Theatre

Best Design - Props

Kirstin Bianchi
Salvage
Planet Ant Theatre

Best Choreography

Jennifer Graham
Equus
Blackbird Theatre

Best Music Direction

Cheryl VanDuzen
The 25th Annual Putnam
County Spelling Bee
Tibbits Summer Theatre

Jim Posante Community Pride Award

The New Theatre Project
Steven Alan O'Brien & Jon Ager



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Between the Lines



BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Gays who alien abduct

Carl Jung, a colleague of Sigmund Freud in the creation of psychoanalysis – that costly, seemingly unending, mental probing of troubled couch potato egos – broke with Freud over Freud’s hangup on libido, the sexual energy underlying humankind’s mental quirks.

Psychological troubles all stem from being randy, embarrassed, frustrated said Freud. (Who also said with insight, “Sometimes a cigar’s just a cigar.” He died of cancer of the jaw.)

Jung, who lived ‘til 1961 (Freud, 1939), said the urge toward spirituality was the more powerful driving psychological dynamic. Failure to seek out the transcendental creates neurotic behavior.

(Advice: After Saturday Night’s money spent on lap dancers, it’s probably in your best interest to go to church. A generous offering, prayerfully given for the previous carnal enjoyment, helps. And, while you’re at it, leave the phallic symbols alone.)

Jung also said UFOs – appearing in America from the late 1940s – were archetypes, along with angels, visions of the BVM, sightings of assorted bilocating saints (being visible in, say, Rome and Rochester Heights, Mich. at the same time). All wishful thinking ...

Like Jesus returning to take his simple-minded flock homeward in what’s called among fundygelicals, “the Rapture.” Eternal orgasm without sex, coupled with non-stop hymn singing, speaking in unknown tongues, rubbing tight, matching halos with Pat Robertson.

Do UFOs exist? It depends upon the authority researched. Two new books provide challenging data: “Area 51” (Annie Jacobsen; Little, Brown and Company), and “UFOs: Generals, Pilots, and Government Officials Go On Record” (Leslie Kean, Three Rivers Press).

Jacobsen’s 500-pager (full title: “Area 51: An Uncensored History of America’s Top Secret Military Base”) gives a unique take on America’s most famous UFO crash landing. Roswell, NM. 1947. Even after 60 years this controversial happening still grabs headlines.

The so-called aliens found in the Roswell saucer, says Jacobsen, were actually small, dead Down’s Syndrome children, surgically transformed into ETs with big-brain heads, lidless eyes, shrunken mouths, altered body parts. Surgery was performed by the notorious Dr. Joseph Mengele, the “Angel of Death,” responsible for ghastly experiments at Auchwitz Concentration Camp. (He drowned in 1979 while swimming offshore, Brazil.)

Mengele, captured by the Russians at the end of World War II, was offered freedom by Communist dictator Joseph Stalin for this facial/body ET reconstruction operations. Its purpose: a masterly psychological ploy used to counter United States spying on Russia by weather balloon surveillance and photography.

Author Kean’s book “UFOs” says there’s something out there. As yet we haven’t determined what. Or where “they” come from. She cites years of regular UFO sightings in Belgium, seen by thousands of witnesses, photographed, video taped.

“UFOs” includes a 16-page illustrated analysis from Major General Wilfried De Brouwer (Ret.) Belgium Air Force, detailing the ‘UFO Wave.’ He advocates full investigation of the phenomenon by scientists. It’s real, and he should know.

(Several weeks ago I reported on a sighting by my good friend, S. Kay Young, well-known Detroit photographer, Focus Hope teacher/volunteer. She, with two friends, driving late at night, witnessed a low-flying, triangular shaped, silent object hovering motionless above them. It zipped off in nothing flat! They were stunned.)

One closing ET item. There have been alien abduction reports from gay teenagers being themselves abducted, several incidents occurring while attending church (mostly among Southern Baptists). Abductee stories like the following from Abel Stonewell, Jr., 17, are oddly typical.

“I was beamed up at a tent revival. Whoosh! During altar call. I don’t remember much, ‘cept this creature with scary eyes, high-pitched voice, snipping me with sharp, shiny scissors. Don’t hide it, errant earthling, he throbbled telepatically. Once the reparative surgery’s over, you’ll go straight orbit. Believe us, space cadet. Or we’ll detonate your no-return rocket fuse.”

Charles@pridesource.com Have a rainbow day!

No sex changes for prisoners?

‘Moral Values Bill’ would prohibit using taxpayer dollars for sex change operations for incarcerated citizens

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

LANSING— Two Republican state representatives introduced a bill Aug. 25 called the “Moral Values Bill” that would ensure no public funds could be used to pay for sex change operations for Michigan prisoners.

Rep. Tom Hooker, D-77, told the Grand Rapids Press: “It’s something that’s kind of a common sense thing. I’d much rather be proactive than reactive. It’s definitely something we want to prevent.” Tom McMillin, D-45, also introduced the bill with Hooker.

Rep. Hooker does not know of any prisoner who has requested a sex change operation, but said “It’s definitely something we want to prevent.”

Hooker does not know of any prisoner who has requested a sex change operation. According to a press release from his office, he introduced the bill in

response to an appeal by the American Family Association, a Midland-based anti-gay group headed by Gary Glenn. Glenn recently announced he is running as a Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate.

Russ Marlan, a public information officer for the Michigan Department of Corrections, said the bill came as a surprise to MDOC “because we hadn’t necessarily thought of it as a problem.”

Marlan said that all states are required to provide health care to prisoners under the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. “We assess inmates’ health care throughout the system and make decisions on care and what’s medically necessary and appropriate,” Marlan said.

Marlan consulted with the chief medical officer who said that MDOC would not provide sex change operations.

But, Marlan added, “if there ever was a circumstance where somebody had a medical need for such a thing, it’s certainly possible and allowable under our health care contract right now.”

Marlan said the chief medical officer knows of a transgender inmate who self-injected silicone into his breasts. The silicone is now leaking into his organs and blood. “There’s a health risk there with what’s happening to him so we’re certainly going to provide treatment for that,” Marlan said. The silicone will be removed from the inmate’s body. The inmate asked for silicone breast implants as a replacement, but the chief medical

officer said the inmate will receive a prosthesis to wear instead.

“We provide medically necessary care and we want to keep prisoners healthy,” Marlan said. “It’s good for them, it’s good for their families ... when 95 percent of them return to society we want to have them healthy. That helps control our long-term costs as well.”

Jay Kaplan, the staff attorney for the ACLU of Michigan’s LGBT Project, said the bill – House Bill 4889 – doesn’t only deny sex reassignment surgery in prisons but also through other public assistance programs.

“I’m not aware of people who are on public assistance who have ever gotten sexual reassignment surgery paid for by the state,” Kaplan said.

“I do know in Michigan Medicaid policy the state says it will not pay for drugs related to gender identity conditions, which we think is the wrong policy too because it ignores things that are medically necessary.”

Kaplan referred to two other cases that possibly stirred the AFA and Rep. Hooker to attack sex reassignment surgery. On Aug. 5 a federal appeals court upheld a ruling striking down a Wisconsin law banning publicly-funded hormone therapy for transgender prisoners; the court said that denying medical treatment amounts to torture. And an inmate in New York has sued the state, claiming it should pay for sex reassignment surgery.

Four Michigan cities have most gay couples in the U.S.

Lansing, Ann Arbor, Ferndale, Pleasant Ridge make top 25 list

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

Four Michigan cities are listed among the 25 cities with the highest same-sex couple population, according to a recent analysis from the Williams Institute. The institute has used U.S. census data to analyze same-sex couple populations since 1990.

The institute ranked cities by how many same-sex couples were present per 1,000 households in small, medium and large cities. In Michigan, there are 5.6 same-sex couples per 1,000 households

on average. Lansing has 12.34 same-sex couples per 1,000 households; Ann Arbor has 11.9. Lansing was listed 19th and Ann Arbor was listed 23rd on the 25 most populated mid-size cities for same-sex couples. The institute defined mid-size cities as those with populations between 100,000 and 250,000.

Pleasant Ridge and Ferndale made the list for most same-sex couples in small-sized cities that have less than 100,000 residents. Pleasant Ridge was listed seventh, with 59.55 same-sex couples per 1,000 households. Ferndale

was listed 25th, with 35.06 same-sex couples per 1,000 households.

Gary Gates, a scholar at the Williams Institute, a think tank affiliated with the University of California Los Angeles, said the same-sex couple population jumped 50 percent across the country, with some states showing increases as high as 88 percent, such as the state of Montana.

Gates did not think that the increase was due to an actual increase in couples; rather, he thought the increase shows “how big the closet was” ten years ago.



Left: Susan Crocker shows off the donations gathered for Transgender Michigan, which she founded with her wife Rachel Crandall in 1997. Right: Amber M. Bice, Charlie Ford, Danette Kotzke, Janelle Heideman and Leona Klajda enjoy food and friends at Trans Pride in the Park in Ferndale Saturday, Aug. 20. BTL photos: Crystal Proxmire.

Grant awarded to expand counseling

FERNDALE – Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority and Affirmations Community Center are partnering to assist with the mental health needs of the local LGBT community of youth and adults.

Affirmations, through a grant from OCCMHA, will assess mental health needs of local LGBTQ community of youth and adults, provide access to LGBTQ affirming counseling services and coordinate the setup of Medicaid eligible billing services.

Research suggests that LGBTQ people are likely to be at higher risk for depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders. Affirmations and OCCMHA will assess local needs, identify available resources and make recommendations to meet the needs of the LGBTQ community.

“Our partnership with Affirmations is a positive step to help the LGBTQ community have access to and receive appropriate services for their mental health needs,” said Jeffrey L. Brown, OCCMHA executive director.

Antonio David Garcia, Affirmations’ new executive director, said, “This is an important step forward in our efforts to expand counseling services here at Affirmations to better meet the needs of our LGBT community.”

For more information, visit www.GoAffirmations.org.

Record turnout at Trans Pride

Attendees from as far as Texas meet, greet, feel like family

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

FERNDALE – More than one hundred MTFs, FTMs, trans identifying, gender variant people and allies came to Geary Park on Saturday, Aug. 27 for the annual Transgender Pride in the Park Picnic.

“This is the first time I’ve experienced a transgender picnic,” said Jennifer Marcus, from Royal Oak. “I wanted to meet some of my transgender brothers and sisters. It’s important for us to bond. It would be nice to meet each other this way more.”

Organized by Transgender Michigan, the event is large but simple. The organization brought the burgers and hot dogs, and the guests brought a side dish to pass. A small auction and a jar for donations raised money to cover the cost.

The large turnout meant that many left having made new friends and feeling enthused to go back to their home communities.

Charlie Ford is a FTM active in promoting transgender visibility and support in Flint. He leads the Team T group of PFLAG-Flint and he is also the founder of Flint Trans Spectrum. The meetings regularly have 10-15 attendees, who together work through problems such as harassment, issues in the jail system and difficulty finding therapists and doctors. “Mainly people should know we exist,” Ford said. “We

exist everywhere in the world, and we exist in Flint.”

Steph Turner came from Rochester to take part in the picnic. She is a member of the Michigan Trans Empowerment Task Force and a former member of the Transgender Michigan board. “Rachel (Crandall) and Susan (Crocker) started this in ’97 at a time when people couldn’t be as visible as they are,” Turner said. “It’s empowering to see how many more trans people are out and want to get involved.”

Marcus, who is part of the ACLU Lambda Legal program, also found a message of strength and hope last Saturday. “A lot of people forget how hard they had to fight to get their rights. In the sixties people stood up for themselves and each other. But the eighties came along and we got our cocaine and our big manufacturing jobs, our electronic toys and gadgets and we forgot where we came from,” Marcus said. “This is the kind of thing we need to get back to – having a voice.”

Transgender Michigan board member Vanessa Emma Goldman remembers the frustration of having to hide her gender expression as a child. “Growing up in Wyandotte in the seventies, you didn’t talk about things like this,” Goldman said. “I came out in 2005 and I joined the board in 2008 because I think it’s important. Having an organization like

“This is the kind of thing we need to get back to – having a voice.”

–Jennifer Marcus

Transgender Michigan makes it possible to come out and be more comfortable in transitioning.” Goldman lives in Gaines Township, a place she says works well for her because “it is out in the country where people keep to themselves,” though she still presents herself as male most of the time in public.

“For a lot of people this is the only day they can be themselves and interact with other transgender people,” said Transgender Michigan co-founder Rachel Crandall. She said 106 people attended, ranging from toddler-age to 80, with the farthest away coming from Texas.

For more information on Transgender Michigan, visit <http://www.transgendermichigan.org>. The site also has information about the Transgender Health Fair at Affirmations on Sept. 17 from 1-4 pm.

Competition offers prizes for funky art

FERNDALE – The first annual Off the Wall art competition will highlight Ferndale’s eclectic vibe.

Submitted artwork will be displayed at Grab & Go SushiCo, located in the Affirmations cafe at 290 W. 9 Mile Road during the Funky Ferndale Art Fair on Friday, Sept. 16 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 17 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Work must be delivered to Grab & Go SushiCo between Monday, Sept. 12 and Wednesday, Sept. 15 at midnight. All images of submitted pieces must be received electronically by that time. Images can be sent via email to Mark McMillan, events manager, at mmcmillan@goaffirmations.org.

Prizes include cash and merchandise and will be awarded based on how well the artist uses methods, materials and images to express the intended message.

First place will receive \$100 in cash and two \$25 gift certificates to Grab & Go SushiCo. Second place will receive \$50 in cash and one \$25 gift certificate to Grab & Go SushiCo. Third place will receive \$25 in cash and a \$25 gift certificate to Grab & Go SushiCo. An honorable mention will receive a \$25 gift certificate to Grab & Go SushiCo.

For more information, go online to www.goaffirmations.org.



BTM Editorial

Of bills and buffoons

Now this is just getting embarrassing. We live in a state that bans same-sex marriage, refuses to recognize perfectly legal same-sex marriages performed in other states and has no protections for LGBTs in housing or employment.

And now we live in a state that may ban sex change operations for prisoners.

Not that any prisoner has ever tried to have, or actually had, a sex change operation on taxpayers' dime. Not that the legislator who introduced the bill, Rep. Thomas Hooker, even knows of any active requests from prisoners for sex change operations. Not that Rep. Hooker fully understands transgender health care, as the short paragraph that is his bill refers mostly to physical deformities.

Apparently, this exact moment in time is the most pressing to pass laws about transgender health care – gawsh, it's not as if our state is in some sort of economic crisis with record unemployment or anything.

When pressed with these basic questions – uh, why do you care so much about this (very) particular issue at this particular moment? – Rep. Hooker just said it's what the American Family Association of Michigan wanted him to do.

This is just painful. This is the kind of thing that gets our state made fun of on late-night television. This is the kind of thing that makes Michigan look as tolerant as Mississippi. This is the kind of thing that makes us realize that our GOP lawmakers are as unschooled in basic fact-checking as they are with the other pressing problems facing the state.

In short, this is the kind of thing that makes those lawmakers – and the citizens who voted for them – look like a bunch of buffoons.

Fortunately, the Michigan Department of

Corrections is not a bunch of buffoons.

When the story of this silly little bill broke, the MDOC spokesman told us that MDOC was a bit surprised about the legislation (that

This bizarre buffoonery by Bible-thumping bigots has no place in a state full of intelligent, reasonable and caring citizens.

is polite-speak for “WTF”), and that they take care of all inmates as medically necessary. It is highly unlikely that a sex change operation would be deemed medically necessary, explained the spokesman, but if for some reason it were, it could very well happen. Why? The Eighth Amendment to the Constitution (yes, our Constitution, the one Republicans like to thump as much as the Bible itself) protects citizens from cruel and unusual punishment, and the practice of not providing medically necessary health care to inmates has been deemed cruel and unusual and downright unconstitutional.

This bizarre buffoonery by Bible-thumping bigots has no place in a state full of intelligent, reasonable and caring citizens. Keep this little nugget in the back of your mind. Next time you hear someone pontificating about the greatness of the GOP and its family values, toss this perfect example of blatant idiocy their way. For Pete's sake, it's your civic duty.



BTM General Gayety

BY LESLIE ROBINSON

A touch of the divine in Florida

Whether or not you've heard of Jerry Buell, in a few minutes you're going to find it hard to forget him.

Buell is a high school teacher in Mount Dora, Fla., who posted on Facebook that he “almost threw up” when he heard about New York's legalization of gay marriage. He said same-sex unions were part of a “cesspool,” and called them a “sin.”

In other words, he holds mild opinions on the subject.

A U.S. history instructor, Buell was suspended from the classroom and reassigned, the Orlando Sentinel reported, while the school district investigated whether he violated an ethics policy that calls for educators to value the “worth and dignity of every person.”

Even those persons who make you want to toss your cookies.

Buell said his gay students “know that I don't hate them. I love them.” He said his Facebook post didn't spring from hatred. “It was about the way I interpret things.”

Indeed. He interpreted gay marriage rights as cause for Dramamine.

The ACLU stated Buell had the right to say what he pleased. The mega-conservative Liberty Counsel also argued for Buell's right to off-gas on Facebook.

After a weeklong investigation, the Lake County Schools superintendent reinstated him. A “written directive” was put in his file, but so far it's unknown whether the directive is a reprimand, a warning or a recipe for sponge cake.

A nanosecond after Buell was reinstated, a new controversy arose. The school district turned its attention to whether he monkeyed around with the constitutional separation of church and state.

On his syllabus, Buell included this heads up to students: “I teach God's truth, I make very few compromises. If you believe you may have a problem with that, get your schedule changed, 'cause I ain't changing!” And on a different document Buell labeled the classroom his “mission field.”

Call me crazy, but I think a wee bit of his faith has crept into the fella's teaching.

By way of another tiny hint, Buell wrote on his school webpage that he tries to “teach and lead my students as if Lake Co. Schools had hired Jesus Christ himself.”

What does that mean? Does Buell hand out

loaves and fishes in the cafeteria? Is he given to healing the sick in the school nurse's office? Perhaps he trots down to the biology class to raise dissected frogs from the dead. Or, when the swim team isn't hogging it, he walks on the pool.

I would think God would command a higher salary than the school system could afford. On the other hand, wouldn't Jesus teach for free? And have no need for a 401(k)?

Buell says he tries to “teach and lead my students as if Lake Co. Schools had hired Jesus Christ himself.”

At any rate, I can report that last year Buell was named Mount Dora High School's Teacher of the Year. He wasn't named Deity of the Year.

A lawyer from the Liberty Counsel is representing Buell, and the organization staged a rally at which, fighting tears, Buell said, “I'm a social studies teacher, and I knew what the heck I was doing.”

I should hope so. If he wants to reek of divinity, being all-knowing is a basic requirement.

“There's a thing in this country called the First Amendment,” he told the crowd. “I firmly believe in the right to express my opinions passionately.”

Expressing his religious opinions so passionately in a public school might strike you as a clear violation of the separation of church and state, and you might think those opinions are a threat to LGBT students, as well as other types of students.

But the rules are different for God's stand-in. Buell's position is stressful – he must teach history, figure out who's skipping class and model holiness all at the same time. Uneasy lies the head that wears a halo.

Leslie Robinson almost titled this column “Syllabus on the Mount.” Email her at lesarobinson@gmail.com, and revel in her blog at www.generalgayety.com.

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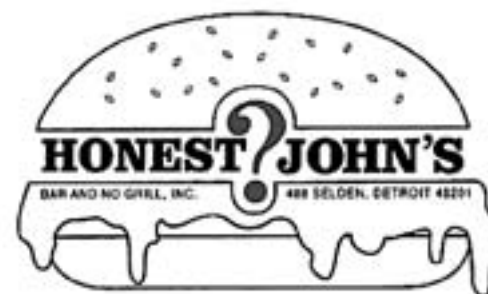
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Bisexual people really DO exist, says a new study. What are your thoughts?

Glad that's all cleared up.
-Melinda Graczyk

And please, folks, don't dismiss bisexual women as "bar-sexuals" or bi-curious drunks. I've been bi as long as I've been sexual. And I always will be. Thank you, and goodnight.
-Lynda Schrecengost

It's irritating to me that a study has to be done to confirm the existence of bisexual people. Can't we all just get along and accept each other however we identify? No one should have to prove anything.
-Jessie Pegg

All these years I thought I was make-believe...
-Mallory Sly

This really shouldn't be a surprise to anyone, perhaps maybe the willfully ignorant, which is why it's nice to have a little scientific study ... Although we all know that many willfully ignorant individuals discount science.
-Michael Hill

Comments may be edited for grammar and length.



Join the conversation ...

Search: "Between The Lines Newspaper"

Relationships, history



Darian Aaron

"I was so incredibly frustrated with the lack of positive images of black gay couples in committed relationships in the mainstream and LGBT press. There's a persistent myth that black gay men are incapable of maintaining healthy relationships. I knew this wasn't true, and I wanted to challenge this idea that has crept into the consciousness of black men. So I started interviewing black gay couples in committed relationships, highlighting how they met, fell in love, and continued to maintain their relationship."

—Darian Aaron, in an interview titled "Someone You Must Know: Darian Aaron," about his life, his blog titled "Living Out Loud with Darian," and his new book titled "When Love Takes Over: A Celebration of SGL Couples of Color," 10thousandcouples.com, Aug. 1.



Bayard Rustin

"He absolutely didn't hide it. He'd never heard there was a closet."

—Rachelle Horowitz, a longtime friend and co-worker of Bayard Rustin, about openly gay Rustin, a key adviser to Martin Luther King, Jr. and the chief organizer of the historic August 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, in an article titled "Bayard Rustin, organizer of the March on Washington, was crucial to the movement," washingtonpost.com, Aug. 21.



Shane L. Windmeyer

"In the next 10 years, we'll look back and ask why colleges didn't make this change much sooner. (The question) sends an important message to LGBT students: you are welcome here. The admissions form is one of the very first messages from a college about what's important. By standardizing this question, we can match students up with resources and start to communicate with them."

—Shane L. Windmeyer, founder/executive director of Campus Pride, a national organization working to make colleges safer for LGBT students, about an optional question, appearing on Elmhurst College's 2012-13 application, which makes Elmhurst the first institution to include a question about sexual orientation and gender identity on its undergraduate admissions application, The Chronicle of Higher Education, chronicle.com, Aug. 23.



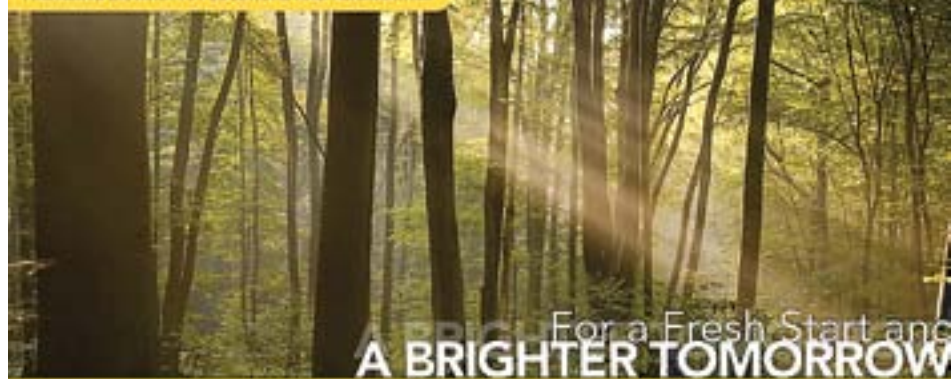
Pat Griffin

"We can hope that the fact that a player stepped forward to challenge what she perceived as anti-lesbian discrimination by her coach and the failure of the university athletic department to properly investigate her allegations will serve as a warning to other coaches and schools: Athletes and their parents these days are more likely to object to and challenge what they experience as discrimination in sport based on sexual orientation. Schools and coaches that hope to avoid discrimination lawsuits should educate athletic staff, adopt policy that protects athletes and coaches from discrimination based on sexual orientation and then follow through to make sure these policies are followed by everyone in the athletic department."

—Pat Griffin, in her blog titled "SMU Settles Lawsuit with Former Women's Basketball Player," about Jennifer Colli, a former Southern Methodist University women's basketball player who sued the university and head women's basketball coach for revoking her scholarship in retaliation for her complaints that the coach was questioning her sexual orientation and the sexual orientation of other players on the team, ittakesateam.blogspot.com, Aug. 7. Colli was awarded \$19,213, the equivalent of one semester of financial aid.

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Fun dining for everyone

Royal Oak's Pronto! finds success by breaking down gay stereotypes

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

When you think of Pronto!, be sure not to forget that exclamation mark – and the mark that it's left on the city of Royal Oak.

Over 20 years, what began as a narrow takeaway expanded to five store fronts, taking up an entire city block and a host of identities: Pronto! has birthed a sit-down restaurant, a bar, a bakery, a nostalgia store and a catering service.

The restaurant has also helped Royal Oak embrace its identity as a gay hotspot, says Bill Thomas, one of its three co-owners. "We've built friendships with business

owners, breaking down stereotypes about gay-owned businesses and businesses that attract gay clientele. We've been able to educate the community to say look: there is a marketplace here that you're not capturing." Royal Oak was recently named the fifth most popular city for same-sex couples, according to 2010 U.S. census data.

The city has changed over two decades, Thomas says, "and I think our consumer base, particularly our gay and lesbian audience, has changed too. In this marketplace, it's a very accepting, welcoming, diverse community. So we're just not the only (gay-friendly) place anymore. Our guests are guests in every single location in town."

But when it first opened, the restaurant was the only gay-friendly place in town. That legacy lives on after 8 p.m., when Pronto! becomes the gay bar to be at in the city. "But at any other time during the day, you can't assume two women dining are lesbians; they may just be business associates," Thomas says. "We've become very mainstream.

"We're seeing people now who have children, who are married, divorced, now they're bringing their kids in, now we're multi-generational. We started with zero high chairs," Thomas chuckles, "and now we have 15. Everyone's having kids!"

Becoming mainstream is easy when the menu offers something for everyone to love.

"We make everything from scratch here," Thomas says, "which is kind of an anomaly in the restaurant world – you could open up a restaurant today and not even have a kitchen, the way that food is produced. But we take a different approach.

"We have a commissary kitchen in north Royal Oak. We have a production kitchen in here, which is sweet and savory: we make every cake, every filling, every soup, every dressing." The restaurant's sandwiches and desserts have graced best-of-Detroit lists for years, and Ford Arts Beats & Eats picked the restaurant as its media backdrop this year. Its ever-expanding popularity caused it to need several physical expansions; the latest is a large patio seating area in the back that was once a parking lot.

As he proudly shows off the new space, Thomas says he loves the view it provides of the urban skyline: "At night when you sit here, with these buildings, you almost feel like you're in the middle of Manhattan." The new patio offers 90 seats surrounded by lush green plants and strands of lights that



The new back patio is the latest expansion of the Pronto! restaurant empire. The restaurant's owners have expanded Pronto! from a small takeaway to a full sit-down eatery with a bar; they have also created a catering service, a bakery and a nostalgia shop.

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3. The festival supports local businesses: last year's economic impact was an estimated \$39 million.

4. Nearly 70 restaurants showcase all the flavors found in Metro Detroit, and an "Iron Chef"-esque competition features a tasty food fight.

5. Festivalgoers can take in more than 200 musical performances from world-famous and local artists. For more information about the entertainment acts, see p. 33.



Jim Domanski and Bill Thomas hang out in the new back patio. The expansion offers 90 seats, a pool table and a gorgeous city skyline. BTL photos: Andrew Potter.

Ford Arts Beats & Eats picked the restaurant as its media backdrop this year.

crisscross under an open sky.

Thomas attributes the success of Pronto! to the open-mindedness and flexibility of the owners. Thomas co-owns the restaurant with Jim Domanski and Tom Murray. Every six months, the owners and the staff rework the menu to fit new customer demands and food trends. The owners are also flexible when it comes to their staff; they encourage staff to be "who they are" and they proudly display an HRC sticker on the front door.

Another part of the business's success is its philosophy of giving back. "We started Steppin' Out, AIDS Walk Detroit because a friend asked us a favor," Thomas says. "We've been very philanthropic – within the Royal Oak community, the gay community. Where we can help, we do." For the

first time in 20 years, Thomas and his co-owners are turning control of Steppin' Out to another organization, a decision Thomas calls tough but the right thing to do.

So what's next for the bustling restaurant that feels like a big-city bistro? Thomas laughs and says he has no idea what the universe has in store. "It seems like each year there's a different focus on something, based on the economy, based on people's tastes."

No matter what comes down the pipeline for the Pronto! brand, one thing is for certain: "We're not fine dining," Thomas proclaims proudly. "We're fun dining." With, of course, that exclamation mark.

Learn more about Pronto! and its services at www.prontorestaurant.com

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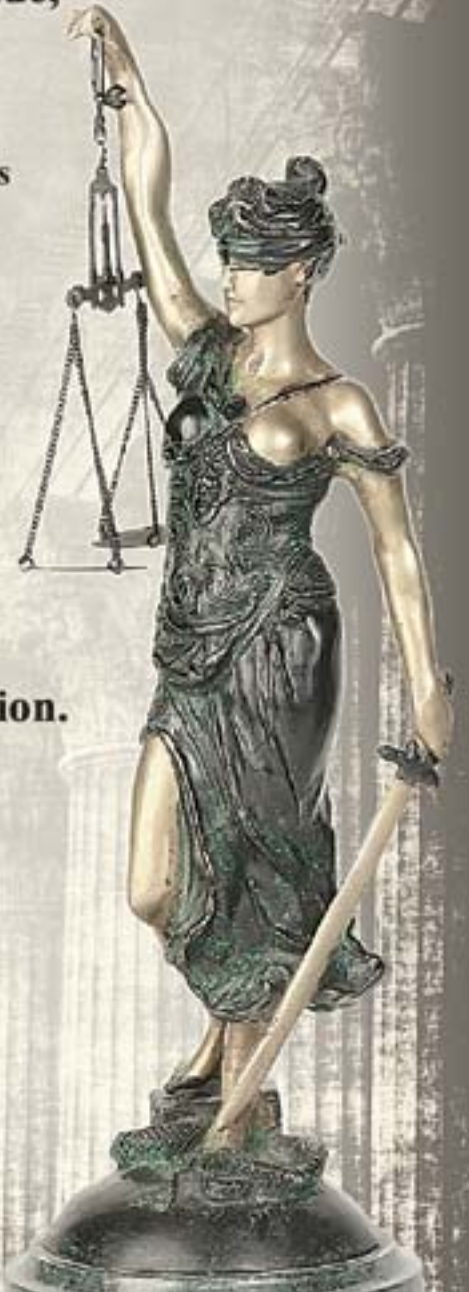
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Creep of the Week

Roberto Arango

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Puerto Rican Sen. Roberto Arango on his weight loss. I realize that, right now, Arango is in the international spotlight for “sexier” things, namely posting nude photos of himself to the gay meet-up app Grindr, but what’s being lost in all the hysteria is that this man really did shed some serious pounds. And that’s hard.



Roberto Arango

Anyone who has ever been overweight can tell you that it is not easy to go from a doughy guy with a double chin to a shirtless stud muffin posing in front of a mirror with a cell phone strategically covering your face.

All you have to do is Google the guy to see for yourself. Mind you, you’ll also see a photo of Arango showing all of the boys on Grindr his asshole, but let’s not jump to conclusions here.

In fact, Arango has a perfectly reasonable explanation for why nude photos of him exist. As he told a Puerto Rican TV show, “You know I’ve been losing weight. As I shed that weight, I’ve been taking pictures.”

A totally reasonable, normal reason to take pictures of yourself shirtless, am I right? As for the anal-photo,

everyone knows that’s a very standard post-weight loss pose. In fact, I’m fairly certain such shots exit of both Florine Mark and Jennifer Hudson. That doesn’t make them gay.

So common is this kind of photo that most people don’t recall that such a photo of them even exists until said photo ends up, say, on the Internet. Even if said photo is clearly taken in front of a mirror with the cell phone you have strategically and awkwardly positioned next to your bare ass in order to accomplish taking said photo while alone.

“I don’t remember taking this particular picture but I’m not saying I didn’t take it,” Arango said. “I’d tell you if I remembered taking the picture but I don’t.”

See? He’d tell us if he remembered. He’d tell us!

Granted, the weight loss excuse doesn’t explain how Arango’s nude photos ended up on Grindr or how he had a profile on Grindr in the first place.

But perhaps Arango, an unmarried guy, just wanted a place to show off his new and improved physique. Maybe he learned from former New York Rep. Anthony Weiner’s mistakes that girls just don’t dig it when guys send them unsolicited photos of their junk. And so he chose a bunch of homos for his audience instead because they just love that sort of thing.

Though as it turns out, Arango has a pretty rocky relationship with Puerto Rico’s LGBT community.

According to Pedro Julio Serran of the leading LGBT rights organization Puerto Rico Para Todos, “This isn’t a moment to kick someone when he’s down, but I have to denounce Sen. Roberto Arango’s complicity with a fundamentalist agenda that promotes the exclusion and marginalization of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.”

He reportedly voted in favor of a ban on gays adopting children as well as “Resolución 99,” a state constitutional anti-gay marriage amendment.

Serran says that “violating his constitutional duty to guarantee equality for all should be the real reasons for his resignation.” Unfortunately, like most anti-gay politicians who get caught in gay sex scandals, he likely cares more about getting caught with his pants down than the damage his politics have wrought on the lives of LGBT Puerto Ricans.

Arango has since resigned from the senate in order to concentrate full time on his weight-loss plan.

The weight loss excuse doesn’t explain how Arango’s nude photos ended up on Grindr.

Beating, death won’t be investigated as hate crime

19-year-old was called gay slurs, kicked in the head

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

WATERLOO, Iowa— Marcellus Richard Andrews died Sunday, Aug. 21 due to severe head injuries he suffered in a fight, reported the Des Moines Register. He was 19.

The young man was a resident of Waterloo. According to the WCF Courier, Andrews was with two female friends when they decided to take a walk around 12:45 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 20. Andrews decided to stay behind and sit on the porch. The two friends, Nakita Wright and her cousin Tudia Simpson, returned to the home a few minutes later when they heard yelling from the house.

The Courier reported:

“They ran back and found a truck stopped in the street, and the occupants were taunting Andrews, calling him ‘faggot’ and ‘Mercedes,’ a feminization of his first name, Simpson said.

“The arguing and name calling continued, said Simpson, who admitted throwing the first punch.

“From there, the fight was on, with Nakita Wright and the others joining in, according to their account.”

After the fight – during which Andrews was beaten and kicked in the face – Simpson said Andrews appeared “dazed” and was unable to stand. Simpson called paramedics, who decided to send Andrews to University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics by helicopter.

“We can and must do better, because we can never, ever allow an attack like this to take place in Iowa again.”

—Iowa One Executive Director Troy Price

Waterloo Police are not investigating the incident as a hate crime.

“We’ve done multiple interviews and

we have heard those allegations, but this was not because of his persuasion or the perception of his persuasion,” Waterloo police spokesman Lt. Michael McNamee told the Des Moines Register. “These were all people who knew each other, and there was some bad blood between the two parties involved.”

No arrests had been made and no warrants had been sought as of Tuesday.

Andrews was a captain of the Crusaders Drill Team, sponsored by Union Missionary Baptist Church. He planned to study interior design at Hawkeye Community College this fall.

The funeral was scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 27.

“We are deeply saddened by the brutal and tragic death of Marcellus. This is just not something that happens in Iowa and we are appalled at this level of extreme violence and intolerance,” said Troy Price, One Iowa executive director. “Tragedies like this underscore the incredible need to talk about issues affecting gay and lesbian Iowans and to fight for equality in our communities...We can and must do better, because we can never, ever allow an attack like this to take place in Iowa again.”

Perry signs pledge on anti-gay marriage amendment

Reverses previous statement supporting states’ rights to decide same-sex marriage for themselves

BY WILL WEISSERT

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)— Rick Perry has signed a pledge to back a federal constitutional amendment against gay marriage – a reversal from a month ago when the Texas governor said he so supported individual states’ rights that he was fine with New York’s approval of same-sex marriage.

The pledge by the National Organization for Marriage states that, if elected, Perry will send a Constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman to the states for ratification, and appoint U.S. Supreme Court and federal judges who will “reject the idea our Founding Fathers inserted a right to gay marriage into our

Constitution.”

Others vying for the Republican presidential nomination, including Michelle Bachmann, Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum, have also signed it, according to Brian Brown, president of Washington-based National Organization for Marriage, which campaigns against same-sex marriage.

While far from a surprise, Perry’s decision raised some eyebrows because it appears to contradict his previous position that this is an issue that should be left up to individual legislatures.

Perry won applause at a Republican conference in Colorado on July 22 when he said of New York’s same-sex marriage law, “that’s New York, and that’s their business, and that’s fine with me.”

Those comments alarmed some conservatives, however, and Perry moved to soothe fears the following week when he said during a broadcast interview with Tony Perkins of the conservative Family Research Council, “I probably needed to add a few words after that ‘It’s fine with me.’”

“Obviously gay marriage is not fine with me. My stance hasn’t changed. I believe marriage is a union between one man and one woman,” Perry told Perkins.

His signing of the pledge reiterates that clarification. Perry spokesman Mark Miner did not return phone messages seeking further comment.

See Perry, page 20



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Ill. college asks students about LGBT status

ELMHURST, Ill. (AP)— Elmhurst College in suburban Chicago has become the first in the country to ask students directly on admissions applications about their gender identity and sexual orientation.

The application asks: “Would you consider yourself to be a member of the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered) community?”

Students who answer “yes” may be eligible for a scholarship that will pay up to a third of tuition, said Gary Rold, the college’s dean of admissions. The information also will help officials direct incoming students to services and groups that could help them on campus, Rold added.

“Increasing diversity is part of our mission statement,” Rold told the Chicago Sun-Times (<http://bit.ly/pwjgli>). “This is simply closing the loop, in many ways, of another group who has a very strong identity. It may not be race and religion, but it’s an important part of who they are.”

The question will appear on applications for students hoping to start in the fall of 2012. Like questions about race and religion, answering is optional and will not affect admissions decisions.

Elmhurst College is a private, liberal arts college that has 3,300 undergraduate students. It is affiliated with the United Church of Christ.

“It is kind of a pleasant surprise that Elmhurst College in Illinois is the first campus to ask an identity question,” said Shane Windmeyer, executive director of Campus Pride, a national nonprofit group. “Some of the leaders in college admissions have done similar stuff but never asked the question.”

HUD takes more steps to protect LGBTs from housing discrimination

BY BTL STAFF

WASHINGTON, D.C.— A report released Aug. 29 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development shows that the agency is helping municipalities and state and local agencies receiving HUD funding to comply with civil rights requirements and holding non-compliant recipients accountable.

This year’s report shows that HUD has placed greater emphasis on ensuring that recipients of HUD funding create greater housing opportunities for minorities, families with children, and people with disabilities.

HUD will continue to reach out to groups that have historically lacked sufficient protection from housing discrimination, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons. HUD has announced that it will issue a rule to clarify that the term “family,” when used in HUD programs, includes all eligible LGBT couples and individuals.

Neb. high court clarifies same-sex custody rights

Lesbian mom can pursue custody of child she raised

BY JOSH FUNK

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)— The Nebraska Supreme Court issued a decision Aug. 26 that clarifies the custody rights of same-sex couples in the state.

The court ruled that a lesbian woman can pursue custody and visitation after her relationship ended with the child’s biological mother because she had been acting as the boy’s parent.

The ruling will send the dispute between Teri Latham and Susan Schwerdtfeger of Omaha back to a lower court for hearings about whether Latham should be granted visitation rights.

The two lived together as a couple for more than 15 years before having a son together in 2001. The two women chose a sperm donor together and shared the cost of the fertility treatments for Schwerdtfeger’s pregnancy. Both sides agreed Latham acted as the boy’s mother for the first several years of his life before the relationship ended in 2006.

“The relationship between Latham and Schwerdtfeger, however, is not the deciding factor,” the court said in its ruling. “The record is clear that Schwerdtfeger consented to Latham’s performance of parental duties. Schwerdtfeger encouraged Latham to assume the status of a parent.”

Latham’s attorney, Tyler Block, said this ruling will be important for same-sex couples

as well as for other non-married couples where someone who is not the biological parent acts as a parent.

“They got it exactly right,” Block said. “They applied Nebraska law and helped give clarification on how it applies in these particular situations.”

Schwerdtfeger’s attorney, Angela Tiritilli, said her client is disappointed with the ruling because it will likely mean several more years of court proceedings. But Tiritilli said the ruling should help clarify parental rights in the state.

“What we’re seeing here is a good trend: the court is not simply dismissing same-sex parental rights,” Tiritilli said.

Schwerdtfeger had argued that Latham hadn’t done enough since the relationship ended to maintain her parental rights. Latham quit providing financial support for the boy and wasn’t involved in making decisions on his behalf.

Plus, 10-year-old Parker Schwerdtfeger told a judge last year that he didn’t want to continue to have a relationship with Latham.

The court said that it appears the main reason why Latham hasn’t had much contact with the boy is because Schwerdtfeger restricted her access to the boy.

“The amount of visitation Latham has been afforded does not appear to reflect a lack of desire on her part to be an active part of P.S.’ life,” the court said.

But Latham will have to prove at trial that it is in the boy’s best interest for her to have a

relationship with him, the court said.

The National Center for Lesbian Rights wrote a brief supporting Latham’s argument because the center believes courts should recognize the custody rights of same sex couples as long as they meet the legal standard to qualify for parental rights.

“What we’re seeing here is a good trend: the court is not simply dismissing same-sex parental rights.”

—Angela Tiritilli, attorney

The Center for Lesbian Rights said it believes parent-child relationships are intended to be permanent and shouldn’t be undone if a child’s parents separate.

This case did not deal with the question of whether same-sex couples can marry or get divorced, which is prohibited under the state Constitution.

► Perry

Continued from p. 18

Perry has not always been so sanguine about the Supreme Court’s ability to help him oppose gay marriage. In his book released just nine months ago, “Fed Up! Our Fight to Save America from Washington,” the governor strongly defended states’ rights, saying the high court overstepped its bounds by overruling a Connecticut law banning birth control pills and a Texas law prohibiting sodomy. He also predicted that its justices would eventually issue a ruling legalizing gay marriage nationwide.

“Gay marriage will soon be the policy of the United States, irrespective of federalism, the Constitution, or the wish of the American people,” Perry wrote then.

In an earlier book, 2008’s “On My Honor,” Perry likened homosexuality to alcoholism.

“I can sympathize with those who believe sexual preference is genetic. It may be so, but it remains unproved. Even if it were, this does not mean we are ultimately not responsible for the active choices we make,” he wrote. “Even if an alcoholic is powerless over alcohol once it enters his body, he still makes a choice to drink. And even if someone is attracted to a person



Rick Perry at the Republican Leadership Conference in New Orleans this past June. Photo by Christopher Halloran.

of the same sex, he or she still makes a choice to engage in sexual activity with someone of the same gender.”

In that same book, Perry wrote, “I do not believe in condemning homosexuals that I know personally. I believe in valuing their lives like any others, as our God in heaven does.

“Tolerance, however, should not only be

asked of the proponents of traditional values,” he continued. “The radical homosexual movement seeks societal normalization of their sexual activity. I respect their right to engage in the individual behavior of their choosing, but they must respect the rights of millions in society to refuse to normalize their behavior.”

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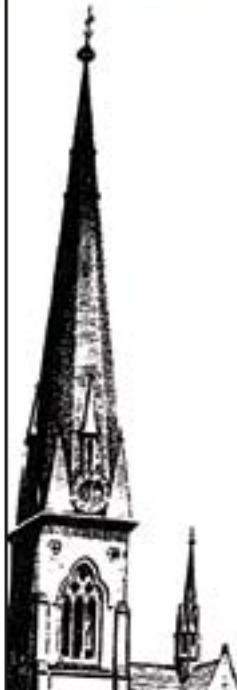
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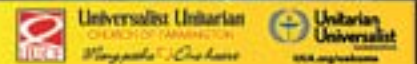
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'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' dialogue series plans to expand brand

Addresses silence of LGBT members in black churches

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

DETROIT— For many, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is the often-used nickname for the military’s ban on openly gay service that will officially be history as of Sept. 22. But “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is also the name of a discussion series at Agape Spirit Life Ministries that addresses the hidden black LGBT members in the spiritual community.

“The dialogue takes on a life of its

“It gives the community a chance to ask questions about topics that nobody else is talking about.”

—The Rev. Darlene Franklin

own,” said the Rev. Darlene Franklin, founding minister of Agape Spirit Life Ministries and the series that began this spring. “The dialogues are designed to bring about community awareness. It gives the community a chance to ask questions about topics that nobody else is talking about – well, that are rarely shed light on in the context of our spiritual community and the black community.

“It’s taken off really well,” Franklin said proudly, “and we hope to keep adding to it as necessary.”

Franklin has high hopes for the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” brand: she wants to expand the discussion series into a conference and support groups and to even travel around the country, sharing the message that it’s not OK for LGBTs to be invisible in the black church.

Franklin makes sure that those who attend the discussion groups are aware of their resources. “We uncover a lot of things that are going on in people’s lives, and so we have to have somewhere to direct people to,” she said. “That’s the purpose of the church, to me.”

The next event in the discussion series is titled “Silent No More: Transgenders



The Rev. Darlene Franklin, founding minister of Agape Spirit Life Ministries, hopes to expand the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” discussion series into more programs, including a conference and support groups. Photo provided by Agape Spirit Life Ministries.

Speak!” It takes place at the Ecumenical Theological Seminary, located at 2930 Woodward Ave. on Aug. 31 at 7 p.m. Franklin encouraged anyone who is interested to attend, regardless of race.

Openly gay bishop to speak at Univ. of Michigan Dearborn

BY BENJAMIN JENKINS

DEARBORN— On Oct. 5, Gene Robinson, the first openly gay priest ordained in a major Christian denomination, will speak at the University of Michigan’s Dearborn campus. Following the speech and discussion, the bishop will attend an evening reception that will raise money for LGBT youth shelter Ruth Ellis Center.

Bishop Gene Robinson is the first openly gay bishop in LGBT history.



Photo of Gene Robinson provided by BProud Photography, Philadelphia.

Robinson is the ninth Bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire in the Episcopal Church of the U.S., which is one of the most progressive major Christian denominations in the country. The church has backed legislation to protect LGBTs and allows gays and lesbians to be ordained ministry.

Bishop Robinson entered office in March 2004. That November, Bishop

Robinson was consecrated as the Bishop of New Hampshire – and as the first openly gay bishop in LGBT history. He wore a bulletproof vest under his clothing at the ceremony.

Since then, Robinson’s career has hit many highs and lows. He was the only bishop in the Anglican Communion not to be invited to the the 15th decennial Lambeth Conference in November 2008.

One month later, Robinson was asked to lead the opening prayer at President Obama’s Inaugural Celebration.

In 2010 at the annual convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire in Concord, Bishop Robinson announced that he would step down in January of 2013. He will be 65.

Bishop Robinson said his early retirement is due to death threats, harassment and controversy. “(These struggles) have been a constant strain,” Robinson said, “not just on me, but on my beloved husband, Mark, who has faithfully stood with me every minute of the last seven years.”

Robinson will speak to UMD students and invited students of other Michigan universities in mid-afternoon (an exact time has yet to be determined). Following the event, the public is invited to attend a reception and refreshments with Robinson. A suggested donation of \$10 to aid the Ruth Ellis Center will be requested at the door.

For updated information, check the Pride Source Online Calendar, go to umdgsa.weebly.com or call the president of the UMD GSA at 734-776-8104.

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The Gospel According to Kristin Chenoweth

Singer talks country music, queers, Christians and Michele Bachmann

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

One of the most happy-go-lucky ladies in showbiz, Kristin Chenoweth doesn't get miffed very easily. But when she does, she does. And last year she did, after Newsweek published a commentary on the inability of gay actors to play straight roles. It upset the 43-year-old actress/singer so much she wrote an extensive letter to the magazine, calling the article "horrendously homophobic," which was published shortly after the debacle – and which she spoke about during this interview.

Chenoweth's allegiance to the gay community goes way back to being a child and growing up in the South – a place she returned to for her latest album, "Some Lessons Learned" (out Sept. 13), her first of four to fully embrace her country roots. But her success hasn't been confined to just the music business; Chenoweth broke out on Broadway, where she originated the role of Glinda in "Wicked" and most recently starred alongside "Will & Grace" star Sean Hayes in "Promises, Promises." There's also been a book (2009's "A Little Bit Wicked: Life, Love and Faith in Stages"), and several TV spots: "Pushing Daisies," "Glee" and, coming soon to ABC, "Good Christian Belles."

So we had lots to talk about when we recently caught up with Chenoweth, who was on a dinner break from shooting her upcoming sitcom. During it, she discussed her history of dating gay men, her opinion on Michele Bachmann's support of gay conversion clinics and being a little bit wicked.

I can't get over your character's last name on "Good Christian Belles": Cockburn. Carlene Cockburn.

(Laughs) You can't?! I can't wait for my family to hear that one.

I'm glad I'm not the only one who's thought this.

Oh no. Are you kidding? I was like, "Wait a minute!" But I just think the most important thing for me as an actress, because of the lines that come out of my mouth, is to just have to speak them and keep going, because they're so funny and her name is so funny and the whole thing is just so great. I love it.

Does your character have anything in common with April Rhodes, who you play on "Glee"?

(Laughs) Probably not on paper, but they're both pretty outlandish people. Carlene, though, is the antithesis of April.

Speaking of April, when do you think we'll see her on "Glee" again, considering the ban on guest stars for the third season of the show?

I don't know! Nobody's mentioning it, so I'm hoping it happens. I certainly love her. She's so fun to play.

You grew up in Oklahoma, so country music is your roots. How is this album a reflection of that?

It's so funny, because I get asked, "Why a country album now?" But that's how it all began for me – and, of course, why would anyone know that? It's not something I've been talking about a lot, but it's the music I grew up listening to. One of my biggest influences is Dolly Parton, and when you look at the history of songs in musical theater and in country, they're both usually great storytellers.

I know just how lucky I am to do this kind of music. Getting to go to Nashville and sing this music that feels like home to me was a real gift, and one that I don't take lightly.

"What Would Dolly Do?" reminds me a lot of Dolly herself.

I co-wrote that, and (producer) Bob Ezrin asked, "Who's had the biggest influence on you country music-wise?" I said, "Dolly, without question." And he said, "How would she approach it? Let's think: What would Dolly do?" I said, "Bob, why aren't we writing that song?"

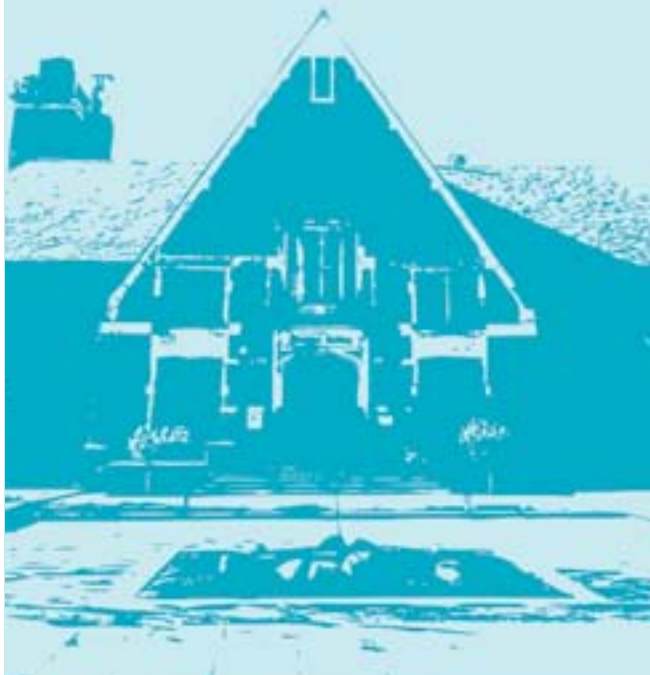
There's something about her that I feel very attuned to. There's only one Dolly. I'm not comparing myself, but I'm just saying her spirit and the way she looks at life is pretty similar to me. And the cover I did of hers ("Change") is actually a very emotional thing and it reminded me – of course, how could I ever forget? – what an amazing songwriter she is. You know, I didn't do a lot of covers. I did two covers, one of Carrie (Underwood's) and one of Dolly's, and I just love both of them. I love their music, I love their spirit; everything they stand for.

It makes total sense, because, to me, both you and Dolly epitomize happiness.

Oh my god, thank you. That's the biggest compliment you could give me.

See Kristin Chenoweth, page 28

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Downtown Birmingham participates in global shopfest

Downtown Birmingham will join the worldwide celebration of fashion and shopping during Fashion's Night Out on Sept. 8.

Fashion's Night Out is rooted in New York in a partnership among American Vogue, the Council of Fashion Designers of America, NYC & Company and the City of New York. Though established in New York, businesses throughout the world are invited to participate.

The evening is meant to celebrate both fashion and shopping, encouraging businesses to offer unique fashions and special prices for their clothing, drinks and food. FNO also stimulates the food and clothing industries' economy and restores consumer's confidence in the market.

Various venues, including numerous businesses within the Birmingham Principal Shopping District, will have unique storewide sales and events such as complimentary

drinks, hors d'oeuvres, live musical performances and models displaying the upcoming season's hottest fashions.

Other stores, such as Antonino and Harp's Lingerie, will host unique events during the evening. Harp's Lingerie will host on-site bra fittings to "experience the delight of a correctly fitted undergarment," as part of their campaign.

Antonino Salon & Spa, which will be pet-friendly for the evening, will offer photo ops for shoppers and their pets in exchange for donations to the Michigan Animal Rescue League. The salon also is offering \$20 gift cards in exchange for MARL wish list items.

For more information on Fashion's Night Out, visit fashionsnightout.com. For a complete listing of officially participating stores and restaurants in Birmingham, see enjoybirmingham.com.



Fashion Models at the corner of Woodward and Maple. There will be eight locations this year. Photo: Carroll DeWeese

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David Guetta gets us moving with new collection of club cuts. Plus: Natalia Kills rips off Gaga



David Guetta, 'Nothing But the Beat'

David Guetta has a way of bringing out the best in his collaborators, as he did with Kelly Rowland's "When Love Takes Over" more than two years ago. With a new lineup that includes everyone from Nicki Minaj to Timbaland and newcomer Jessie J, the house music-maker du jour is at it again. Minaj lays down a frenetic rap on Flo Rida's first single, "Where Them Girls At," and then owns "Turn Me On," a song she, you know, "sings" that should earn her even more gay club play. Tracks featuring will.i.am ("Nothing Really Matters") and Jennifer Hudson ("Night of Your Life") are all right, though not exactly the most innovative among the other club cuts, but can't come close to touching the one-two punch of Sia and Jessie J. "Titanium" is a big track, catapulting like it's about to break through the sky, and Sia takes it even higher. Jessie J's "Repeat," another empowering song with soul and an irresistible hook, is better than any track off the Brit's recently released debut. Both songs should, in a perfect world, give both artists more career momentum — thanks to Guetta, whose fifth album isn't just a more diversified affair that pulls in all sorts of artists; it takes many of them where you've never heard them go before. *Grade: B*



Natalia Kills, 'Perfectionist'

If Natalia Kills were a true perfectionist, as the title of this album claims, there'd be no room to complain about the 10 songs on her debut. But there's plenty to pick at, including the half-as-good Gaga rips and seriously lame lyrics that don't go deeper than a scratch. Not only does the British singer coin her own penis euphemism ("disco stick" is so three years ago; it's "love grenade" now), there's also a that-man-is-a-monster song called "Zombie." It's easy to see who she's been listening to lately, which makes this shameless copycat problematic: She's never as good as Gaga, which is a comparison that wouldn't be fair had Kills not brought it on herself. So we have "Wonderland," definitely passable (though it's just a "Bad Romance" wannabe), and songs that are so abysmally written they wouldn't even make it on a Ke\$ha album (among them: "Superficial" and "Acid Annie," an awkward tale of getting her boyfriend back). She even lacks innovation on the ballads, with "Broke" coming from the "Halo"/"Already Gone" family. And "If I Was God" isn't bad, but Nelly Furtado's

done it better. Think of the 24-year-old as a breakup rebound: She's a good time, but you'll be thinking of someone else the whole time. *Grade: C-*

Also Out



Mason Jennings, 'Minnesota'

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The dark turn Mason Jennings took on his last album, the gritty "Blood of Man," isn't so much a part of his latest. A dedication to his home turf, the singer-songwriter — inspired by starting his own family — loses the lo-fi vibe and goes back to earlier albums, but now with more piano. It runs through the simple "Bitter Heart" like a track from the closing of some sweet scene in an indie film. It's used to jauntier effect on almost-pop "Raindrops On..." and as an intro to "Clutch," one of the disc's many highlights. Even when Jennings goes for something way leftfield, like on the Cuban-cut "Well of Love," his risks are ones worth taking... and hearing.



Active Child, 'You Are All I See'

Active Child, a pseudonym for laptop musician Pat Grossi, might as well be the love child of Bon Iver and

Enya. Layers of instruments mount into sonic bliss as he draws in everything from synth beds and harpsichord to thrashing drum machines and, of course, his own voice — a pretty, always emotive link between the variance of songs. Most of them sound like they were threaded in his dreams, with "See Thru Eyes" taking on some kind of sacred life and another fave, "Hanging On," sounding like he's singing with himself, alternating between registers with a cool duality. It's music that isn't meant to be accessible or understood. In fact, you don't even really hear it — you feel it.

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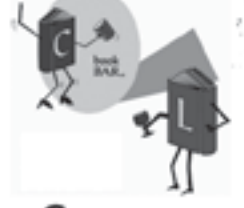




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► **Kristin Chenoweth**

Continued from p. 25

It's true. You are two of the happiest people I know of. So, tell me... what pisses you off?

(Laughs) Oh gosh. I don't really get mad that often. But I'm not going to lie, when I do, there's a quiet that comes over me that is a little like whoa, and that happens when I don't feel other people are prepared or doing their job or pulling their weight. I come from a family where my dad came from nothing and worked hard to get where he is, and he said, "Work hard, play hard, Kris," and I guess that's kind of been my motto in life. So when I see people squandering opportunities or having a sense of entitlement, that really makes me crazy. Because I don't understand it. It's not a world I get.

You're driving, so how about something that ticks you off about other drivers?

You know what, I don't get road rage! I just don't. I'm like, "OK, you cut me off – you must need to go somewhere a lot quicker than I do. Go on then." And also, I've had so many people in my life be affected by car wrecks, and I've had a few myself, that I just have realized, "Eh, you know, life's too short."

I know one thing that makes you upset, and that's homophobic people.

I don't like that, you're right.

Your letter in response to that Newsweek column said it all. Why was it important to address your feelings on that issue?

To be honest with you, I wasn't prepared for what was going to happen. I was on Broadway doing "Promises, Promises," and I read the article and I actually thought it was pretty irresponsible. I'm not even talking about whether a person agrees with being gay or not, I'm talking about artistry and gay actors trying to play straight. It just made me mad, because I thought, "Well, I've played a prostitute, does that mean I am one? No." I just thought it was a little bit of a bullying thing, and I honestly prayed about it – no kidding, I prayed about it. I wrote that letter in one fell swoop and I gave it to a good friend of mine to proofread, because the last thing I wanted to do was sound like an idiot, which I can do as well. So we sent it on and the next thing I know, they printed it.

And by the way, I'm a big fan of the magazine, which is why I was so bummed. But I think that they felt bad and hopefully there's been some discussion about it and some learning, because that's what we're here to do on this Earth, to learn our purpose. Well, one of my purposes in this life – since I'm a believer and a Christian – is to help people realize that not every Christian thinks that being gay is a sin.

To reinforce your stance that gay actors can indeed act straight, you made out with your "Promises, Promises" co-star Sean Hayes at the Tonys last year.

It might've been a little jib. It might've been a little one. (Laughs)

What was it like to make out with a gay man, and was that your first time making out with one?

Well, let's face it, my high school boyfriend is gay, so I don't think it's my first time making out with gay men – and I bet a lot of women don't even know they've done it! And Sean Hayes is just a darn good kisser, what can I say?

Wait, so you dated a gay man in high school?



Photo: Jeremy Cowart

Yeah, and I'm like, "Well, that's why we were such a great couple!" He didn't pleasure me in any way but he helped me pick out my prom dress!

Was he one of the first gay people you knew in Oklahoma?

Yeah. I want to tell you something I know about myself: When I was in the second or third grade, I first heard the word "dyke," and it was in reference to a girl in our school who was very, very tomboyish – and I didn't really understand what the word was, but I knew I didn't like the way it was said. And for some reason I've always been drawn to the person that was alone, and I don't mean to make me sound like I'm Mother Teresa, because I'm not, but I've always been drawn to people who felt left out or different, and maybe it's because I too felt different and unique. People would not think this of me, because there's this perception of me that, "Oh, life's been perfect and things have come so easily."

But let's face it, my speaking voice is very interesting. Yes, I was a cheerleader but I also wanted to do all the plays, I was in renaissance choir, and I too felt a little bit like an outsider. I was always drawn to people who felt that way too. And sure, some of them were gay and I never did understand – I guess the word is fear.

God made us all equal. He made me short, he made someone gay, he made someone tall – whatever it is, it's not a sin; it's how we're made. And that's the way I feel about it. It flies in the face of a lot of what Christians believe, but as I'm finding out there's a lot of Christian people who think the same as me. So that's my deal, and I think we should not be careful of the unknown but rather accepting and loving of it.

As someone who's Christian and supports the gay community, how do you feel about the pray-away-the-gay program that Michele Bachmann supports?

(Long pause) Um, you know what – you can have your opinion. One of the great things about being in this country is we get to freely say what we believe. I just don't happen to agree with that. I like the pray part! (Laughs)

Rio Rocks On



Royal Oak actress finds her calling in a new rockabilly band

BY SAMANTHA WHITE AND CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Detroit was bustling from a Lions game that just let out, but inside the city's U Detroit Café was a gritty, soulful voice – much like an amalgam of Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley and Janis Joplin. Except her name is Rio Scafone, and she and her band – known collectively as Rio and the Rockabilly Revival – were making their debut this past weekend.

Even in a red polka-dotted dress, looking

like Bettie Page, Scafone was pure rock 'n' roll and out to say that no, this – the rockabilly genre – doesn't need to be a man's world.

"Traditionally women steered clear of this type of music," Scafone says. "It takes a really strong and passionate woman to sing rockabilly."

And that she is.

"Ladies, get the attitudes going," Rio revved before going into "The Way I Walk," which she delivered so fiercely there didn't need to be a pep talk; her contagious swagger was enough to

get them going.

"There's nothing like the feedback and exchange of energy," she says. "It's a high you can't even imagine – there's nothing sweeter."

"Big, Bad, Handsome Man," a high-energy tune that brought couples out to the dance floor to do some fancy '50s footwork, was another favorite.

"Save my soul," she sang – and there were few people in the bar who *didn't* catch the rock 'n' roll holy ghost, taking them into another world

far away from the café on Randolph.

Though she's done theater work and starred in shows like "Detroit 187" and HBO's "Hung," Scafone was clearly born to sing "rockabilly," one of the earliest styles of rock 'n' roll music rooted in rock and country with soul and folk influences. After all, it runs in the family – her uncle, Jack Scott, is one of the genre's pioneers. "I've been singing since I was six. I've been at this for a long time," she says proudly.

After several years of living on both coasts and traveling, she's landed back in her native Detroit, by way of Royal Oak, where her uncle began it all. "I originally came back to reconnect with some of my family and in doing so met my husband," she says. "I'm very proud to be from Detroit and have my family from here."

Rio and the Rockabilly Revival are still preserving that raw sound that she grew up listening to – one that's gone to the wayside in the midst of technological advancements. And staying true to the authentic sound of the 1940s and 1950s is certainly important to Rio. "We don't use help of any kind," she says. "Our harmonies are very complicated and it's important that they are tight. If they aren't dead-on, we shouldn't be doing this."

Which is why Scafone made sure each of her bandmates could before they grouped.

"It's not for the weak of heart," she says. "You either bring it or go home. The whole point is to do it old-school, the way they did it in the 1950s. There's no Auto-Tune here."

Rio and the Rockabilly revival also includes singers Trish Shandor and Kim Maes, guitarist Jarod Thompson, saxophone player Jumpin' Jack Johnson and Brian Harris on drums.

Scafone and her husband Sean Eric Harris, the band's bassist and artistic director, met via social networking after Rio ended a long-term relationship. "Oddly enough, we met on MySpace after I ended a 15-year relationship with a woman who's my best friend," she candidly shares. Yes, Scafone's not just a pretty voice – she's a proud part of the LGBT community, even if she's not keen on labels.

"Labels are dangerous," she says. "They make it easier to understand an artist and who they are. I have been called 'The Female Elvis' and I don't mind that label. But I don't think being bi, straight or gay should have any bearing on music."

And it didn't last weekend in Detroit, even as they took a break from rocking out mid-set so that the band's ladies could come off stage and slow-dance with some adoring fans.

Once the show was over, the band settled into the upstairs greenroom, relaxing on black leather couches surrounded by music paraphernalia. They goofed around a bit and finished each other's sentences like they've been together longer than three months – but they haven't.

The chemistry was evident to Fenton radio station WCXI when Rio and her band recently performed in-studio. "They told us after the performance that there was magic in the air," she says.

Some artists don't even have that camaraderie after decades in the business, but Rio and the Rockabilly have more than that: undeniable musicianship, perfect harmonies and contagious energy.

Just ask the three folks in the back who were so moved by the music they caught the "spirit."

"We try to bring a Pentecostal spirit to our show," says Sean, "which is funny because none of us are Pentecostal."

New Orleans



Jackson Square lies at the heart of New Orleans' vibrant French Quarter. Photo: Andrew Collins

New Orleans has long ranked among the top destinations in the United States for gay travelers – it's been the case for decades, and even following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, LGBT tourists were among the first to return to the Big Easy in significant numbers. The city is especially popular with gay visitors during a handful of festivals and events throughout the year, including Southern Decadence, sometimes nicknamed "Gay Mardi Gras," which is coming up soon – it takes place over Labor Day weekend.

Other key events for gay visitors are Halloween weekend at the end of October, New Orleans Gay Pride in late June, and – of course – the city's true Mardi Gras season, which takes place at varying times in late winter (in 2012, the date of Mardi Gras "Fat" Tuesday is Feb. 21. Additionally, Christmas season – throughout December and right into New Year – is a wonderful time to visit, in part because of the mild weather but also because it's a season of very lively parties and special dinners held by numerous restaurants (called *reveillon* dinners).

Whenever you happen to make your way to this festive city, which has staged a remarkable renaissance since Katrina, you'll find no shortage of fascinating neighborhoods.

First, a word about navigation: the layout of New Orleans is tricky for newcomers. Locals don't use such directional cues as "east," "west," "south," and "north," so leave your compass at home. The city is sandwiched between Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River, which snakes around the parts of the city with the bulk of the key neighborhoods – hence the nickname, the "Crescent City." So listen instead for directional references to the lake, the river, or a particular neighborhood.

If you're interesting in finding names of the many cool gay bars, desirable restaurants and intriguing shops in New Orleans, consider

such resources as the city tourism office's official LGBT visitor website (www.neworleansonline.com/neworleans/glb), and commercial sites like GayNewOrleans.com and AmbushMag.com are also very handy.

Some of the nation's finest examples of late-18th- and 19th-century residential architecture line the streets of the French Quarter, which fringes the river. The Quarter may be the only major entertainment district in America that's frequented just about equally by gays and straights, locals and tourists. Virtually every notable restaurant in the French Quarter (a.k.a. *Vieux Carre*, which residents pronounce *voo-cair-ay*) has at least something of a gay following, and you'll find a mixed gay-straight crowd at many bars and hangouts, and the epicenter of the city's gay nightlife scene at the intersection of Bourbon and St. Ann streets (home to venerable bars like Bourbon Pub and Oz). The neighborhood also abounds with hotels and inns with a strong gay following.

Bourbon Street is the Quarter's most famous address, but Decatur Street is a better walking thoroughfare – it's less chaotic and commercial and more diverse, home to good, cheap eateries and offbeat shops. Off Decatur is the entrance to Jackson Square, the historic center of the French Quarter. Behind the gloriously landscaped square is the stunning late-18th-century St. Louis Cathedral. William Faulkner once resided at 624 Pirate's Alley, which is one of two alleys (Pere Antoine is the other) that cut beside the cathedral between Chartres (pronounced "Charters") and Royal streets. At 632 St. Peter Street is the house (now private) in which Tennessee Williams lived when he penned "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Many antiques shops and galleries are along Chartres and Royal streets, as well as in the wonderfully atmospheric French Market, where you can buy everything from local crafts

to regional culinary specialties – hot sauces, bits of alligator jerky, gumbo mixes, and so on. Across from the entrance to Jackson Square are steps leading to the Mississippi River and Woldenberg Riverfront Park, which is a relaxing place to explore day or night. The park leads to the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, a state-of-the-art facility where marinelife swim in dozens of exhibits.

The neighborhood just downriver from the Quarter – across tree-shaded Esplanade Avenue – is Faubourg Marigny, sometimes lovingly dubbed "Fagburg" Marigny for its sizable GLBT presence. Nearer the Quarter, from about Elysian Fields Avenue to Esplanade, more rainbow flags fly than anywhere else in the city. The next neighborhood downriver, Bywater, has been significantly gentrified in recent years by a newer wave of settlers, many of them gay, who have restored dozens of grand old homes.

The more modern side of New Orleans falls within the Central Business District (CBD), which borders the Canal Street side of the Quarter. There are some prime examples of early 20th-century commercial architecture in and around where Perdido Street intersects with Loyola Avenue, but this district looks like a typical American downtown business section. Toward the river, however, particularly along Julia Street, you'll find the increasingly interesting Warehouse District, which abounds with galleries, restaurants, and some notable museums, including the Ogden Museum of Southern Art and the National World War II Museum.

From Canal Street, you can take the streetcar along St. Charles Avenue for several miles clear out to Carrollton Avenue. This trip takes in the city's vibrant Uptown and Carrollton neighborhoods and reveals dozens of historic homes (some open as museums), churches, and trendy dining and shopping districts. Such attractions as Audubon Park and Zoo, Loyola

and Tulane universities, and the courtly Garden District round out this part of town. To see the homes and gardens that give the Garden District its name and allure, alight at the Washington Avenue stop and walk a block down Washington to Prytania Street.

Much of the best shopping and dining Uptown is along Magazine Street, which parallels St. Charles a few blocks closer to the river and is especially known for its antiques stores and galleries. A walk along this engaging street reveals a side of city that's far less touristy than the French Quarter.

Where to Stay in New Orleans

Although the usual chain properties are well-represented all over the city, and some of these make excellent lodging options, New Orleans also has an exceptionally high number of guesthouses and inns set inside vintage mansions as well as larger historic hotels. In terms of history and atmosphere, the Hotel Monteleone (hotelmonteleone.com) – once a favorite overnight address of Truman Capote, Tennessee Williams, and many other literary greats – is a stand-out. More than 125 years old, the 600-room high rise is in the heart of the French Quarter, has a great spa and a fabulous bar, the Carousel Piano Lounge.

Of larger properties, other great choices are the swanky Ritz-Carlton New Orleans (www.ritzcarlton.com), which fringes the Quarter and occupies a historic former department store; Harrah's New Orleans (www.harrahneworleans.com), which is centrally located, is home to several excellent restaurants, and has beautiful rooms – the casino is in a completely separate building, making it ideal whether or not you're into gaming. Also check out the New Orleans Marriott (www.marriott.com), which draws a mix of business and leisure travelers, borders the Quarter, and offers a LGBT-oriented "Rainbow NOLA Getaway" package.

If you're more interested in a smaller property, be sure to check out the website of Bed and Breakfast Inns of New Orleans (www.bbnola.com), which lists nearly 50 reliable properties throughout the city – you can search for them on the site by checking a number of criteria, including "gay-friendly." Some favorites include La Maison Marigny B&B (www.lamaisonmarigny.com), which is right on Bourbon Street (the quiet end), just a few blocks from numerous bars, and has smartly furnished, eco-friendly rooms; and 1896 O'Malley House (www.1896omalleyhouse.com), a gorgeous Colonial Revival home in the Mid-City neighborhood (an easy streetcar ride from the Quarter), with lavishly furnished rooms and spectacular breakfasts.

B&W Courtyards (www.bandwcourtyards.com), in Faubourg Marigny just a short walk from Frenchmen Street's dining and nightlife, is another terrific inn, with intimate and elegant rooms and knowledgeable hosts who know a ton about the neighborhood. And if you're seeking a distinctive accommodation Uptown, near the Garden District, consider the Chimes B&B (www.chimesneworleans.com), whose five guest rooms are posh but understated, some with original fireplaces, slate floor or heart-of-pine floors, and pitched ceilings. It's one of the most romantic places to stay in New Orleans.

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

Passionate 'Sunset Boulevard' at the Barn

BY BRIDGETTE M. REDMAN

For those who will never surrender, the only option is glory – whether it be in laurel-crowned victory or horrifying loss. At the Augusta Barn, it becomes possible to see both simultaneously in the stellar production of Norma Desmond's tragic fall from grace. The character experiences the loss, the production is sheer victory.

Andrew Lloyd Weber's "Sunset Boulevard" has all the elements of classical tragedy with its larger than life heroine, the former star of the silent movie genre who is convinced she will make a triumphant return by getting Cecil B. DeMille to direct her script of Salome, with the aging starlet playing the role of the 16-year-old dancer.

Kim Zimmer's Norma commands the stage with a fearsome presence. Her voice is clear, powerful and emotional, whether she is eulogizing her dead ape, swearing her love or expressing how at home she feels back in the studio. Zimmer is both frightening and endearing. Like Penelope Alex's Blanche in "Streetcar Named Desire," she commands sympathy even while portraying an unlikeable personality. So effectively does she seduce, that at the end of the musical, the loss of her sanity has greater emotional impact than the death of the person she murders. Her delivery of the musical's famous closing line inspires goose bumps, even with the foreknowledge of what she's about to say.

As all that made Norma famous is irretrievably lost to her, Zimmer wrenchingly portrays what it is like to have the sun set on one's self-identity. She grasps at youth and blindly ignores reality, lest its barbs bleed her dry.



Kim Zimmer stars as Norma Desmond in "Sunset Boulevard." Photo: Barn Theatre

REVIEW

Sunset Boulevard

Barn Theatre, 13351 W. M-96, Augusta.
Tuesday-Sunday through Sept. 4. \$34. 269-731-4121.

www.barntheatre.com

It's easy to see why Norma falls for Eric Parker's Joe Gillis. Parker is intense in the way he listens, the perfect audience for a woman who defines herself through her fans. His stillness speaks as voluminously as his narration of Norma's downfall. Parker wears Gillis' cynicism well, a wry self-awareness of his compromised values apparent in each of his choices.

Roy Brown gives Max Von Mayerling his own tragic dignity, playing his loyalty fiercely and his protectiveness unwavering. He peels back the layers slowly, letting the relationships build in intensity until they reach their tragic conclusions. His work with Zimmer in the final scene is nothing short of breathtaking.

This trio dominates the musical with amazing chemistry and skilled performances. Yet, it is not just their show. A large cast supports the leads with equally strong voices, character work and commitment. "Sunset Boulevard" is the culmination of Augusta's season, and everyone performs at peak levels. The sets are opulent and the costuming varied in all but quality, which remained first-rate.

"Sunset Boulevard" bestows a powerful closing to the Augusta season with echoes of each of their previous performances. Norma dreams the impossible dream of "The Man of La Mancha," engages in the soul-sapping pursuit of fame that doomed the "Chicago" ladies' character, mirrored the descent into madness found in "Streetcar" all while searching for the happy ever after of "Cinderella." For those that have missed the Augusta Barn season so far, "Sunset Boulevard" marks the opportunity to experience the magic of their 65th season.

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

Fisher opens season with 'Come Fly Away'

DETROIT—The new Broadway musical "Come Fly Away," conceived, choreographed and directed by Tony Award-winner Twyla Tharp and by special arrangement with the Frank Sinatra Family and Frank Sinatra Enterprises, will open at Detroit's Fisher Theatre on Tuesday, Sept. 13.

"Come Fly Away" follows four couples as they fall in and out of love during one song and dance filled evening at a crowded nightclub. Blending the legendary vocals of Frank Sinatra with a live on-stage big band and 14 of the world's finest dancers, "Come Fly Away" weaves an unparalleled hit parade of classics, including "Fly Me To The Moon," "My Way," and "That's Life," into a soaring musical fantasy of romance and seduction.

The show's score combines classic and newly discovered vocal performances from the Sinatra archives along with signature arrangements by Nelson Riddle, Billy May, Quincy Jones, among others, and brand new charts, for this fresh innovative musical.

"Come Fly Away," which premiered at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta in September 2009 and opened on Broadway in March 2010, is the next and most

elaborate chapter in one of the most fruitful collaborations in contemporary dance. Twyla Tharp's creative relationship with the music of Frank Sinatra began in 1976 with the premiere of "Once More Frank," a duet created for the American Ballet Theatre, performed by Tharp and Mikhail Baryshnikov. The collaboration continued with "Nine Sinatra Songs," Tharp's acclaimed piece for 14 dancers, which had its world premiere with Twyla Tharp Dance in 1982, and was followed by "Sinatra Suite," a duet featuring Baryshnikov and Elaine Kudo, which had its world premiere in 1984 with American Ballet Theatre at the Kennedy Center. Sinatra requested "Sinatra Suite" be performed when he received his Kennedy Center Honors Award, citing it as one of the purest expressions of his body of work.

Performance times for "Come Fly Away," appearing Sept. 13 – 25 at the Fisher Theatre, located at 3011 W. Grand Blvd., in Detroit, are Tuesday through Saturday at 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m. and Sunday evening performances at 7:30 p.m.

Ticket prices for the Detroit engagement of "Come Fly Away" range from \$39-\$89 (including parking and facility fees) and are now on sale at



The original Atlanta cast of "Come Fly Away." Photo: Greg Mooney

the Fisher Theatre box office and all Ticketmaster locations. Tickets are also available for purchase online at {URL www.ticketmaster.com} or {URL www.BroadwayinDetroit.com}, and by calling Ticketmaster at 1-800-982-2787. Limited premium seats are available at the box office only. For group sales (12 or more) please call 313-871-1132.

For additional information, call 313-872-1000.

The Whipping Man
By Matthew Lopez
Directed by Gary Anderson
"...Eerie and absorbing...at once gorgeous and terrifying..."
September 7 - October 2, 2011

It is the first night of Plague, 1845. Time for a Salem. When? G. Well-kept house in Salem, MA. The wife? Salem. The maid? A small room of husband, the tough older's bond. Unsettled others you're play the role of the bitter love.

Did the three elderly participants? All. Inside two only feed down and an injured Confessors while whose family have all three are unacceptably inhabiting in the weekend aftermath of the pre-ordained God.

Yes. It is Salem, the older of the two former does and a man of strong, unwavering faith who leads the ceremony.

Little by little we find out that Simon and the younger John learned to work in the fields of their fathers, the family of Caleb Turner. He also see the splendor of a new world you find before our eyes. Don't miss this!

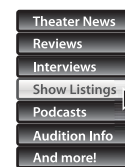
Co-Produced with
Rowdies Theatre Company

*There is no performance on September 27th. Subscribers will receive tickets for September 27th.

Get Your Tickets Today!
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JET performs in the Aaron Doray Theatre in the corner of Maple & Cass.

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RTM Happenings

Outings

In 2010, Michigan hosted 50 anti-government extremist groups, the highest number in the country. The state is host to one of the largest concentrations of KKK members in the country and has attracted numerous hate-mongering groups and individuals, including anti-Islamist Terry Jones. As Eric Freedman of Dome Magazine put it: "What is it about Michigan that makes our state a magnet for religious hate-mongers?"

In an effort to address this potentially dangerous aspect of Michigan culture and to build community-based response networks to address the needs of our communities and possible victims of hate crimes, the Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights have developed the MI Response to Hate conference.

The conference is Friday, Sept. 9 at the MSU Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing. It's offered at no cost to registered participants. Time and further details provided after registration. For registration and more information, visit miaahc.com.

Art 'n' Around



When viewing Bruce Giffin's latest photograph exhibit "The Face of Detroit," located in the Pittmann-Puckett Art Gallery of Affirmations, Giffin would tell you that there are two things you need to know about his collection: One-third of the people depicted in this exhibit are homeless, but it is not important to know which ones.

Longtime Metro Times photographer Giffin has been shooting photos of Detroit for almost 30 years. His portraits of abandoned buildings have earned him a reputation for capturing the city's complex history and nature.

Giffin's "The Face of

Detroit" is revealed at his opening night reception at 7-9 p.m. Sept. 9 in the Pittman-Puckett Art Gallery at Affirmations, where it will be exhibited. For more information, go to brucegiffin.com or goaffirmations.org.

Theater

Eastern Michigan University Theatre opens its 2011-12 season with "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." Winner of the 2005 Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical, "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" is a witty foray into the lives of six kids caught in the clutches of puberty and clinging to the outskirts of popular society. Performed at EMU during the spring semester, the production has been held over by popular demand.

Performances will be in the Sponberg Theatre at 7 p.m. Sept. 9-10 and 2 p.m. Sept. 11. Sponberg Theatre is located inside the Dramatic Arts Building, located at the intersection of East Circle Drive and Best Hall on EMU's Ypsilanti campus. Tickets are \$15. Call 734-487-2282 for complete information.



OUTINGS

Wednesday, Aug. 31

GOAL Bowling Night, 7 p.m. Both games and shoes cost \$1 each. Karaoke in alley's bar to follow. GOAL, 2101 E. 12 Mile Road, Warren. getoutandlive.me

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

Silent No More: Transgenders Speak!, 7 p.m. Part of the "Don't Ask Don't Tell: The Unspoken Policy in the Black Church" dialogue series which explores the impact of silence on the African American LGBTQ community. Agape Spirit Life Ministries, Noah's Ark, and the Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion, 2930 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 248-825-6149. agapespiritlifeministries.org

Thursday, Sept. 1

Jewish Gay Network Family & Friends, 7 p.m. LGBT group discussing issues impacting the LGBT and allied community. Meets 1st Thursday of every month. The Jewish Gay Network, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 248-432-5661. jgnmi.org

Friday, Sept. 2

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. Film-Vickie Shaw. Riffing on the madness of menopause to helping your kids come out about your sexuality, Vickie says that when your kid's friends ask, "Is your mom gay?" look 'em in the eye and ask, "Why? - Does your mom wanna date her?" Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

S.P.I.C.E., 7:30 p.m. S.P.I.C.E. works to empower and enhance the lives of women of color in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning community in Metropolitan Detroit, by eradicating the health, social and educational barriers facing them. Meetings are on the first Friday of every month. S.P.I.C.E., 290 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Tuesday, Sept. 6

LanSINGout Gay Men's Chorus, 6:30 p.m. LanSINGout Gay Men's Chorus invites all people with male-sounding voices to join with us at our open enrollment rehearsals. Lansing First Presbyterian Church, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing. 517-490-1746. lansingout.org

Wednesday, Sept. 7

Ladies Who Lunch, 11:30 a.m. Ladies meet at Nina's Cafe for food and conversation. Contact Angie to make a reservation. The Resource Center, 1710 W. Main St., Kalamazoo. angiehosewillard@yahoo.com kgirc.org

Friday, Sept. 9

MI Response to Hate, 7:30 a.m. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, Michigan led the nation in 2010 with the highest number of anti-government extremist groups at 50. This conference will provide a structured opportunity for Michigan to develop community-based response systems and address the needs of our communities and victims of bias motivated incidents. Registration is free. The Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, 55 S. Harrison Ave., East Lansing. 517-432-4000. miaahc.com

Artist Opening Reception for The Face of Detroit, 6 p.m. Metro Times photographer Bruce Giffin has been shooting photos in the city of Detroit for almost 30 years. He's garnered attention in recent years for his Face of Detroit portrait project. The artist states one-third of the subjects are homeless, but that it's not important to know which are. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 224. MMcMillan@GoAffirmations.org goaffirmations.org

Older Lesbians Organizing, 7 p.m. Provides older Lesbians with the chance to meet like minded women in their common struggles, to share mutual interests and to play and work together. Meets the 2nd Friday of every month. Older Lesbians Organizing, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-678-2478. jasmithers@sbcglobal.net

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. Film-Sappho. Recently married Sappho can't imagine a more perfect union than the passionate relationship she shares with her sensitive husband. That is, until they spend the summer on the Greek island of Lesbos. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Sept. 10

"Circle...Home" Book Release, 12 p.m. Melissa Dey Hasbrook releases Circle...Home, a collection of poetry rooted in mid-Michigan. Circle...Home is a collaboration with Women's Center of Greater Lansing, and supported in part by a grant from the Arts Council of Greater Lansing. Womens Center of Greater Lansing, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-897-5833. melissahasbrook@gmail.com deyofthephoenix.com

Sunday, Sept. 11

PFLAG Detroit Meeting, 2 p.m. Support groups, social gathering, community announcements, program presentations, guest speakers, and dinner. Every 2nd Sunday of the month. PFLAG, 3333 Coolidge Hwy, Troy. 248-656-2875. pflagdetroit.org

GOAL Book Club, 4 p.m. September's choice: "Middlesex" by Jeffrey Eugenides. GOAL, 515 S Washington, Royal Oak. 248-515-2551. getoutandlive.me

Rainbow Book Club, 4:30 p.m. Book club dedicated to reading and discussing classic and contemporary lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer literature. Meeting since before 1998, every second Sunday of the month. Rainbow Book Club, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-678-2478. catherine.herne@gmail.com

HARC provided HIV/AIDS testing 5 p.m. HARC provides anonymous and free HIV counseling, testing and referral services through its outreach at the Jim Toy Community Center. HARC, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734 6782478. hivaidresource.org

MUSIC & MORE

CONCERTS

Ferndale Public Library "The Blueflowers and Woodman" Library's "First Stop Friday" series offering a unique, non-bar venue. This month's performance: The Blueflowers and Woodman Ferndale Public Library, 222 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 5:30 p.m. Sept. 9. 248-547-6008. facebook.com

Fox Theatre "Alison Krauss and Union Station" Tickets: \$29.50-49.50. Featuring Jerry Douglas for the "Paper Airplanes Summer Tour 2011." Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Sept. 8. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

Kerrytown Concert House Howard Fishman, New Orleans jazz, Brooklyn soul, open-hearted country, blues and gospel music through a completely original, experimental aesthetic, to create a sound entirely its out. Tickets: \$30-10. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Sept. 9 - Sept. 9. 734-769-2999. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

MSU College of Music "Professors of Jazz Concert" MSU Professors of Jazz take the stage celebrating the start of a new academic year and welcoming new faculty member Reggie Thomas to MSU. Tickets: \$10 adults, \$8 seniors. Admission is free for students with ID or anyone under 18. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts at Michigan State University, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 7:30 p.m. Aug. 31. 517-353-1982 ext. 14. msu.edu

Saugatuck Center for the Arts Janis Ian, Grammy winning, iconic singer/songwriter Janis Ian's one-night only performance in West Michigan. Tickets: \$35. Saugatuck Center for the Performing Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. 7 p.m. Sept. 8. 269-857-2399. sc4a.org

The Ark "Orpheum Bell The Red Sea Pedestrians" Tickets:\$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Sept. 2. 734-761-1800. theark.org

The Ark "Fishtank Ensemble" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Sept. 1. 734-761-1800. theark.org

The Ark John McCutcheon Tickets: \$20. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Sept. 10. 734-761-1800. theark.org

The Ark Caroline Herring Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Sept. 14. 734-761-1800. theark.org

The Ark Bernard Allison Tickets: \$20. The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Sept. 13. 734-761-1800. theark.org

The Ark Ben Sollee Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Sept. 14. 734-761-1800. theark.org

FESTIVALS

Blue Water Folk Society "Thumbfest 2011" A free all-day music festival for the entire family with music stages spread throughout downtown Lexington. Thumbfest spotlights acoustic music from traditions as diverse as New Orleans brass to Celtic, PanWorld to blues, Eastern European to Americana. There are multiple stages, workshops, jam sites, dance hall, song circles, children's stage area, crafts and a Hootenanny at the end of the night. Locations of stages at thumbfest.org Various venues, Lexington, Lexington. 10 a.m. Sept. 3. thumbfest.org

Detroit Jazz Festival "32nd Detroit Jazz Festival" Subtitled "We Bring You the World," the Detroit Jazz Festival will celebrate jazz's influence on the world and the world's influence on jazz. Detroit Jazz Festival, Hart Place to Campus Martius Park, Detroit. Sept. 2 - Sept. 5. 313-447-1248. detroitjazzfest.com

FILM & VIDEO

Michigan Theater "Psycho" Alfred Hitchcock's class 1960 suspense thriller. Tickets: \$9. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Sept. 5. 667-TIME.

Michigan Theater "The Whistleblower" Inspired by true events, Kathy (Academy Award-winner Rachel Weisz) is an American police officer who takes a job working as a peacekeeper in post-war Bosnia. Tickets: \$9. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Aug. 31 - Sept. 1. 667-TIME.

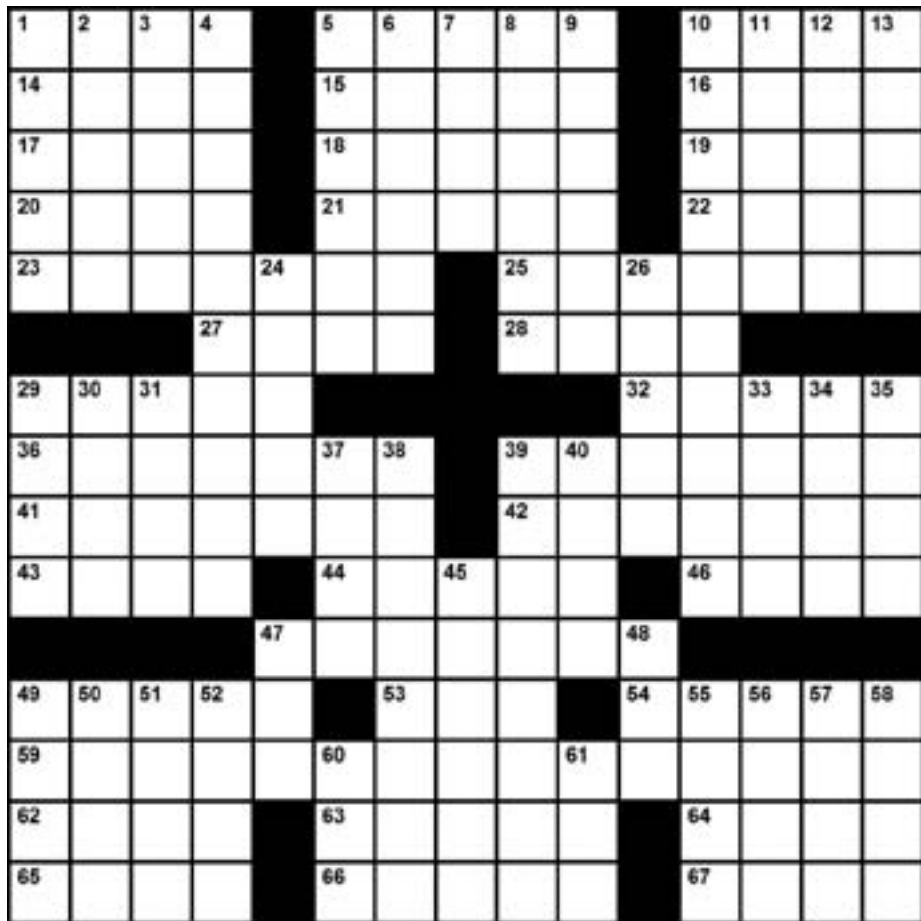
State Theater "Le fabuleux destin d'Amelie Poulain" From the visionary writer and director Jean-Pierre Jeunet, AmXXlie helped give the filmmaker the global recognition justly deserved after working with his artistic partner Marc Caro on such cinematic achievements as Delicatessen and The City of the Lost Children. Tickets: \$9. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Sept. 4 - Sept. 6. 667-TIME. michtheater.org

OTHER

Fashion's Night Out "Birmingham Fashion's Night Out" Celebration of the global shopping and fashion event "Fashion's Night Out." Special events and sales offered in participating stores downtown. For a list of participating stores go to enjoybirmingham.com. Downtown Birmingham, Various Venues, Birmingham. 6 p.m. Sept. 8. enjoybirmingham.com

Greenfield Village "61st Old Car Festival" Among 700 vehicles to be displayed at the 61st Annual Old Car Festival, the historically accurate replica of the 1770 Fardier de Cugnot, a steam powered wheel cart considered to be the first self-propelled vehicle ever made. Along with the Cugnot, the festival will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first Indy 500 race. Greenfield Village, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. Sept. 10 - Sept. 11. 313-982-6001. thehenryford.org

Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth "Drum for Wellness Circle" Facilitated drum



Urban Legend

Across

- 1 Forgo swallowing
- 5 Piece by Bette Midler
- 10 Lively dances
- 14 Alec of "Desperate Housewives"
- 15 Top
- 16 Kind of jacket
- 17 Range dividing Europe and Asia
- 18 ___ Hall University
- 19 Cry before claiming immortality
- 20 Actor Auberjonois
- 21 Larry Kramer's "Just ___"
- 22 Problem for one's bitch
- 23 Sitcom with John Mahoney
- 25 Kahlo output
- 27 Where to get off in gay Paree
- 28 "Starting Over" bisexual
- 29 Faux pas
- 32 Peachy, but not fruity

- 36 Games figures
- 39 Woody source
- 41 Cartoonist Alison
- 42 Society crasher
- 43 Art Deco design name
- 44 Shopping aids
- 46 Soviet leader Andropov
- 47 Prepare for printing
- 49 City of "The Bird Cage"
- 53 23rd Greek letter
- 54 "Riverfinger Women" writer Dykewomon
- 59 "Urban legend" of this puzzle
- 62 Explodes, with "off"
- 63 Ready to shoot off
- 64 Cold-cock
- 65 Roadside stops
- 66 Internet surfers
- 67 Former lovers

- 3 Bucky Beaver's toothpaste
- 4 With 7-Down, serial novel by an "urban legend"
- 5 Bowl or boat
- 6 Fabled cow owner
- 7 See 4-Down
- 8 Not like the sound of music, traditionally
- 9 Poe poem
- 10 Librettist for a musical adaptation of 4/7-Down
- 11 Prefix for Michelangelo's land
- 12 Marine role of Jim Nabors
- 13 Pussyfoot
- 24 Literate boast?
- 26 Aquarium structures
- 29 Kaplan of Kotter fame
- 30 Spit it out confidently
- 31 It may be cold and hard
- 33 Herr's honey
- 34 HI, once
- 35 Abominable snowman

- 37 Bank (on)
- 38 Glass footwear in a fairy tale
- 39 Not one of the gang
- 40 Vaulted church area
- 45 Part of Ali Babi's opening
- 47 Seventh notes
- 48 Beverage with scones
- 49 Three guys who went to see Mary
- 50 What muscle Marys pump
- 51 Sherman Hemsley religious sitcom
- 52 Piggy's title
- 55 Jelly not for bread
- 56 Very top
- 57 Cairo river
- 58 Queen's "subjects"
- 60 Greek T
- 61 L. Cruz and C. Torres, on "Grey's Anatomy"

Down

- 1 Shirtless guy in hot pants
- 2 Fruit peeler

Solution on 36

Pet of the Week



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Explore ideas, Cancer!

BY JACK FERTIG

Mercury in Leo stimulates creative thinking, but also a lot of self-promotional BS. While in Leo he's agitating the Pluto-Uranus square, leading people to take their notions way too seriously, but those aspects can trigger bits of revolutionary genius. The trick there is to challenge yourself, not everyone around you.

ARIES (March 20 – April 19): Your idea of fun and good humor is likely to upset some people. In the right time and place that could be a good thing, but think ahead about consequences and whom you can afford to piss off.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20): Arguments at home reflect and exacerbate your own insecurities and doubts. Dig into family history, or reflect on childhood patterns and how they affect you now. Probably best to do that on your own.

GEMINI (May 21 – June 20): Your mouth is getting even further ahead of your brain than usual, and your libido is probably somewhere between. The brilliance of your ideas depends on how much you challenge yourself, not others.

CANCER (June 21 – July 22): Hiding financial problems from your partner will only make the situation worse. Which of you is really better at handling money? It may be time to renegotiate how you deal with bills and expenses. Explore ideas now, but don't make decisions!

LEO (July 23 – August 22): Others might admire your brilliance nearly half as much as you do, but a good showman always leaves the audience wanting more. The ability to listen makes one much more popular than the ability to talk.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22): As naughty fantasies come up inside your head, explore them safely there. Putting them into reality could be delicious, but be very, very careful! Whether you explore them in theory or practice, you can learn a lot about yourself.

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22): It seems everyone wants an argument. Why can't they just be nice and agree with you? There's nothing wrong

with sticking to your guns. It's shooting them off too freely that drives away the people you care about.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21): You may feel hassled by an overbearing boss. Bite your tongue and take it all in as feedback to help you do your job better, no matter what the tone. There's always room for improvement.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20): Your idea of playful banter can really upset some people. That could be a good thing when done in the right time and place. In any event, there will be a price to pay, so make sure it's worth it!

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19): Capricornian brilliance at sex is one of the zodiac's best-kept secrets. The more it stays that way, the better off you are. Your home life will stay a lot safer if you keep that info on a need-to-know basis.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18): If you can't avoid debate, at least keep one eye inward to see how your arguments reflect your deepest fears and insecurities. Keep a friend nearby with whom you can have an honest talk about that.

PISCES (February 19 – March 19): Taking a cut in pay might be a necessary strategy for long-range benefits, but keep your eyes open and don't get taken advantage of. If money gets tight, you have the creative resourcefulness to make it through.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available for personal and business consultations in person in San Francisco, or online everywhere. He can be reached at 415-864-8302, through his website at www.starjack.com, and by email at QScopes@qsyndicate.com.

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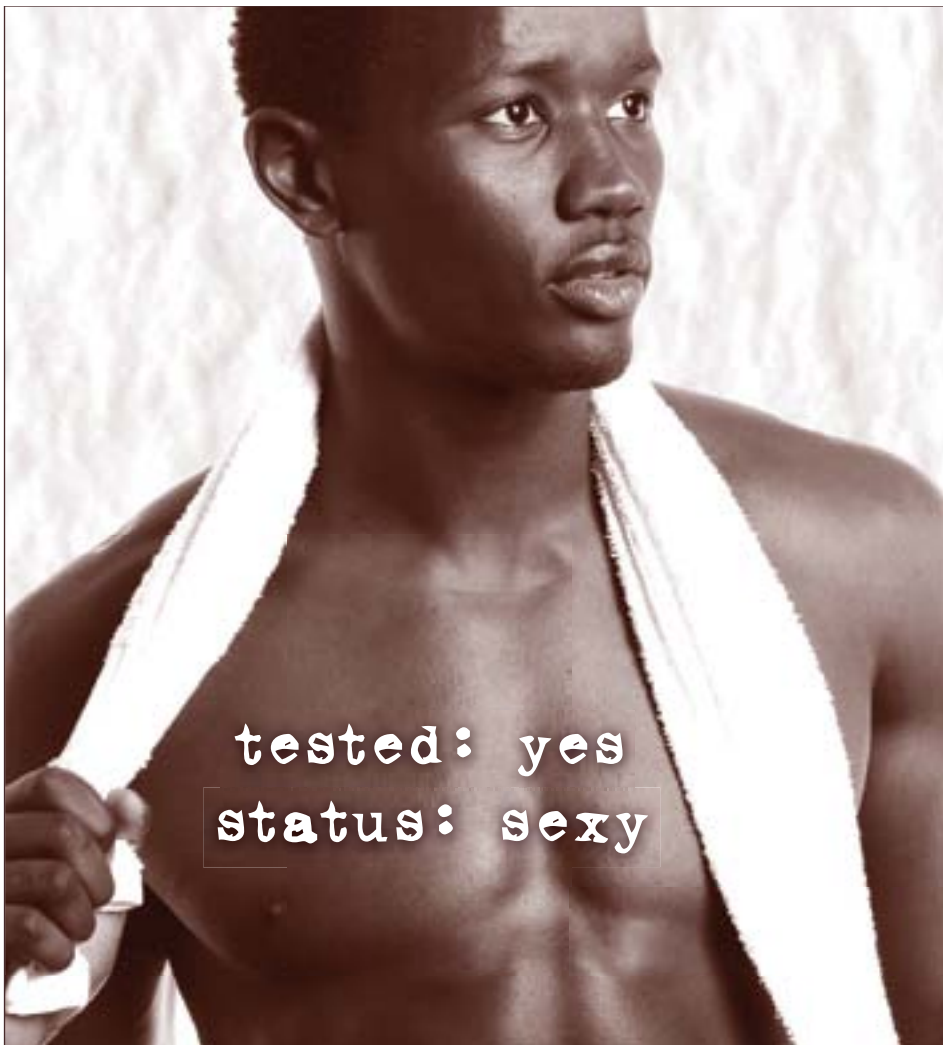
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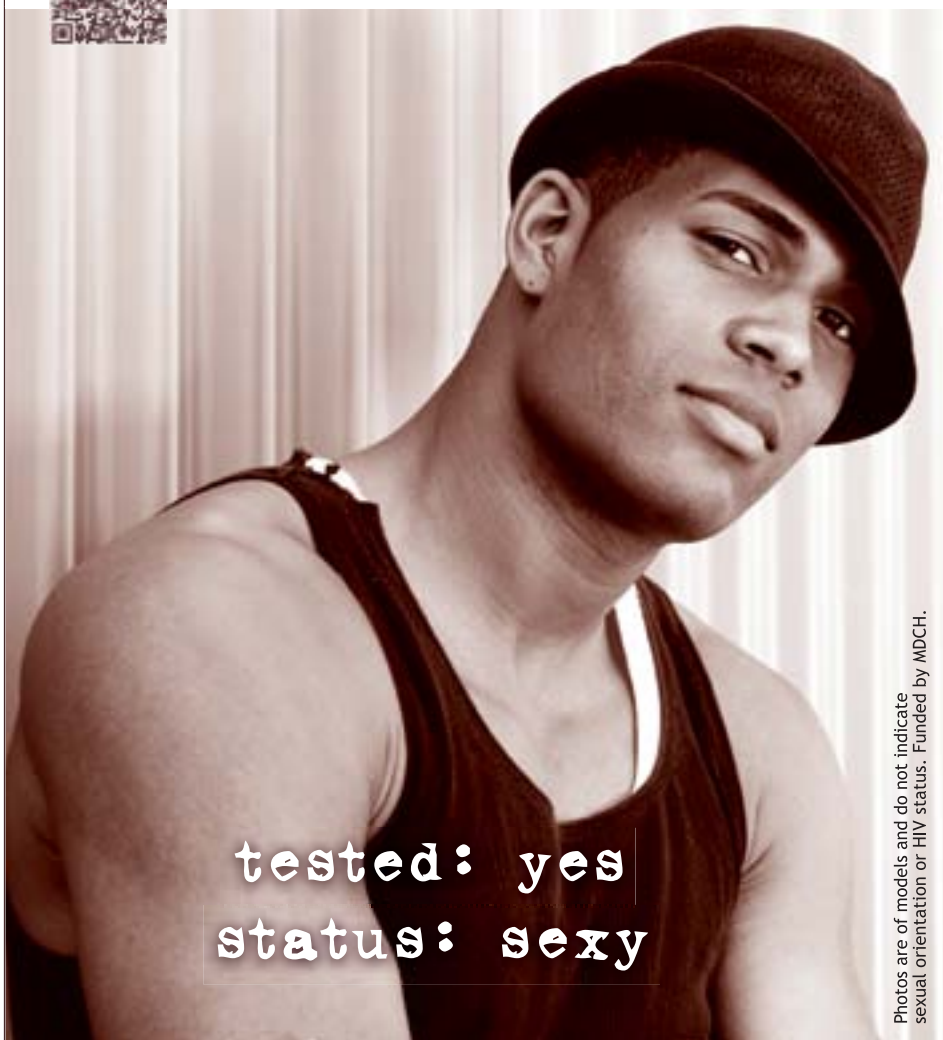
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BTL Dear Jody

BY JODY VALLEY

Little lies a big deal

Q: I've been dating "Sheryl" for a few months. I like her and sometimes feel like I'm falling for her. She's a lot of fun – not boring like a lot of other people. But, she has this one fault that is getting to me. She tells white lies, little lies most of the time, but sometimes bigger ones. It's not that I have a problem with a little white lie now and again, but she does it as a habit.

She lies about where she is, where she's going, whom she's speaking to, and on and on. I don't get it. It doesn't make sense to me why she even thinks she has to lie about most things. For instance, a friend called and wanted Sheryl and me to go to a movie. She told them that we wouldn't be going because we had already seen that particular movie. We hadn't seen it; what we were going to do that night was go to a play – we had advance tickets to a sold-out show. Sheryl could have just said that we had other plans.

Then, when we went to the play, we met some people she knew. In the course of the conversations, she told three lies that I knew of. I was amazed! All these lies seemed needless and incredibly ridiculous, like there was absolutely no good reason for them. In most cases she could just have told the truth, because it would have made no real difference.

I finally decided to confront Sheryl about it. At first she denied that she lied so much. So, I gave her all the many examples. In the face of all my evidence, she even lied that she told all these lies! That is, except for one of her lies: she explained to me that she didn't want to hurt the person's feelings.

How do I deal with someone who tosses out lies, like candy at a parade, for no good reason, then doesn't acknowledge that she lies? Like I said, I've never really seen any big lies, just little inconsequential ones. (We haven't been dating that long.) It doesn't make sense to me. Can you tell me why she would lie like this?

Dating a Liar

A: There are many reasons why people lie, such as: trying to keep out of trouble, making themselves look better, sparing feelings of others, not having to deal with unpleasant situations, trying to manipulate someone, wanting to be liked. There are more reasons, but this is a good start.

Most of us – if we're honest, and don't lie – tell lies, mostly to spare other people's feelings. However, Sheryl – from your descriptions – goes far beyond that. In fact, it sounds like Sheryl is pretty out of control in her lying. It appears compulsive, and may well be pathological.

Your question to me was: "Why would she lie like this?" My question to you is: Why would you consider getting involved with someone who lies like she does? Do you believe that she wouldn't lie to you, only to others? If so, you're wrong about that. And furthermore, when she's confronted with lying, she lies about lying. In other words, she's not facing up to her problem, for whatever reason.

You don't mention anything else about her, other than that she's "a lot of fun." Being "a lot of fun" doesn't seem like enough of a reason for an intimate relationship with someone – though one night at a party might be OK. However, in a relationship, how would you ever trust her not to lie to you? And even if she didn't lie to you, which I guarantee she will, how long can you take standing by and watching her lie to others?

If I were you, I'd run.

Want to know more about lying and why people do it? Go to Dear Jody Valley on Facebook.

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.

BTL

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Solution to puzzle from page 34

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101-ANNOUNCEMENTS
LGBT AA MEETINGS

Ann Arbor-Friday

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.
112 ANNOUNCEMENTS - VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
DIFFA: DINING BY DESIGN
Detroit's most original event, involving members of our fabulous design community! Cocktails by Design/Artworks for Life - Thursday, Sept. 22, 2011. Party by Design - Friday Sept. 23, 2011. Dining by Design - Saturday, Sept. 24, 2011. DIFFA: Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS benefits Michigan AIDS Coalition. www.michiganaidcoalition.org - click on DIFFA Dining by Design. Located at Willys Overland Lofts, 441 W. Canfield 48201 (in Midtown). For information, contact Monica Mills at (248) 545-1435, ext. 117, or mmills@michiganaidcoalition.org

116 ANNOUNCEMENTS - EVENTS

Calling all Artists!
Affirmations is seeking art submissions for an upcoming Juried Art Contest to be held during the Funky Ferndale Art Show. We will be offering over \$500 in prize winnings. For contest rules and how to submit art, please go to www.GoAffirmations.org/funkyart

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RTT Deep Inside Hollywood



Elton John. Photo: Andrew Macpherson/Miramax

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

T.R. Knight heads back To TV

It's been about two years since "Grey's Anatomy" star T.R. Knight quit that show amidst conflict with fellow actor Isaiah Washington. And he's kept busy in the theater world in the meantime, including taking a starring role in the 2010 Broadway show "A Life In The Theatre" opposite Patrick Stewart. But Hollywood called again, so now he's coming back to work in front of the cameras on an upcoming episode of "Law & Order: SVU." The episode in question—currently in production—finds Knight playing a suspected serial rapist, so that's an interesting out-of-the-box step for the actor, a role worlds away from the nice-guy character he portrayed on "Grey's." Maybe he can parlay it into meaty villain roles and become the next Joan Collins. There's no airdate for the "SVU" episode just yet, so keep a close watch on your DVR.

Elton John's ditches gnomes for trolls

Elton John's movie producing arm, Rocket Pictures, scored a solid hit with this spring's "Gnomeo & Juliet," an animated reworking of "Romeo and Juliet" featuring talking, singing garden gnomes. Filled to the brim with John's classic hit singles, the film made almost \$200 million worldwide. And because it's a short leap from gnomes to trolls, that's where Rocket's going next. "Will Gallows and the Snake-Bellied Troll," a live-action/CGI-animated feature based on the first in a series of kid-aimed books by author Derek Keilty, is already in production with "Gnomeo"'s writer/director Kelly Asbury. The story combines elements of Wild West cowboy adventure and, well, trolls from a fantasy universe. There's no voice cast set up just yet, but it's safe to expect that John will contribute in some way to the film's score. No gay troll jokes please.

'Glee,' 'True Blood' stars join 'The Submission'

When a gay white male playwright poses as an African-American female in order to pen a story about an alcoholic black mother, only

to be discovered in that lie, the consequences aren't going to be the stuff of fluffy musical theater. So when the non-musical drama "The Submission" opens Off Broadway this fall, audiences can expect to see a side of Jonathan Groff ("Spring Awakening"/"Glee") they might not have experienced before. The Tony nominee will be joined by "True Blood" star Rutina Wesley (as a woman who becomes involved in Groff's hoax) as well as by Eddie Kaye Thomas ("American Pie") as Groff's boyfriend, with directing duties handled by Tony winner Walter Bobbie ("Venus In Fur"/"Chicago") So if you're planning a New York theater trip this fall, put it at the top of your to-see list; serious drama—especially serious drama about touchy issues like race—never sticks around as long as the ones with catchy songs and cat costumes.

Coming soon: a 'Weekend' of 'Toast'

Pity the gay-themed indie film. Usually relegated to a limited release for an equally limited audience in the urban arthouse movie market, it can be tough to find a box-office foothold when Hollywood stuffs multiplexes with 3,000 prints of the new Adam Sandler movie. But two autumn releases might have more life up their sleeve than the usual suspects. September sees the release of the critically acclaimed U.K. film "Weekend," from director Andrew Haigh. It's been winning film festival awards all year and gathering praise from both audiences and critics, a rarity for low-budget romantic dramas with gay subject matter. And another Brit import, "Toast," already aired on BBC1 but getting an October theatrical release stateside, is a nostalgic dramedy about the boyhood of best-selling gay food writer Nigel Slater. Starring Freddie Highmore ("Neverland") and Helena Bonham Carter ("The King's Speech") and penned by "Billy Elliot" screenwriter Lee Hall, "Toast" has "Elliot"-style crowd-pleaser written all over it and the credentials to score with Oscar voters, too. Now all it has to do is leave a good taste in audiences' mouths.

Romeo San Vicente believes in the health benefits of buttered toast with Nutella, no matter what anyone else at the gym has to say about it. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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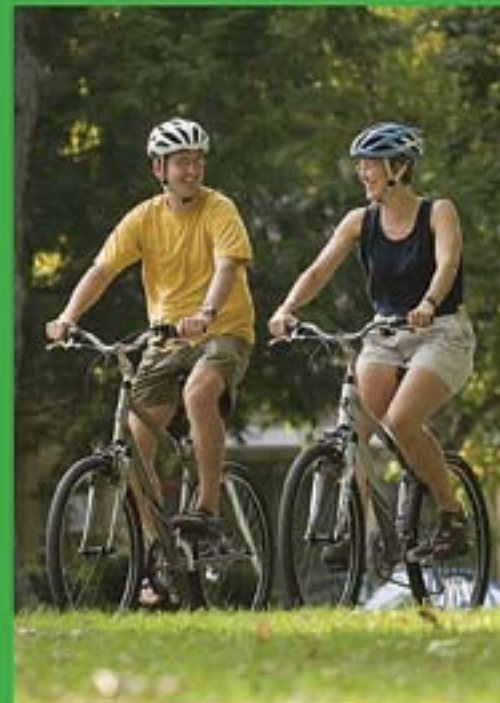


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