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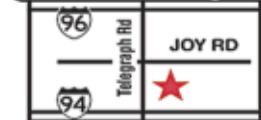
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BTL photos: Andrew Potter

Social activist challenges groups to create safe spaces for all

"I thought if I was a lesbian, I would never have kids, etc. I had accepted what I'd been told it means to be gay, versus what it's really like to be gay."

- Adrienne Maree Brown

BY DESIREE COOPER

You might say that Adrienne Maree Brown is an exorcist for social justice.

"I help social justice groups align themselves with their vision," said the 33-year-old Detroit resident. "So much is wasted on small, petty things, or harboring bitterness, grief and trauma. I try to exorcise those feelings."

The work of healing progressive movements requires Brown to be everything from an organizational guru, to a facilitator, networker and life coach. Since her early 20s, she has

worked on the ground floor of social movements in order to hone her skills. From 2006 to 2010, she was the executive director of The Ruckus Society, a California-based organization that trains activists in non-violent direct action.

"My role was moving Ruckus from a white, male organization to one that included more queer people and people of color," she said.

She worked with a green building project in New York's Hudson Valley, and eventually brought her skills to Detroit.

"I first met Adrienne when she was the host of the Allied Media Conference in 2008," said

Shea Howell, a community activist and chair of the Department of Rhetoric, Communication & Journalism at Oakland University. "Adrienne provided the warm, loving welcome to Detroit (even though she had not yet moved here). It was clear she felt the Detroit pull."

In 2006, Brown was invited to consult with Detroit Summer, a multi-racial, inter-generational collective that has been working to transform communities through youth leadership.

"I was so blown away by what they were

See Social activist, page 5

► Social activist

Continued from p. 4

doing and saying,” said Brown. “You have to transform yourself to transform the world. They were forging deep intergenerational relationships.”

“She started doing anti-oppression training with the participants but she quickly became an advisor to the collective,” said Howell, who is also a co-founder of Detroit Summer. “She has been a major force in guiding them into rethinking the role of Detroit Summer and its strategic vision - something she has helped a lot of organizations in the movement do.”

Through her work in Detroit, Brown met Invincible, the Detroit rapper who is now her same-sex partner. “My father used to say that

But she had to come to terms with her own internalized homophobia. “I thought if I was a lesbian, I would never have kids, etc.,” she said. “I had accepted what I’d been told it means to be gay, versus what it’s really like to be gay.”

Her maternal grandparents, however, were less than accepting.

“They were Southern Baptists,” said Brown. “They sent me scriptures to read. It was just like it was when my mother came home with my dad. They were opposed to the interracial relationship as well.”

Her sisters came to her aid. “They told my grandparents that if I wasn’t welcome in their home, they weren’t coming either. About two years later, I had a powerful conversation with my grandfather. I told him I was a spiritual person doing holy work in the world. I made real peace before my grandfather passed.”

“The way I work is being 100 percent myself. I come in as a bisexual, biracial woman everywhere I go. My work tends to be cross-constituency. I support queer people at the intersection of poverty, race and ability.”

- Adrienne Maree Brown

he’d always dream I’d fall for someone like him,” said Brown. “Well, I have.”

Coming to terms with coming out

Brown is the daughter of a white mother and an African American father who served 30 years in the U.S. Army. Born in El Paso, Texas, she grew up in Germany, Georgia, New York and California.

“My father was raised in poverty in South Carolina; he joined the military to escape that,” said Brown, acknowledging the way racism, capitalism and militarism have intersected to impact her life. “Because of his choice, we had a good life.”

Although she experienced same-sex attraction early in life, “In the military environment, I don’t remember homosexuality being anywhere in my world,” she said. “It wasn’t possible.”

In her early teen years, Brown was sexually assaulted. After that, she went through “an asexual phase.” She attended Columbia University in New York to study African American Studies, political science and voice.

“After I left college, I started to ask who I am in my body,” said Brown. “I started wearing clothes that would draw attention to me. I dated effeminate men and men who were studs. But I didn’t do relationships. I focused on my work. I saw relationships as drama.”

Coming out to her nuclear family when she was in her 20s wasn’t difficult. “I told my mother the first time I slept with a woman,” Brown said. “I was never encouraged to silence myself.”

Spaces without compromise

When Brown began to date Invincible five years ago, she not only fell in love with a Detroit, she also fell in love with Detroit. While her organizational consulting takes her nationwide, her home base is Detroit’s Cass Corridor, working closely with groups like the Food Justice Task Force and the East Michigan Environmental Council. In 2010, she was a co-host for the U.S. Social Forum that brought thousands of progressive activists to the city.

“She continues to be a force with Detroit Summer,” said Howell. “Everything from dinners at her home, to running weekend long retreats where, as she says, she creates and holds the space, so that people can bring their best selves to deciding what needs to be done.”

“The way I work is being 100 percent myself,” said Brown. “I come in as a bisexual, biracial woman everywhere I go. My work tends to be cross-constituency. I support queer people at the intersection of poverty, race and ability.”

Although she is bisexual, Brown does very little work exclusively within the LGBTQ community.

“The evolutionary goal is to live openly in all spaces without compromise,” she said. “Once you can be open about one thing, you can open the gate to other things. That’s how new kinds of families, traditions and ideas can emerge. One of the biggest mistakes we make as a society is trying to pull the conversations apart, as if racism isn’t related to sexism which isn’t related to homophobia.

“I don’t want gay to be so normal no one ever notices it,” she added.



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Measuring the impact of anti-bully laws

How do states' bullying bills stack up? How does Michigan compare?

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Before 1999, no state had laws against bullying in schools. Then there was the shooting at Columbine High School, and a wave of media attention to similar cases, where picked-on kids either sought revenge or killed themselves to combat the pain.

Since that time there have been numerous studies on the effects of classroom bullies and 48 states have enacted legislation, with over 120 bills and pieces of legislation being passed. Michigan was the most recent state to pass legislation, with PA241, known as "Matt's Law" being signed into effect on Dec 6.

The bills passed in the various states do not offer students the same protections, and some are considerably weaker than others. In order to assess the effectiveness of state legislation, the U.S. Department of Education has embarked on a two-part study. The first part compares the laws themselves and was released earlier this month titled "Analysis of State Bullying Laws and Policies." Michigan's current legislation was not included in this study because it hadn't been passed yet, nor was legislation signed on July 11 in Hawaii. Only Montana and South Dakota are left without anti-bullying laws on the books.

The second half of the study will look at how these laws have impacted students in their respective states. "While this report focuses on documenting and profiling policy across the states, these policies may not benefit schools or students unless they can be successfully implemented," the report states. "Whether these necessary actions are feasible within resource constraints, cannot be determined through a policy review alone."

As a starting point, The U.S. Department of Education identified 11 "key components" of anti-bullying legislation and then scored each state based on adherence to the principles behind those components. The components (Purpose, Statement of Scope, Prohibited Behavior, Enumeration of Groups, Development and Implementation of Local Policies, Review of Local Policies, Components of Local Policies,

Communications, Training and Prevention, Transparency and Monitoring, and Right to Pursue Other Legal Remedies) are fleshed out below, with information for Michigan added in by BTL.

Prohibition and purpose statement

Fifteen states laws contain purpose statements that communicate the context or rationale for the law. According to the report

education in a public school environment that is reasonably free from substantial intimidation, harassment or harm or threat of harm by another student."

Illinois justifies the laws by including the words "bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping and dropping out of school, fighting, using drugs and alcohol, sexual harassment, and sexual violence." (105 Ill. Comp. Stat. 5/27-23.7)

Michigan's Act 241 does not include such a statement. It does however include a requirement that school districts implement anti-bullying policies, which must include "a statement prohibiting bullying of a pupil." Including Michigan, 40 states have laws which directly prohibit bullying behavior or require that school district policies contain clear provisions. The study says California, Colorado, Connecticut, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska and Pennsylvania were "less explicit in communicating legal expectations and avoided concrete prohibiting statements."

Statement of scope

Scope means where the law is applicable. According to the report, 44 states list the location where the legislation applies, with all naming school grounds and property. Michigan is the 45th to include scope in its law. Two states, Minnesota and Idaho, do not mention it at all. Some states list additional locations and situations where bullying may apply, such as at school sponsored functions, on the bus or at the bus stop, adjacent to campus and off-campus conduct.

Cyberbullying is one aspect of scope that has varied coverage among the states. Michigan's statute does not apply to electronic bullying behaviors, and further clarifies that "at school" includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider, that occurs off school premises if the telecommunications access device or the telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the school district or public school academy." Thirty-six states address cyberbullying in their legislation.

In Arkansas and Louisiana, in contrast, provisions are made to specifically include electronic bullying regardless of origin or

ownership of the device used if it is directed at a student.

Prohibited behavior

According to the study, 43 states include descriptions of bullying behavior that is prohibited by law. Michigan is the 44th. Only Arizona, Minnesota and Wisconsin fail to define what bullying is.

Enumeration of groups

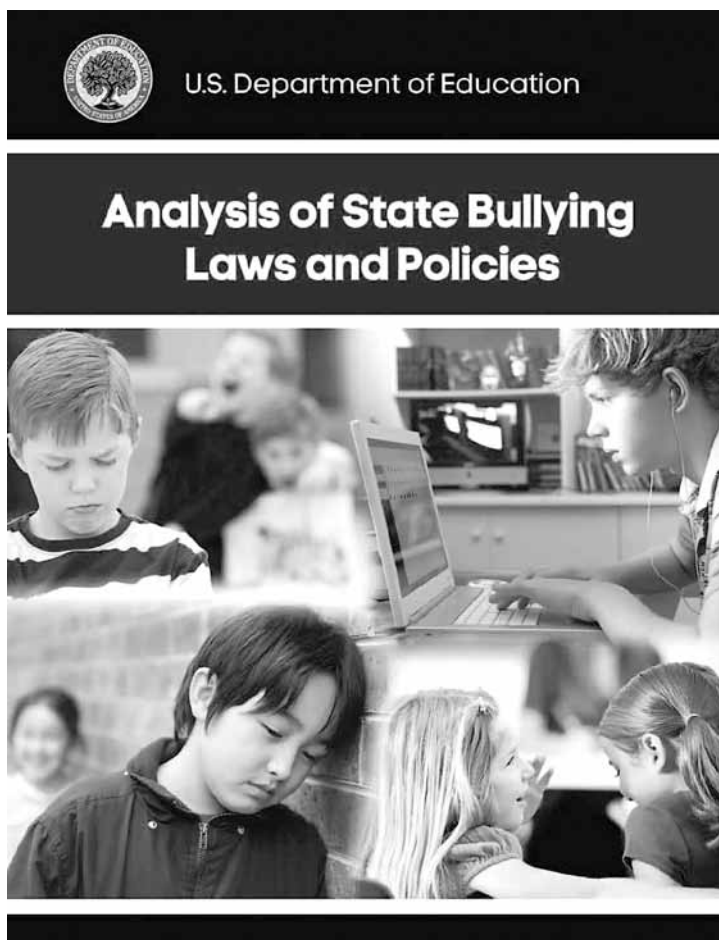
Seventeen state bullying and harassment laws have enumeration, meaning they list groups of people who have historically been targets of bullying and makes it clear that bullying against people in those groups will not be tolerated. "Advocates have pushed for the inclusion of enumeration in state laws on behalf of LGBT youths who experience extremely high rates of bullying victimization, but who are not legally protected under federal civil rights legislation," the study says.

Seventeen states enumerate. All seventeen states list race. Disability, religion and sex or gender are listed by 16 of the states. National origin and sexual orientation are listed by 14 of the states. Ancestry/ethnicity and gender identity/expression are listed in 12 states. Age, associations with groups/individuals, marital status, and socio-economic status are listed in 5 of the states. Family status and physical appearance are in four of the states. Academic status and obesity/weight were listed in two.

A couple of states chose to discourage or prohibit enumeration in the state or local policies. Michigan joins Missouri in this perspective. Michigan's PA241 requires school districts to adopt policies that include "a provision indicating that all pupils are protected under the policy and that bullying is equally prohibited without regard to subject matter or motivating animus."

Development and implementation of local policies

With Michigan added in, 46 states require school districts to set up anti-bullying policies. The majority of school districts are governed by new or revised bullying policies that have only been implemented within the past five years. Michigan's PA 241 gives districts six months to complete their policies, and 30 days after passing the policy to present it to the state for review.



The 202 page report can be found online at U.S. Department of Education website.

"these purpose statements embody different perspectives on the bullying issue." The most common themes emphasized the civil rights of students to be free from bullying and harassment, the need for safety and security of the school environment, the importance of a positive school climate to support learning and achievement, or the detrimental effects of school bullying.

Arkansas' Code 6-18-514 says every student "has the right to receive his or her public

► Impact

Continued from p. 6

Review of local policies

State review of local policies is another key component of legislation. With Michigan added in, 21 states require school districts to submit bullying policies to the state for review.

Components of local policies

The study looked at the components of local policies required by state statutes and listed the common requirements. According to their research, 29 state laws require local bullying policies contain a definition of bullying. Thirty-six require that districts establish reporting procedures. Thirty-one require districts to outline procedures for investigating complaints of bullying. Eighteen require written documentation of complaints and investigations. Forty-two require clear statements regarding disciplinary sanctions for prohibited behavior. Thirteen include language regarding a district's role in facilitating access to mental health services or supports for targets of bullying. The study states "Oklahoma statutes offer a strong example, stating that policies shall include a procedure whereby "a school may recommend that available community mental health care options be provided to the student if appropriate."

Communications

Forty-two laws, including the recent Michigan law, require school districts or boards to include procedures for publicizing bullying policies. Michigan requires school districts to hold public meetings about the policies being passed by the districts. It also requires local district policies to include "a statement describing how the policy is to be publicized."

Training and prevention

With Michigan added in, 26 states mandate or encourage training of school officials. Eleven mandate or encourage districts to establish bullying prevention task forces, safe schools committees, or other local advisory groups to address school-wide prevention.

Transparency and monitoring

"For schools to effectively address issues with school-based crime and violence they need an understanding of the extent, nature and context of the problem," the study says. Nineteen states, including Michigan, outline specific requirements for monitoring and compiling data on bullying complaints.

Right to pursue other legal remedies

Eighteen state laws address the rights of bullying victims to seek legal remedies under the law. According to the report "The ruling of the United States Supreme Court in the case of Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education established the precedent that schools receiving federal funds could be held liable for damages in peer harassment cases. School may be liable if the harassment is proven to be so 'severe, pervasive and objectively offensive' that it deprives the victim of access to educational opportunities or benefits, and if the school had actual knowledge of the harassment but was 'deliberately indifferent' to it.

More information

In addition to studying bullying legislation, the Department of Education has been active in advocating for safe schools. They've launched a website for students at www.stopbullying.gov.

STOP BULLYING .gov

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LGBT Bullying
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Heard on Facebook

Mother brings boy to tell Michele Bachmann: "My mommies are gay but they don't need any fixing." Watch the video online and tell us what you think.

The kid does seem pretty uncomfortable though... Not entirely sure using children like this is the most helpful way to make a point.
-Daphne Rhodes

I totally agree with you Daphne. The mom should not have done that. However it may cause Michelle Bachmann to think. I don't know.
-Kathie Norfleet

As a lesbian, a mother of four and a grandmother of three, I didn't like how this mother pushed her son to doing this. If he had gone up to her himself and said something, that would be different. I realize eight year olds are unpredictable, but it was not fair of the mother to push him this way.
-Annalisa Snow

I agree with Annalisa. It was clear the kid was prodded into doing this by his mother. I doubt the kid even knows about Michele Bachmann. I will admit though, the look on Bachmann's face after was quite priceless.
-Jay Topham

The little boy was correct but he did not say that on his own. He was clearly pushed and that's wrong on the mother's part.
-Fran Murray

Comments may be edited for grammar and length.



Join the conversation ...

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S/He Said

The Bachmanns, Muppets and Finances

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL



Walter the Muppet

"The Muppets will save thousands of gay children. In American cinema, one of the rarest narratives is a joyful coming out story. The Muppets seems like a simple reboot of a faded franchise, but watch again and you'll see the protagonist muppet in the classic stages of gay liberation. At the film's climax he claims full muppethood - and through him, young viewers can feel free. Historically, being gay is portrayed as tragic in American cinema. Very few live with joy, which makes claiming one's sexuality a candidacy for martyrdom. Such films are designed to wring tears of sympathy from straight people, who are shocked by the brutality of bigotry. But The Muppets is a surreal, playful and hopeful universe where every difference has a home."

-Nicholas Powers, in his column titled "Coming Out Muppet: The Amazing, Gay Subtext of the New Muppets Movie," Dec. 6, alternet.org.



California

"There's more evidence in our polling that the tide is turning on gay marriage. 48 percent of voters in the state think it should be legal to only 43 percent who believe it should be illegal. Those numbers should encourage pro-equality voters given that California banned gay marriage by a 4 point margin only three years ago. When you broaden the discussion to include civil unions 78 percent of voters, including even 65 percent of Republicans, support some form of legal recognition for gay couples. 85 percent of Democrats, 79 percent of independents, and even 65 percent of Republicans favor at least civil unions."

-In a recent poll, 500 California voters were surveyed by Public Policy Polling, from November 10-13 through automated telephone interviews, publicpolicypolling.com, Nov. 18.



Ineke Mushovic

"The finances of LGBT movement organizations appear to be stabilizing despite the difficult economic climate. However, while most revenue streams are increasing, organizations are seeing continued drops in individual donors. Finding ways to reach the 97 percent of LGBT adults who do not give to these organizations is becoming a more urgent priority."

-Ineke Mushovic, executive director of MAP, about the 2011 National LGBT Movement Report, which provides a comprehensive look of the financial health of LGBT social justice advocacy organizations, lgbtmap.org, Dec. 6.



Ann Coulter

"I don't believe Michele Bachmann's husband is gay - I don't think you'd [Michele Bachmann] run for president - I think he's just effete. If you can have gays who don't seem gay, why can't you have heterosexuals who kind of seem gay? She wouldn't run for president if her husband were gay!"

-Ann Coulter, right-wing pundit, in a guest appearance on an upcoming episode of LOGO's "A-List: Dallas," speaking with gay Republicans, huffingtonpost.com, Dec. 09. Marcus Bachmann, who has publicly made anti-gay statements, denies that his Christian counseling clinic practices "pray away the gay" reparative therapy, despite evidence to the contrary.

Detroit Police arrest suspect in Shelly Moore murder

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Detroit Police confirmed Friday, that an arrest has been made in the murder of Michelle "Shelly" Moore, a transgender woman whose torso was found on the east side of Detroit near I-94 on Oct. 23. As reported in an earlier BTL story, Moore was last seen at around 1 a.m. on the morning of the 23rd, when a cab driver she used frequently dropped her off at a house in Detroit where three men were waiting outside. Just minutes after, Moore called the driver again saying she felt uncomfortable and asking that he return. But the phone went dead mid-call and by the time he made it back to the house there was no sign of her.

Police investigated several leads in the case, including the possibility of a hate crime, which they dismissed early on after learning of Moore's involvement with prostitution and illegal drugs. According to Detroit Police, Moore had been living in Motel 6 in Madison Heights with another sex worker, and the women would leave on "out calls" to service customers.

About a week before Moore went missing, Madison Heights Police caught the women in their room smoking marijuana. Moore's companion was arrested and Moore was given the opportunity to avoid arrest by helping police arrest her drug dealer. Police say Moore called her drug dealer and asked him to deliver marijuana and other "harder drugs," and police arrested him en route to the motel.

"This murder was brutal. It seemed very personal," said Detective White of the Detroit Police Department. "It seemed like revenge, and it happened right after this drug bust." White and his team of detectives took every lead seriously, and worked for weeks to tie enough pieces together to arrest the suspect.

White said that while Moore was involved in illegal activities, he doesn't think she was looking for trouble. "From all accounts she was an easy-going person who got along with everybody," he said. "We talked to a lot of people she knew and no one had anything bad to say. She liked to chill and smoke weed, and this is how she made her living, but she was quiet and kept to herself."

"This murder was brutal. It seemed very personal. It seemed like revenge, and it happened right after this drug bust."

- Detective White of the
Detroit Police Department

The suspect's name is not being revealed at this time, and charges are pending as White is still working with the Prosecutor's Office. White confirmed that the suspect is a known drug dealer, but declined to reveal the suspect's previous criminal record until charges are finalized.

Detectives are still considering the possibility of other arrests. "I think it took more than one person to do this, but we need more information and evidence before arrests can be made," he said. They are also still searching for the rest of Moore's body, the torso of which was identified by a rose tattoo. The body was found dismembered, decapitated and burned.

"Now that this dangerous person is off the street, we hope people who have information will come forward."

Moore's mother, Lynice Nelson, posted news of the arrest on her Facebook Page, stating "GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME.....ALL THE TIME GOD IS GOOD!"

By the grace of GOD,th person evry1 kno tht took my Treasure frm us has been ARRESTED;HE IS IN CUSTODY,Thank you JESUS! Now my heart pleads 2 evry1,if u hold n e information on how 2 make sur ths coward locked up 4 life plz,PLEASE,PLEASE,PLEASE,come forward,let th weight fall from ur shoulders, I LOVE YOU ALL."

In a phone call to BTL, Nelson added "Everybody says they love and miss her, and not to be afraid. Every family member is so elated and so thankful to God and to the Detectives. They were quick to find justice and we are so thankful. We need anybody else with information to come forward so that this coward gets in jail forever and make sure justice is served. I refuse to call this person a man. They are a coward and that's how I'll refer to him.

"My faith in God is strong and steadfast and is not ever ever going to be taken away from me," she said. "If you know anything, please tell the police. Do the right thing and do not be afraid. Let God be your guide."

Those with information can contact Detective White at (313) 920-2648.

- Jason A. Michael contributed to this story.

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BY GWENDOLYN ANN SMITH

Vandy Beth Glenn, a transgender

woman from Georgia, had been working as a proofreader and editor in the state's Office of Legislative Counsel. Two years into her employment, in 2007, Glenn went to her supervisor to inform her of the pending transition. Her supervisor then took this news to her boss, Legislative Counsel Sewell Brumby. Brumby then terminated Glenn's employment.

This story is likely not too uncommon for many other transgender people out there. I still remember telling my employer about my own transition, all those years ago, and expecting that I'd soon be given my pink slip. Further, I suspect you'll find very few transgender people who have found employment hard to gain due to being transgender, or even who've had to face troubled times at work after their gender identity or expression becomes the subject of so-called "water cooler" chatter.

Glenn's story doesn't end quite the same as it does for many, perhaps most, and this is important.

In 2008, she filed suit against the state, claiming that the Glenn's termination violated the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Specifically, her lawyers claimed that treating her employment differently due to her transgender status was in violation.

Now a district court agreed, ruling that the Constitution was indeed violated, and Glenn was discriminated against. The state, naturally, appealed to the Eleventh Circuit.

This year, the Eleventh Circuit has handed down its decision. In a 3-0 decision, the District Court's ruling has been upheld. In handing down its decision, the panel stated. "An individual cannot be punished because of his or her perceived gender-nonconformity. Because these protections are afforded to everyone, they cannot be denied to a transgender individual... A person is defined as transgender precisely because of the perception that his or her behavior transgresses gender stereotypes."

This isn't the first time Federal law has been on our side. While the Civil Rights Act of 1964 does not provide any explicit protections based on gender expression and identity - nor, for that matter, sexual orientation - we have been seeing recent instances of Title VII protections extended to transgender people. Perhaps the best known is Schwenk v. Hartford, where a transgender prisoner sued after an assault by a guard. The Ninth Circuit determined that, "discrimination because one fails to act in the way expected of a man or a woman is forbidden under Title VII."

I'd be remiss if I did not mention this is a complete turnaround of a dusty, old Title VII case, Ulane v. Eastern Airlines, Inc. from 1984.

Transmissions

In Ulane, the Seventh Court held that the United States congress, in enacting Title VII, only meant to "prohibit discrimination against women because they are women and men because they are men."

What Glenn v. Brumby has done is take this into new ground, saying that transgender people do enjoy the same protections as others under the Fourteenth Amendment, and giving another avenue for transgender people who have had their rights violated.

Is it perfect? No. Much like the Ulane case was seemingly superseded by other Title VII cases, we could see other court challenges come down the line and rule opposite of the Glenn case. While this is one step below the U.S. Supreme Court, is it not a decision of SCOTUS, and like it or not, that leaves a bit of wiggle room in the future.

It's important to add, too, that if Glenn's case had been a Title VII case, things would have gone a very different way - the appeals court did not feel that Glenn's gender "non-conformity" would have applied in that case.

Of course all of this does require filing court cases, and likely going through a lengthy appeal process. Glenn was fired in October 2007, and it's taken until December 2011 to have this ruled in her favor. Not everyone has the resources and intestinal fortitude to go through this process.

That said, it's important to consider that this case does provide some basis for those who can pursue a case. If the historically conservative Eleventh circuit can find in Glenn's favor, then there's hope for us all.

I'd like to see this victory taken a couple of steps further. For one, I'd like to see the Department of Justice look at where transgender people fall under Title VII, under the Fourteenth Amendment, and other places rights based on sex or gender are mentioned. Perhaps it is time these are clarified, in the light of trials such as Glenn v. Brumby.

What Glenn v. Brumby has done is take this into new ground, saying that transgender people do enjoy the same protections as others under the Fourteenth Amendment

More than this, it also points to the importance of bills such as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and the need for this now-transgender inclusive bill to pass. Let's clear this up, once and for all, and make sure that transgender protections are, and will be the law of the land.

One more thing: Hillary Clinton spoke to the United Nations within days of the Glenn decision. In a speech celebrating the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Clinton spoke at length about the importance of LGBT rights.

"I am talking about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people," Clinton said, "human beings born free and given bestowed equality and dignity, who have a right to claim that, which is now one of the remaining human rights challenges of our time."

She followed that up by immediately saying, "I speak about this subject knowing that my own country's record on human rights for gay people is far from perfect."

Cases like Glenn v. Brumby are a step in the right direction. Let's take more steps, and see that all people truly are protected.

Gwen Smith may be left handed, but she'll take all the rights she can get. You can find her on the web at www.gwensmith.com



Movie gets aging gays together for coalition building, dialogue

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

ROYAL OAK – After a lifetime of taking part in the gay equal rights movement, aging LGBT seniors are now coming together to take on a new fight, equality in end-of-life care. Over 100, mainly older adults, met Dec. 7 at Emagine Theatre in Royal Oak to watch a screening of the Stu Maddux film *GenSilent*, and to discuss upcoming plans of the LGBT Older Adult Coalition.

“The turnout was amazing,” said Judy Lewis, one of the coalition’s founders. “We know this community knows how to get mobilized, and it is time for it. We hear too often about adults having to go back in the closet to get care and this has to stop.”

The movie, *GenSilent*, followed older gay, lesbian and transgender people as they dealt with end of life issues. The film pointed out that gay individuals are less likely to have

children to care for them, and more likely to be estranged from their families of origins. The film showed how couples and individuals might isolate themselves, or how they find small pockets of support in the gay community. But as the community ages and people in those small circles die, it leaves others alone and without support.

Jay Kaplan staff attorney with the ACLU LGBT project, is another of the coalition’s organizers. He outlined the group’s plans over the next few months. The first goal is to “reduce isolation and increase connection.” The first step, he said, is to create a SAGE Chapter in Detroit. SAGE provides services and advocacy for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender elders, and would give them ties to the national organization, including access to resources and the ability to provide certification to care establishments that are LGBT affirming. There will also be a second annual summit to build off their first one held at Affirmations last April. A senior-themed website is also in the works.

The second goal is to “provide information, access and advocacy on health care and housing.” This will be done through a Patients Rights Packet and a Housing Rights Packet,

along with other resources, that will be shared with the community.

The third goal is to “improve and increase LGBT competent care in community-based and institutional settings.” The coalition hopes to identify 10-20 LGBT welcoming and affirming providers across the spectrum of older adult care services. They hope to create or adopt standards of care and present those standards to at least two conferences for professionals, and to create LGBT cultural competency training for providers.

The fourth goal is to “increase the competency of LGBT older adults to manage their own affairs,” by providing training on legal, financial, community and medial issues.”

The stories shared and the suggestions given, were all reflections of a similar wish, for no one in the community to have to hide or to be denied treatment or love in the last months of their lives.

Relationships with care facilities was a primary focus of *GenSilent* and of the coalition. “How can someone know if the facility they are going into is going to be affirming?” Kaplan said. An audience member who works in the medical field said that senior centers could “put a rainbow on the door. Ninety percent of the people won’t even notice, but for the 5 percent of the population who really need it, it will make a difference.”

One suggestion given was that the coalition re-connect older adults with young people in the community. Not only would this give seniors some stability and able-bodied assistance, it would give the youth opportunities to learn from the struggles of the older generation.

“We were taking the crap before you were born,” said one aging lesbian in the film. She and her partner decided to come out of their shell and join a group of LGBT seniors for a trolley ride as part of the gay pride parade.

Members of the film’s audience also voiced the need for more communication between young and old. “Young people lack a sense of history,” an audience member said. “I love the idea of a living history type of project to teach people what this generation did for us.”

The film touched many in the audience, leaving some with tears in their eyes. One young man in his early 20s said he came hoping to find help. “I’m here for my mom,” he said. “I do believe she’s gay, but she’s never come to say it openly. She has a girlfriend who I work for sometimes and I really love them both. I think they love each other too, but she won’t say it. My grandmother died recently and I was there, rubbing aspercreme on her back and all that, I know how hard it is and I couldn’t imagine doing that alone. I wish my mom would come out. I don’t want her to have to grow old and not have her best friend there with her.”

The stories shared and the

suggestions given, were all reflections of a similar wish, for no one in the community to have to hide or to be

denied treatment or love in the last months of their lives. With over 100 interested advocates, and growing, the coalition is poised to make a difference.

The LGBT Older Adult Coalition consists of groups and individuals, including ACLU of Michigan, Adult Well Being Services, Affirmations, Citizens for Better Care, Equality Michigan, Jewish Gay Network, the Jim Toy Community Center and S.P.I.C.E. This coalition is working to create the SAGE chapter and is being funded with a grant from the HOPE Fund, administered by the ACLU of Michigan.

Many of the events are organized through the Affirmations Community Center in Ferndale, which also currently has some programming for seniors in place. To learn more go to www.goaffirmations.org, or contact Kathleen LaTosch of Affirmations at 248-398-7105. The group is seeking seniors and LGBTQ and allies to get involved, as well as medical and senior facilities and caregivers to participate.

Royal Oak Emagine Theater and BTL sponsored the event, making it possible for people to attend free of charge.

LCC won’t fight partner benefits law

BY TODD A. HEYWOOD

LANSING – The state’s only community college to offer health care benefits to unmarried partners says it will not defend those benefits if Gov. Rick Snyder signs legislation which would ban them.

Lansing Community College, which is the state’s third largest and covers parts of five counties in mid-Michigan, began offering the benefits in 2002. Currently, three full time employees have availed themselves of the benefits at a cost of \$25,064 per year, says Ellen Jones, spokesperson for the college.

But if Republican Gov. Snyder signs HB 4770 into law, Jones says the college will not fight it in court.

“LCC does not have the resources to mount legal action against legislation with which we disagree. We use our limited resources to provide education for our students and the community,” she said in an email to *Between The Lines*. “Lansing Community College has had a policy of making domestic partner benefits available to its employees. That policy was adopted and reaffirmed by the Board of Trustees who were elected to represent the citizens of our district. They clearly thought LCC’s policy was prudent, beneficial and authorized by law. The Michigan legislature has reached a different conclusion, and the Governor is apparently still considering the matter. President Knight and others at LCC are monitoring the situation, which is still developing.”

The legislation was passed earlier this month, and Snyder has announced he will sign the bill – with one caveat: state universities have to be exempted under the law. While that might seem like a simple thing to determine, the House Republican caucus says the bill does not exempt universities, while the Senate Republicans say the bill does exempt them. Universities are key issues because in May of this year, Snyder administration lawyers issued a legal opinion as a part of the budget process which rejected a provision which would have punished universities with a five percent penalty for offering partner benefits. Snyder’s administration

argued the provision violated the constitutional autonomy provisions of the state.

But community colleges are not provided that same autonomy under the constitution and state laws, and

“You can’t help but think the GOP in the legislature are going after us. No doubt. Just no doubt in my mind.”

-Nancy English, whose partner is a fulltime employee at LCC and provides health care coverage for her

thus would be subject to the law – which would prohibit state, county and local units of governments, including public schools, from offering benefits to employees.

And for Nancy English, whose partner is a fulltime employee at LCC and provides health care coverage for her, it’s an attack.

“You can’t help but think the GOP in the legislature are going after us. No doubt. Just no doubt in my mind,” English said. “It’s an insult. I am just insulted by that. I am beyond insulted anymore. It’s just Republicans pandering to their conservatives – especially the Conservative Christian Base – either for re-election or because they believe lesbians and gay men are heathens against God and deserve nothing...I have no idea what all is their thinking about it. It’s an outright attack.”

The news could not come at a worse time for English, who is going on disability because of health issues. She says the legislation, if signed into law, would leave her without medical coverage, without access to necessary surgeries or prescriptions.

Creep of the Week

Rick Perry

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

You don't have to be a political scientist to recognize that Texas Governor Rick Perry is an ignorant prick. But I've got to hand it to him: he knows how to get people talking. Granted, they're talking about what an ignorant



Rick Perry

prick he is, but still.

So congratulations, Mr. Perry, for having what is apparently the most "disliked" video in YouTube history. With over 4,700,000 views, his anti-gay campaign ad, creatively titled "Strong," has over 652,300 "dislikes" compared to only a little over 20,460 "likes."

The ad begins with Perry, clad in a tan jacket, navy blue button down shirt, black jeans, and giant belt buckle, sauntering up a small hill covered in impossibly green grass, a babbling brook in the background. He's walking in this kind of sideways, awkward way so that he can traverse and manly landscape while still facing the camera. In other words, he isn't watching where he's going. It's an apt metaphor and actually makes a lot of sense.

What doesn't make sense are the words that come out of his mouth.

"I'm not ashamed to admit that I'm a Christian," he begins, as if that's something people in America are reluctant to disclose. Now, if he'd said, "I'm not ashamed to admit that I'm a vegetarian," or "I'm not ashamed to admit that I have erectile dysfunction," I think we'd all be like, "Dude, that took some courage." But admitting you're Christian in America? That's like admitting that you watch TV or that you eat too much processed food.

After his shocking admission he continues, "[B]ut you don't need to be in the pew every Sunday to know there's something wrong in this country when gays can serve openly in the military but our kids can't openly celebrate Christmas or pray in school."

Yes, gays can serve openly in the military now. Glad to know Perry got that memo. Though Perry is apparently confused and thinks that what gays are in the military to do is to wage the so-called War on Christmas. This is, of course, a pretend war. No one is fighting against Christmas. It's just a scheme cooked up by right-wing Christians who enjoy themselves a good ol' persecution complex.

But Perry's making it sound like gays are slapping the Christmas out of the mouths of children nationwide. Last time I checked, Christmas is pretty openly celebrated in this country by kids and adults. The Don't Ask Don't Tell repeal isn't preventing any hall-decking or even gay apparel.

"As President, I'll end Obama's war on religion," Perry continues. "And I'll fight against liberal attacks on our religious heritage."

Like the war on Christmas, the war on religion in America also doesn't exist. And Lord knows Obama isn't waging one. Of course, Perry wants viewers to associate Obama with radical Muslims hell

Last time I checked, Christmas is pretty openly celebrated in this country by kids and adults. The Don't Ask Don't Tell repeal isn't preventing any hall-decking or even gay apparel.

bent on destroying America.

"Liberal attacks on our religious heritage" is code for "separation of church and state." So basically Perry and so-called Christians like them want to dismantle a principle that actually helps to protect their religious freedoms.

But that's the thing. The "freedom" thing. These folks won't be happy until Christians are afforded special rights and are the only truly free Americans left.

As George Michael says, "You gotta have faith," and as Rick Perry says, "Faith made America strong. It can make her strong again."

In other words, gays have weakened America and have stolen Christmas. But even more surprisingly, people are still talking about Rick Perry at all.

Karen Golinski: Marriage equality's inadvertent champion

BY DANA RUDOLPH

Karen Golinski never meant to become one of the headline names in the fight to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act. All she wanted to do was to secure health care coverage for her legal spouse.

That was three years ago. Today, Golinski is preparing for a Dec. 16 hearing before the federal district court for Northern California in one of the key cases challenging the constitutionality of DOMA.

"I had honestly no idea [the case] would become what it became over the last three years," Golinski said.

Golinski v. U.S. Office of Personnel Management is considered important enough to draw participation from the U.S. House's Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group and could well end up before the U.S. Supreme Court, even if other important DOMA challenges fail.

DOMA, enacted in 1996, prohibits any federal entity from recognizing a marriage license granted to a same-sex couple.

An attorney herself, Golinski, 49, has worked for the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals for 19 years.

She grew up in New York State and went to college and law school there, before moving to California in 1988. In 1989, she met Amy Cunninghis, another east coast transplant, who had grown up in New Jersey and gone to college in Connecticut before heading west.

The two began a committed relationship shortly after they met, and established a home in San Francisco. They married in August 2008, during the brief window when same-sex couples could legally obtain marriage licenses in California. At the time, the two had been together for 18 years and had a five-year-old son. Their son was put on Golinski's health plan.

Cunninghis is a contract employee with a non-profit group and does not get health benefits through her employer. The family has had to pay out of pocket for Cunninghis' coverage — coverage "inferior" to the Blue Cross/Blue Shield group plan that Golinski and their son have, Golinski said.

But Golinski assumed that, once she and Cunninghis were married,

Cunninghis could obtain health coverage through Golinski's employer — a benefit routinely provided to the spouses of heterosexual married employees of the court.

But the court's administrative office rejected Golinski's application to get health coverage for her spouse, saying that DOMA prevented the court from recognizing them as married.

"Everybody wants to be able to protect their family members. That's what this is about," Golinski explained. "It's about equal treatment. I'm not

Golinski assumed that, once she and Cunninghis were married, Cunninghis could obtain health coverage through Golinski's employer — a benefit routinely provided to the spouses of heterosexual married employees of the court.

different than any other person who's married."

Golinski filed an internal complaint with the court, which has an employment dispute resolution policy that prohibits discrimination based on both sex and sexual orientation. She remembers saying to her attorney at the time (Jennifer Pizer at Lambda Legal), "This is just going to be a little private complaint within the court. It's never going to see the light of day."

Golinski recalls Pizer laughed and replied, "These things have a way of taking on a life of their own."

And so it did.

First, 9th Circuit Chief Justice Alex Kozinski, as head of administration for the circuit, ruled in January 2009 that the court's administrative office should reverse its original decision. But then, in a stroke of irony, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, headed by openly gay appointee John Berry, instructed Blue Cross/Blue Shield to deny Golinski's claim. Despite what various Republican presidential hopefuls have been claiming — that President Obama refuses to enforce DOMA — the administration signaled its intent to continue enforcing the

policy until such time as it is declared unconstitutional or repealed.

Kozinski, a well-known defender of civil rights, ordered OPM to stop interfering "in any way" with Golinski's ability to obtain coverage for her spouse. But OPM pushed back and reiterated, through a press release, that DOMA prevented the agency from heeding Kozinski's order.

And so Golinski, with the help of Lambda, found herself filing a lawsuit to seek a preliminary injunction to force OPM to heed Kozinski's order.

That lawsuit failed. Judge Jeffrey White, of the federal district court for Northern California, denied the injunction request in March 2011, saying that OPM had a procedural duty to enforce DOMA that trumped the 9th Circuit's agreement to provide benefits to Golinski.

At the same time, however, he stated that DOMA was not directly implicated in this specific phase of the case and that Golinski "has a clear right to relief."

So Golinski and Lambda filed an amended lawsuit to add claims challenging DOMA's constitutionality.

By then, the Obama administration had made clear that, while it would enforce DOMA, it would not defend DOMA in court because the administration considers DOMA to be unconstitutional.

And that's when the House's Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group filed a motion to intervene in the case and defend DOMA by seeking to have the lawsuit dismissed.

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder filed a brief in July opposing BLAG's motion to dismiss Golinski's case. He stated that the administration believes Section 3 of DOMA is unconstitutional, and he reiterated that the administration would no longer defend it.

Section 3 states that the federal government will not, for any federal purposes, recognize any marriage of a same-sex couple.

"That was really huge," Golinski said. "The federal government was weighing in for the first time on my side as opposed to fighting me."

But the case has been "a big, long roller coaster ride" for her and

Parting Glances



Wise men, cross-dressing chickens

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

An olde, olde legend – newly shared for posterity by a handful of forthright and gay-friendly scholars – says that the wise man known as Kaspar liked on festive occasions and birthdays to do drag.

(Melchior and Balthazar were straight, but not biblically narrow nor politically incorrect.)

Gay-friendly scholars add that the gifts carried on the magi's fabled journey to Bethlehem were not – as we have so long erroneously believed – gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but rather glitter, patchouli, and mirth. (Jokes help to make long journeys shorter.)

It's also likely, these same scholars earnestly believe, that Kaspar was also the world's first top-billing standup comic (after Adam who played The Big Apple, but got hissed into the outback along with fall-guy, Ms "Take a Big Bite" Eve).

Kaspar's audiences were hillside sheep, lowing cattle, occasionally stray scapegoats. They bleated, moored, nannied loudly at his funny one-liners about chickens who cross-dressed roads to get to the other side and camels who foolishly got stuck trying to pass through needle eyes.

Kaspar billed himself as 'The Ever Merry', and had a dedicated following in Persia, where he headlined fancy B&Bs, royalty lip-gloss shops, and a chain of Babylonian Wig-Out! boutiques. He wowed them on Tigris & Euphrates gambling showboats, but was banned in Thebes-on-the-Nile for making off-color remarks about Joseph's Coat of Many Colors.

Bethlehem was Kaspar's first Judean gig. (He said, modestly, that the star was not there just for his Grand Opening.)

Some humanist archeologists, however, pooh-poo the Bethlehem stopover, saying that gawdforsaken place is too dry to have much of a sense of humor. (And with the hagging going on there these days, they may have a point.)

Feminist anthropologists wholeheartedly support the cross-dressing Kaspar legend. They say telltale artifacts discovered at the site of an ancient roadside inn, desert casino, comedy crèche, where the magi likely stayed provide proof.

Artifact #1 is a half-buried, quarter of a wall mosaic of a "man" with teased hair, no beard, red lips. He holds a jeweled clutch bag with a cuneiform G on it (for girth?), and sports a tiara and sash with a magnificent M (for mirth?).

Artifact #2 is a theater token. On one side is a smiling bejeweled terpsichorean. The inscription reads - freely translated - "ten centimes a dance." And on the reverse (again freely translated), "Kaspar, Thou goest so gaily merry!"

The last artifact is most beautiful. A gold medallion with chain, finely crafted, with what appear to be two mascara eye-lined, red-rouged ladies with angel wings and swooping feather boas, tooting tiny trumpets.

The medallion is edged with five small stars and a great big "show-biz" star at top. Glory-O-Skies!

In excelsus day-o! Thou goest, girl!

There are two more delicately engraved inscriptions. The first (give or take a word): "Eternal Limelight to Kaspar the Merry." And touchingly second: "He who becomes she made lowly shepherds, a travel-weary mom with a newborn babe laugh with otherworldly joy."

(The cross-dressing chicken jokes, no doubt.)

Charles@pridesource.com Be well in Two-O-12!

► Marriage

Continued from p. 12

her family.

"I think the hardest thing has been the ups and downs along the way," Golinski said.

People have congratulated them when there has been a positive ruling, she said, "and I have to tell them, 'That's very kind, but ... Amy still doesn't have benefits.'"

Golinski said she feels "incredibly fortunate" to have a "dream team" of legal representation from both Lambda Legal and the San Francisco law firm Morrison and Foerster.

Being an attorney herself, though, has helped her better understand her case, even if it "adds another cook to the pot."

"I feel like I get the easy part," Golinski said. "I just get to participate, without having to put all the sweat into having to come up with the beautiful work that [my attorneys] have done for me."

But the case has still taken up a lot of her and Cunninghis' time and energy, she said. When a brief is due to be filed, she will spend lunch hours or evenings reviewing it.

"My son's heard a lot of 'I'm working on my case' for the last few years, as I tuck him in," she explained.

She also said that press coverage about the case has been "a little bit overwhelming, because we're pretty private people."



Amy Cunninghis and Karen Golinski were married in California in August 2008. Photo: Amos Mac

Still, she asserted, "It's really important, so we're also proud that we can help educate people around the discrimination."

And both co-workers and neighbors have been "unconditionally supportive," she said.

Neighbors, she said, have told them, "You're the quintessential family — and it's really unfair that Amy's not being covered."

On Dec. 16, Judge White will hear both BLAG's motion to dismiss the case

and Golinski's motion for summary judgment on the constitutionality of DOMA.

Even if the judge rules in her favor after the hearing, Golinski said she expects BLAG will appeal further.

"No matter what the result," she said, "I feel we did the right thing by trying to fight this."

"Again, it's just basic fairness. I just want to be treated like all my other colleagues. And they want me to be treated the same way, too."



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Music of the heart



Richard Schooping at his Royal Oak home. Photos: Andrew Potter

Royal Oak musician says writing songs helped him survive AIDS

BY ANDREA POTEET

These days, Richard Schooping is focusing on the little things.

He's not thinking about the nerve damage that has ravaged his throat and left him unable to sing. He's ignoring the possibility that his second book may never see an audience because typing has become too painful.

"I'm just taking it day by day," Schooping says. "It seems every day I'm a little bit better at something. My foot either walks a little better;

my wrist doesn't hurt as much...each day it seems I'm a little better. I'm just focusing on being grateful."

Life has become a matter of positive attitude for Schooping, 44, who was diagnosed with AIDS in 2003.

"Deep in our hearts, we're invincible," Schooping, of Royal Oak, says. "There's a savior within, and once you contact that savior, everything else seems feasible."

He said meditation, spirituality and his music have all helped shaped his outlook since he was

diagnosed as HIV positive in 1994, after three of his partners died of complications of the disease.

When initially diagnosed, Schooping said he knew to expect it and it didn't initially change his life much. As his health began to further deteriorate, he said the fear began to set in.

"I was shackled in fear," he says. "Everything in the world scared me. But somehow I got over that."

After a snowboarding accident in 2001 crushed his collarbone and further damaged his immune system, he contracted Encephalitis


(acute inflammation of the brain), was confined to a nursing home in July, and had to relearn everyday skills like walking and talking.

Five years ago, he stopped taking the AIDS "cocktail" he said made him feel more ill, but had to start again in April after his bout with Encephalitis. He said, this time, the drugs have not had the adverse effects he experienced in his first round of medications.

His illness progressed until he was forced to quit his job as a civil designer in 2006.

See Richard Schooping, page 17

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► Richard Schooping

Continued from p. 15

"Everything broke down," Schooping says of the aftermath of his diagnosis, including a 2004 bout with skin cancer and AIDS complications including rectal polyps. "I just wanted to kill myself."

What helped was returning to his first love: music – after decades spent in bands in Florida and Michigan – and pouring his feelings into his first book, 2008's "From Suffering to Soaring: Through God I Transcended AIDS," a stream-of-consciousness recounting of his life with the disease and the lessons it has taught him.

"You need to get over your fears, because we create it in our mind," he says. "We look out into the world and it is what it is and then we give all the labels and definitions to it and then we become afraid of it. You just have to know yourself. It's not until you know yourself that you attract love."

And while he was suffering from advanced HIV in 1996, he found his soul mate, he said. He and his partner, Cal Kalaf, have been together since then, after meeting while both living in Orlando. Kalaf directs Schooping's music videos, shown on YouTube, and Schooping said the collaborations have helped cement their bond.

"We always appreciated each other and he appreciated my music," Schooping says. "But when the video came and we could do it together, it went up another level."

Singing, writing his own music and playing guitar and piano have always been outlets for Schooping, who has sung in several rock bands



and performed in community theater throughout his life. Recording five albums, two of which, "This Song We Sing" and "Burn Away," he self-released on iTunes and Amazon.com, have helped release his thoughts and formed a positive outlook on his future, he said.

"It grounds me in my space as a human being and shows me the joy that exists around me," Schooping says. "I'll forget and get lost in my mind, and my music is very therapeutic for myself and, I feel, the world. At least I hope so."

Though some of his work includes veiled

references to his life with AIDS, Schooping said he is mostly inspired by everyday life.

"It can be anything from a thought that comes out of nowhere or you hear a song that inspires you, an emotion. Usually it's just all there. It just comes in my head and it's done."

The nerve damage left over from his Encephalitis has left him unable to hit the high notes that used to come so easy for him, he said, and his dreams of again rejoining a rock band have been put on hold. But for now he is focusing on sharing his message of gratitude and hope, and

"It grounds me in my space as a human being and shows me the joy that exists around me. I'll forget and get lost in my mind, and my music is very therapeutic for myself and, I feel, the world. At least I hope so."

hoping others can learn from his journey. He said he gives most of his music away, just so others can hear what he has to say and how far he's come.

"I had no idea how much of a warrior was in me," he says. "How can you tell until you go through something like this? There was never an 'I'm going to give up.' There was 'This sucks, and I'm in a lot of pain,' but nothing in me ever said 'You're going to die,' or 'You can't take this.' God never gives you more than you can handle."

For more, visit Schooping's blog at richardschooping.blogspot.com.

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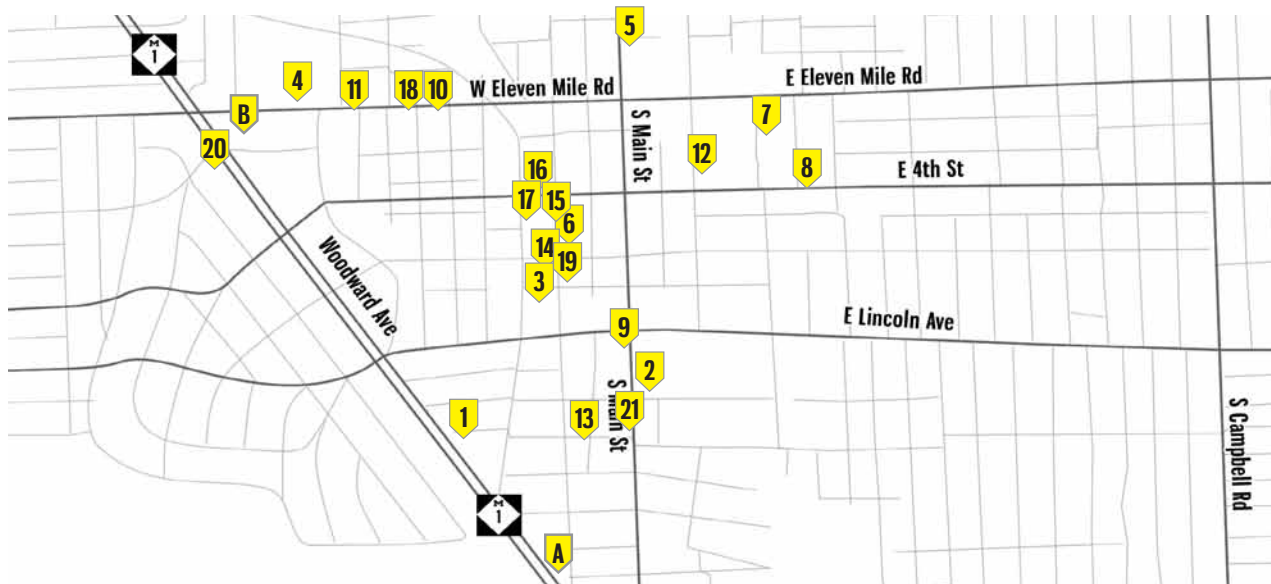
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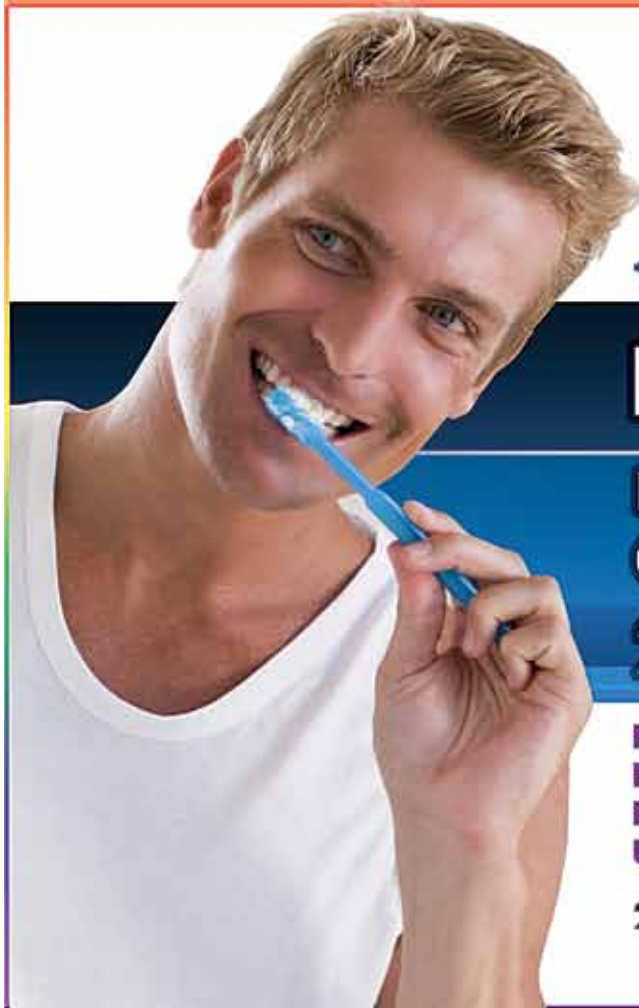
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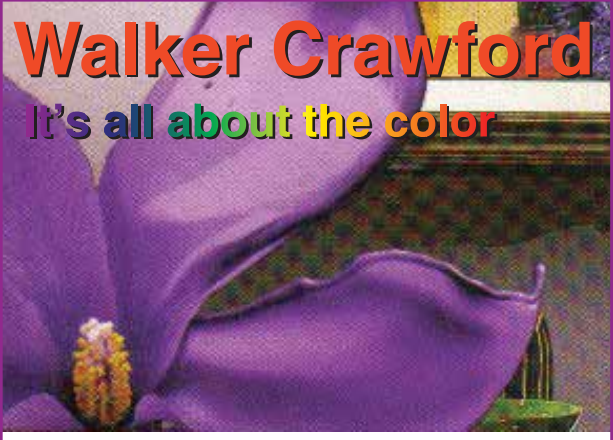
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Book Marks

“Trans/Love” challenges gender binary

BY RICHARD LABONTE

“The Stranger’s Child,” by Alan Hollinghurst. Knopf, 448 pages, \$27.95 hardcover.

For gay fans of Hollinghurst’s first novel, “The Swimming-Pool Library,” his new work – seven years in the writing – may be something of a letdown: it doesn’t contain the pyrotechnic combination of explicit sexual intensity and impressively perfect prose of either his debut or of his second novel, “The Folding Star.” In the author’s fifth novel, readers will find more subtle sexual moments but even more impeccably perfect prose. The multi-generation, two-family saga spans almost a century, all the while tracking the at-first covert and eventually (after homosexuality is legalized in England in 1967) more overt lives of gay men. The novel opens in 1913, its five sections linked by the characters coalescing around and spinning off from Cecil Valance, a roguish lad who, brought to Cambridge friend George’s home, seduces both George and his sister Daphne, scribbles a poem in Daphne’s autograph book and – in the manner of

real-life poet Rupert Brooke – dies soon after on a French battlefield. Tracing the afterlife of that poem, this character-rich novel is both languid and lyrical.



“Trans/Love: Radical Sex, Love & Relationships Beyond the Gender Binary,” edited by Morty Diamond. Manic D Press, 160 pages, \$14.95 paper.

Editor Diamond introduces this tender, lustful, wrenching, revelatory and celebratory

anthology as “a love letter to the trans community and beyond.” It is just that. The 29 contributors range from accomplished authors (Julia Serano, Sassafras Lowrey, Max Wolf Valerio, Imani Henry, Diamond himself) to artists in other media (photographer Amos Mac, filmmakers Ashley Altadonna and Silas Howard, performers Glenn Marla, Cooper Lee Bombardier and Kai Kohlsdorf) to assorted scholars, activists and organizers – even a stay-at-home dad, Patch Avery, who rehearses poetry while vacuuming. The diverse roster of writers is united, engagingly, by both the uncommon quality of their prose and the unvarnished honesty of their mini-memoirs,

sexual escapades, transformative journeys and intelligent observations. Their contributions take the catch-all term “transgender” and explode it, in a style that is passionate, poignant and intensely personal, into varied components: transsexual, two spirit, genderqueer, intersex. Best of all, Diamond succeeds in his goal of compiling an anthology that transcends transgender readers – this collection’s universal appeal, queer and beyond, is delectable.

“Out of Step,” by J. Lee Watton. A&M Books, 236 pages, \$17 paper.

It wasn’t so long ago – like, three months – that lesbian and gay members of the American armed forces were subject to humiliating witch-hunts despite a desire to serve their country. Watton’s account of just that happening to her and a small circle of friends more than 45 years ago arrives, then, at an opportune time. Her story is set in 1965 when, as a WAVE – a member of the anachronistic Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services – she left a frustrating family and a cloying boyfriend to enlist, sensing the need to escape from a preordained life of marriage-house-kids and from something less tangible: self-defined heterosexuality. Soon enough, despite stark warnings from superiors about too-overt friendships with other gals and the consequent horror of homosexuality, Watton’s inner lesbian came out, nurtured by several similarly emergent female companions. The author’s memories of furtive gatherings, fumbled touching and romance blossoming are heartwarming; her account of subsequent interrogations, in which

friend was turned against friend by the Office of Naval Intelligence’s feverish desire to ferret out alleged perversity, is heart-wrenching.



“Halsted Plays Himself,” by William E. Jones. Semiotext(e) Native Agents, 200 pages, \$24.95 hardcover.

Once upon a time, gay porn films attracted the likes of Groucho Marx and Salvador Dali, were collected by New York’s

Museum of Modern Art and were reviewed in the “Village Voice,” “Daily Variety” and the “New York Post.” That pre-AIDS era is chronicled with a kinky combination of serious research and sexual relish in Jones’ narrative of the life and times of legendary porn performer and filmmaker Fred Halsted, whose films, from 1972’s “L.A. Plays Itself” to his final film – they were films then, not videos – 1981’s “A Night at Halsted’s,” stand as exemplars of the intersection of experimental film and hot sex. The art-book-sized study is stuffed with movie stills that, in today’s vernacular, are definitely NSFW, along with what few photos of Halsted’s boyhood and pre-porn days the author found in the course of interviewing his subject’s peers. Jones’ slender but authoritative biography is fleshed out with reprints of film reviews, interviews, a smattering of dialogue from the “L.A. Plays Itself” and – another side of the man – samplings of his erotic prose.

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Celebrate the holidays with the blockbuster hit "Wicked" at the Detroit Opera House through Dec. 31. Photo: Joan Marcus

'Wicked': Not just another pretty farce

BY MICHAEL H. MARGOLIN

If you are considering paying as much as \$165 for a premium ticket on New Year's Eve for "Wicked," you will want to know if there is a lot on the stage to look at and listen to. Well, indeed there is, as this blockbuster musical – now the 14th longest running musical on Broadway with its spawn of touring companies – plays for the third time in Detroit. This time at the Detroit Opera House.

The story itself is a clever one, based on Gregory Maguire's book, the untold story of the witches of Oz, especially Elphaba, the Wicked Witch of the West, and Glinda the Good. Their story begins when they meet in Shiz College: Elphaba, the outsider born with green skin and Galinda, the blond who is immensely popular. (As she will tell you several times during the course of the evening.) Soon they hate one another, then they are roommates, then, yes dear hearts, they become bosom buddies and guide us through the assault on Oz by Dorothy and the banishment of the Wizard with a number of surprises along the way such as Elphaba's parentage.

Oh, did I say they were both in love with the same man? He is Fiyero, who says of himself, proudly, "I am...self absorbed and deeply shallow."

Nominally the lead, Elphaba provides the heart of the show, as played by Anne Brummel. Her songs are the show's anthems, "I'm Not That Girl" and "No Good Deed" sung with emotion in a voice like chocolate. Then there is her variation on the famous WWW laugh, made famous by Margaret Hamilton in the original "Oz" movie. It surprises and delights.

As Galinda – she later rechristens herself "Glinda" in sympathy with her teacher, Dr. Dillamond, who somehow cannot get her name right. (He is also the

last animal teacher, a goat, at Shiz, a p.c. subplot in the show about animals having their power of speech taken from them.) – Tiffany Haas is smashing in the part. And if there are comparisons to be seen and heard in her performance to comic bombshell/singer Kristin Chenoweth, well that is because the role was developed, in part, in workshop around Chenoweth who originated it on Broadway. But Haas does her own very funny, very well sung thing: The show bounces off her and around her.

By now, you are thinking that you have got your money's worth – and on a weeknight, if you are lucky, you may still pick up a ticket for under \$100. (Many performances are rumored to be sold out – or close to it!)

But wait, more to come: The supporting cast is uniformly fine: Emily Ferranti (Nessarose, Elphaba's sister), Dan Pacheco (Boq, the lovelorn factotum) and David Nathan Perlow (Fiyero, the man who loves not wisely, but, finally, well and croons like a Prince.)

Among the character roles, there are three excellent performers who make Oz come alive: Jody Gelb (Madame Morrible, head of Shiz), Martin Moran (a touching portrayal of the goat teacher) and Don Amendolia as the Wonderful Wizard of Oz, whose number "Wonderful" is, indeed. And if you think of Robert Morse, well, he originated the role in "Wicked's" first outing in San Francisco before Joel Grey played it on Broadway.

By now, you are thinking that you have got your money's worth – and on a weeknight, if you are lucky, you may pick up a ticket for under \$200 but over \$100.

But, yet, there is still more value. The director, Joe Mantello knows how to make a show move, flow like a bonny stream with eddies and cascades. Working hand in glove with Wayne Cilento's musical staging, it is

REVIEW

Wicked

Broadway in Detroit at the Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Tuesday-Saturday through Dec. 31, plus Monday, Dec. 26; no performances Dec. 24-25. \$39-\$99 (except NYE). 313-872-1000. www.BroadwayinDetroit.com

a dream partnership. Cilento borrows from Broadway and ballet dance, but synthesizes it into a movement vocabulary that suggests the oddness of Oz.

Stephen Schwartz wrote the tuneful but not so remarkable music and lyrics with banal rhymes, but the kind of songs that give the singers ample room to show off and to move the plot smartly along. His book writer, Winnie Holzman, writes good performing roles and the humor is often, well, funny – my favorite being a wonderful, silly line that describes the goat teacher's escape, but I will not spoil the fun by printing it here.

Finally there is Eugene Lee's Tony-winning set, a giant mash up of Victorian scaffolding and wizard-like gears. Scenes are seamlessly unfolded as his wonderful constructions seem to float on and off, and the scene of the WWW being "empailed" with Dorothy's water and melting is done cleverly. Add to this Tony winner Susan Hilferty's colorful, unique costumes – with a hint of fashionista aplomb as in Christian Lacroix – the show's visuals trump many a show on the Great White Way.

So, you may just feel immensely satisfied even at the steep prices. Though you might not leave the theater humming the tunes, you will remember Haas twirling her hair, the flying monkeys, the sensational finale to Act I, the sneaky satirical opening of Act II and the joy of a happy ending.

I did.



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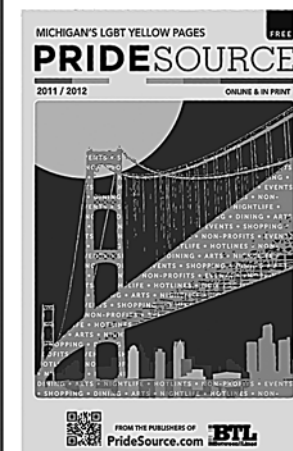
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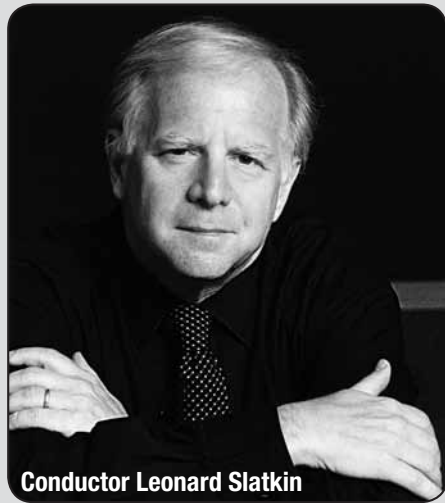
Outings

Whether you're in Lansing or the metro area you can make the yuletides gay Dec. 17 with three of the best LGBT and ally choruses in the state. In Lansing, hear performances of "Deck the Halls" and "The Holly and the Ivy" from LanSINGout Gay Men's Chorus, led by Doug Armstead, and Sistrum Lansing Women's Chorus, led by Meredith Bowen, at the annual winter concert, "Holiday of Lights."

Meanwhile, in the metro area the Detroit Together Men's Chorus presents "Christmas Rebooted" with their own array of Christmas classics such as "Silent Nights" and "Silver Bells."

LanSINGout and Sistrum perform at 8 p.m. Dec. 17, Dart Auditorium, 500 N. Capitol Avenue in Lansing. Tickets are \$12-20. For more information, go to www.holidayoflights.com. Detroit Together performs at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17, Lamphere High School Auditorium, 610 W. 13 Mile Road, Madison Heights. Tickets are \$15-25. For more information, go to dtmc.org.

Music & More



Conductor Leonard Slatkin

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra presents "Home for the Holidays," one of Detroit's favorite holiday musical traditions. Conducted by Leonard Slatkin, this festive evening will include both traditional and contemporary Christmas music, audience sing-alongs and a visit from Santa Claus himself.

Making his debut that evening, is the son of the DSO conductor, 17-year-old Daniel Slatkin. Slatkin will perform on the piano arrangements based on familiar holiday carols reworked by his father.

The DSO presents "Home for the Holidays" 10:45 a.m. Dec. 16, 8 p.m. Dec. 17 and 3 p.m. Dec. 18 at the Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. For more information, go to detroitSymphony.com or call 313-576-5111.

Theater

The holiday season is a time when we disregard our diet, brave the malls and cherish time with our loved ones. This season, Performance Network Theatre's educational outreach program, the Children's Theatre Network, is offering something for the whole family. PNT will present "Jamie and Jordan" at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 17 as part of the Saturday Series for Young Audiences.

This musical comedy will be followed by a complimentary milk and cookies reception. "Jamie and Jordan" features book and lyrics by Kim Carney, with music by Gene Gaunt.

Born in the same hospital on the same day, neighbors Jamie and Jordan are lifelong best friends until a twist of fate (and ankle!) separates them. This hilarious musical tale teaches children about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and healthy friendship – both important for long lasting happiness.

Tickets (\$7 for children and \$10 for adults) are available online over the phone (734-663-0681) or in person at 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor.



OUTINGS

Wednesday, Dec. 14

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

2nd Annual Black and White Masquerade Party & Fashion Show 9 p.m. The evening will include a wide array of gifts donated by area merchants for a silent auction to benefit West Michigan Prides LGBT Angel Tree project and Winter Items for Clean Works (hats, gloves/mittens, scarves, coats, socks, blankets). West Michigan Pride, 10 Monroe Ave NW, **Grand Rapids**. 616-309-8500. Funds@westmipride.org westmipride.org

Thursday, Dec. 15

Bullied - A Student, A School and a Case that Made History 6:30 p.m. The film chronicles one student's ordeal at the hands of anti-gay bullies, and offers an inspiring message of hope to those fighting harassment today. Discussion will follow the 40-minute film. JXN Community Forums, 244 W. Michigan Ave., **Jackson**. 517-734-817-0940. Myjdl.com

Polyamory Network 7:30 p.m. Open and inclusive community of people living polyamorously, people interested in polyamory and people of, friendly to and curious about polyamory. Welcomes diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity. Polyamory Network, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734 6782478. Jimtoycenter.org

Friday, Dec. 16

Riot Youth Weekly Meeting 4 p.m. Riot Youth is a youth-led, safe space for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, queer, questioning youth and their allies (LGBTQQA) at the Neutral Zone, Ann Arbor's youth-driven teen center. Meets every Friday. The Neutral Zone, 310 E. Washington St., **Ann Arbor**. 734-214-9995. Neutral-zong.org

Bisexual Peer Group 7 p.m. Meets monthly on the third Friday. Discussion relating to bisexuality, pansexuality, omnisexuality. Allies are encouraged and welcomed to attend. Building is handicapped accessible using ramp to rear entrance. Bisexual Peer Group, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-678-2478. Biprideannarbor@gmail.com

Holiday Wine Party 9 p.m. Celebrate the holidays with a wine party. Admission is two bottles of wine per person, any type of red and any type of white. The bottles of wine will be separated onto different tables and raffled off at the end of the evening. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Dec. 17

Holiday of Lights 8 a.m. LanSINGout, Artistic Director Doug Armstead, and Sistrum Artistic Director Meredith Bowen, invite you to "Holiday of Lights" a winter concert celebrating our 9th year of collaboration. Tickets: \$20-12 LanSINGout and Sistrum, Lansing Community College, **Lansing**. Sistrum.org

Christmas Rebooted 6:30 p.m. Detroit Together Men's Chorus presents a holiday concert under the artistic direction of Brian Londrow. Tickets: \$18 in advance, or \$20 door, \$15 seniors, \$15 students. Detroit Together Men's Chorus, 610 W. 13 Mile Rd, **Madison Heights**. 248-544-3872. Info@dtmc.org dtmc.org

Sunday, Dec. 18

Holiday Brunch 1 p.m. Enjoy the holiday season with fellow LGBT folks over brunch. RSVP via email. Responsible for cost of meal. Always welcoming new members ages 18-33. Metro Detroit LGBT 20Somethings, 608 S. Washington St., **Royal Oak**. Det20somethings@gmail.com the20somethings.org

PFLAG Ann Arbor Meeting 2 p.m. 3rd Sunday of every month. Support group and monthly speaker at each meeting. PFLAG Ann Arbor, 306 N. Division St., **Ann Arbor**. Pflagaa.org

PFLAG Lenawee Social and Support Group Meeting 3 p.m. PFLAG Lenawee is a local support and advocacy group for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer, Questioning, Intersexed individuals and their family, friends and allies. PFLAG Lenawee, 1247 E Siena Heights Dr., **Adrian**. 517-605-4827. Pflaglenawee@gmail.com sites.google.com/site/pflaglenawee

Conversation Station 5 p.m. LGBTQI 25 and over, join GOAL each week for discussion, food and fun. Topic: "Is Christmas too commercialized? Should the religious symbols of Christmas be on public display, or should it all be kept private?" GOAL, 714 S. Washington St., **Royal Oak**. 248-981-4227. MarcilWilliams@yahoo.com GetOutAndLive.me

Monday, Dec. 19

Holiday Open House 4 p.m. Join West Michigan Pride for fun and food and helping others: Taking donations and gift items for LGBT Angel Tree Project and Clean Works winter items collection. LGBT Angel Tree Project: Donations to a pro-LGBT family in need. West Michigan Pride, 211 Logan St. SW, **Grand Rapids**. 616-309-8500. funds@westmipride.org westmipride.org

Wednesday, Dec. 21

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

Saturday, Dec. 24

Partnerships in Parenting 1 p.m. Promoting the importance of relationship and family development for LGBTQ parents and their children. Seeking to build a stronger connection between parents and children through social networking and community outreach. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 734-574-5953. Ky.intimates@gmail.com GoAffirmations.org

Lezread 4 p.m. Ann Arbors book group for Lesbians. Meets the last Sunday of every month. Lezread, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-678-2478. lezread@yahoo.com

MUSIC & MORE

CONCERTS

Kerrytown Concert House "Rodney Whitaker Quartet" Rodney Whitaker is a Michigan treasure and one of the world's renowned jazz bass performers and educators. A Detroit native, he grew up in the city soaking in the sounds of jazz and classical music. Tickets: \$10-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. 4th Ave., Ann Arbor. Dec. 16 - Dec. 16. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kerrytown Concert House "Marlena

Studer: A Jazzy Little Christmas" Get into the holiday spirit with some jazz-inspired holiday tunes. This concert will showcase a CD recently recorded by Marlena Studer along with several talented local jazz musicians. Tickets: \$5-25. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. 4th Ave., Ann Arbor. 6 p.m. Dec. 18. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Michigan Philharmonic "Home for the Holidays" Two performances of the annual holiday tradition to start the season. Individual Concert tickets: \$22 general, \$18 senior and \$10 student. Full subscriptions available online. Penn Theatre, 760 Pennington Ave., Plymouth. Dec. 15 - Dec. 15. 734-453-0870. Michiganphil.org

Olympia Entertainment "Christmas Eve on Woodward Ave." For nearly two decades, Newman has captivated crowds at Joe Louis Arena with her signature rendition of the national anthem and now metro-Detroit can celebrate the holidays with the local icon's debut on the Fox Theatre stage. Tickets: \$23.50-\$48.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 21. 313-471-6611. Olympiaentertainment.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Young Country Night Before Christmas" Featuring Gloria. Tickets: \$15. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W Fourth St, Royal Oak. 6 p.m. Dec. 21. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

The Acorn Theater "Emerson Hart" Performance by Emerson Hart, lead singer and songwriter of the alternative rock band Tonic. Tickets: \$25. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. Dec. 16 - Dec. 16. 269-756-3879. Acorntheater.com

The Ark "Emerson Hart of Tonic" Tickets: \$22.50 The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Dec. 15. 734-761-1800. theark.org

The Ark "10th Annual Concert for Peace" Tickets: \$15, \$10 students. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Dec. 18. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Home for the Holidays" Leonard Slatkin conducts one of Detroit's favorite holiday musical traditions. Familiar holiday classics, evocative orchestral works and exciting new melodies warm the heart and are sure to satisfy the tastes of any musical palette. Tickets: \$19-105. Detroit Symphony Orchestra, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 16 - Dec. 18. Dso.org

The Whiting "Holiday Pops" Tickets: \$10-32. Hosted by Bill Harris and ABC12's Angie Hendershot. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley, Flint. 6 p.m. Dec. 17. 810-237-7333. TheWhiting.com

OTHER

Static Network "Home for the Holiday 9" Annual songwriter showcase and charity drive for local homeless shelters. The event brings together five local singer-songwriters in one evening of acoustic music for a good cause. Performing will be Patrick Davy & The Ghosts, Audra Kubatmatt Dmits, Emily Rose, Emilio Basa. The proceeds from the event will go towards purchasing food and winter clothing donations to distribute to the homeless. Cover is \$6 or \$5 with a can of people or pet food or winter clothing item. The Corktown Tavern, 1716 Michigan Avenue, Detroit. 8 p.m. Dec. 16. 313-964-5103. Corktowntavern.com

4731 Gallery "Look Before We Leap" A fundraising celebration of art, music and courage. DJ performance from DJ Prime Minister. Musical performances from Alonzo Freed, J. Knox, 24/7 and more. Visual art from Sengor Reid, Mario Moore, Ant Lovelle, Gregory Johnson and more. 4731 Gallery, 4731 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 6

For expanded listings & to add a listing, visit our website

p.m. Dec. 17. Hookbridgechorus.com

St. James Episcopal Church "Caroling, Caroling An Alfred Burt Family Christmas" Popular Christmas carols of Alfred Burt, renowned jazz musician and composer in the 1940s and 50s who lived in Pontiac, will be performed at St. James Episcopal Church. St. James Episcopal Church, 355 W. Maple Road, Birmingham. 3 p.m. Dec. 18. 248-644-0820. Stjamesbirmingham.org

The Dance P.E.A.C.E. and Ann Arbor Community Center "African Dance Tour dance classes" Cultural exploration of Africa through African-inspired dance, movement and music. Every other Saturday. Admission: Adult and youth \$10, children (6-12) are \$5. Ann Arbor Community Center, 625 N. Main St., Ann Arbor. Oct. 22 - Dec. 17. 734-829-7930.

The Magic Bag "The Kenny Olson Cartel Debut Album Release" The self-titled release features vocals by Paris Delane, Brandon Calhoun, Hugo Ferreira and Jon Nicholson, drums by Emanuel Cole, keyboards by Peter Keys, bass by Billy Cox and more. Admission: \$10. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 29. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

THEATER

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

A Christmas Carol \$16. Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Through Dec. 18. 248-553-2955. farmingtonplayers.org

Christmas Belles \$18. PTD Productions at Riverside Arts Center, 76 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti. Through Dec. 17. 734 483-7345. ptdproductions.com

Irving Berlin's White Christmas \$12-\$23. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Through Dec. 18. 269-343-1313. kazooicivic.com

PROFESSIONAL

A Beer Carol \$15. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Dec. 22. 269-756-3879. acorntheater.com

A Christmas Carol \$16. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Through Dec. 24. 810-238-1350. flintyouththeatre.org

A Jazz Christmas \$32-\$38. Plowshares Theatre Company at Virgil H. Carr Cultural Arts Center, 311 E. Grand River Ave., Detroit. Through Dec. 31. 313-593-0926. plowsharestheatre.org

Christmas at The Acorn \$25. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Dec. 17. 269-756-3879. acorntheater.com

Cirque Dreams Holiday \$20-65.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Through Dec. 18. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

Engagement Rules \$17 in advance, \$20 at the door. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through Dec. 23. 313-868-1347. detroitreptheatre.com

Escanaba in da Moonlight \$25-\$40. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Dec. 31. 734-433-7782. purplerosetheatre.org

Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some!) \$15-\$24.50. Etico Productions at The Palace of Auburn Hills, 6 Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 15. 248-377-0100. palacenet.com

Fridays and Saturdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575.

gocomedy.net

God of Carnage \$36-\$43. The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company at The Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Dec. 14 - Jan. 1. 248-788-2900. jetttheatre.org

Grown Ups By donation. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company at The Abrecht Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 15. 313-408-7269. magentagiraffe.org

It's a Wonderful Life \$28. The Encore Musical Theatre, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Through Dec. 23. 734-268-6200. TheEncoreTheatre.org

Rock of Ages \$30+. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts' Cobb Great Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing. Dec. 13 - Dec. 18. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com

Silent Night of the Lambs \$10-20. Who Wants Cake? at The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Dec. 19. 248-545-5545. whowantstheatre.com

The All Night Strut Holiday Show \$20-45. Gem Theatre, 333 Madison St., Detroit. Through Dec. 31. 313-963-9800. gemtheatre.com

The Christmas Carol Caper, Scrooge This \$16 all others. Broadway Onstage, 21517 Kelly Rd., Eastpointe. Through Dec. 23. 586-771-6333. broadwayonstage.com

The Christmas Schooner \$20. What A Do Theatre, 4071 W. Dickman Rd., Springfield. Through Dec. 17. 269-282-1953. whatado.org

The Don't We Boys! \$10. Dog Story Theatre, 7 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids. Dec. 15 - Dec. 17. 616-894-1252. DogStoryTheater.com

The Eight \$15. The Box Theater, 51 N. Walnut St., Mount Clemens. Through Dec. 17. 786-954-2311. theboxtheater.com

The Importance of Being Earnest \$28-\$30. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Through Dec. 18. 248-347-0003. tippingpointtheatre.com

The Santa Land Diaries & Season's Greetings \$10. Who Wants Cake? at The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Dec. 18 - Dec. 23. 248-545-5545. TheRingwald.com

The Sunday Punch \$20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. Through Dec. 17. 313-365-4948. planetant.com

The Tempest \$40. Park Bar, 2040 Park Ave., Detroit. Through Jan. 21. 313-444-2294. parkbardetroit.com

This Wonderful Life \$20-\$25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. Through Dec. 23. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org

Thursdays at Go Comedy! \$15. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. Through Dec. 22. 248-327-0575. gocomedy.net

Wednesdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. gocomedy.net

Wicked \$39-99. Broadway in Detroit at Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Through Dec. 31. 313-237-7464. BroadwayinDetroit.com

Winter Wonderettes \$31-33. Farmers

Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Through Dec. 31. 269-343-2727. www.farmersalleytheatre.com

ART 'N' AROUND

323East "The Brooklyn - Detroit Connection" 323East's The Future is Now Part II. Kimyon Huggins, AVONE, and Ellis G all Brooklyn based artists in the Motor City Spotlight. 323East, 323 E. 4th St., Royal Oak. Nov. 5 - Jan. 4. 248-246-9544. 323east.com

Cranbrook Art Museum "No Object is an Island: New Dialogues with the Cranbrook Collection" Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 12 - March 25. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

Downriver Council for the Arts "The Colors of Winter" Winter Mixed Media Fine Art Show at the Wyandotte Arts Center. Work inspired by winter and activities that relate to the season. Downriver Council for the Arts, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Dec. 1 - Jan. 13. Downriverarts.org

Lawrence Street Gallery "Small Works Exhibition" Annual "Think Small" juried exhibition, over 75 local artists will submit work in all media, two and three-dimensional. The only limiting factor is size -- no piece will exceed 12X in any direction. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Nov. 30 - Dec. 24. 248-544-0394. Lawrencestreetgallery.com

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit "Stephanie Nava: Considering a Plot (Dig for Victory)" A work in progress, developed by French artist Stephanie Nava. Its installation at MOCAD marks the artist's first solo exhibition in the United States. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sep. 16 - Dec. 30. 313-832-6622. MOCADetroit.org

The Detroit Institute of Arts "Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus" Dutch master Rembrandt van Rijn's finest paintings, prints and drawings that portray Jesus and events described in the Bible. The exhibition includes 70 works. Tickets: \$16 adult, \$8 youth. Group rates available via grouprequest@dia.org. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward, Detroit. Nov. 20 - Jan. 29. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

The Gallery Project "Post Apocalypse" Exposes all the doomsday scenarios that are out there, everything from the end of the world to the Rapture. The Gallery Project, 215 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Dec. 14 - Jan. 21. 734-997-7012. Thegalleryproject.com

The Scarab Club "98th Annual Gold Medal Exhibition" 98th annual exhibition of Scarab Club member artwork. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Nov. 23 - Jan. 8. 313-931-1250. Scarabclub.org

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Face of Our Time" Examines more than 100 works by five photographers-Jacob Aue Sobol, Jim Goldberg, Zanele Muholi, Daniel Schwartz, and Richard Misrach-who operate within what Walker Evans referred to as the "documentary style." University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Nov. 12 - Feb. 29. 734-764-0395. Umma.umich.edu



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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.

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Horoscopes

Be patient, Virgo!

BY JACK FERTIG

Mars in Virgo sesqui-square Jupiter in Taurus goads people to be more stubborn, assertive and critical. Listening patiently and graciously, and learning how to improve, gives you an edge. Being a cranky know-it-all doesn't.

ARIES (March 20 – April 19): Even when working on organizing minutiae, don't let yourself get too caught up in details. Keep an eye on the larger picture. Ideals are ultimately more important than short-term gains. You may need to sacrifice a battle to achieve victory.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20): Getting more physical and less cerebral can help you live a more balanced life, but don't lose your head completely! Instant gratification can be a distraction from meeting your real needs. With thoughtful planning you can achieve the latter.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20): Start work on recent relationship problems. Easy does it. You may feel stuck at first. That will pass. Evaluate your patience and commitment and your partner's, but save that information for a later decision.

CANCER (June 21- July 22): Looking too far ahead can trip you up. Hone your expertise on details that need immediate attention. It may take some effort to be diplomatic, especially at work. Criticism is best focused on oneself. Be gentle and considerate with whoever your target is.

LEO (July 23 – August 22): Playing too hard can hurt friendships and your reputation. Striving for a personal best is better than crushing your opponents. Focusing on technique and personal accomplishment, rather than beating others, also helps you at work.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22): If you really can't avoid fights at home at least make an effort to listen, learn and seriously consider other viewpoints little as you may like them. It will all make sense later. The best solutions may come slowly. Be patient!

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22): Worries about mortality or the meaning of life can make you too eager to figure it all out now. Talking it out with a good friend raises more questions than answers. That's good, honest and real. Relax! Nobody ever gets all the answers.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21): Pessimism and striving for control feed into each other, driving away those you love. Make a list of your priorities and another of your spiritual, social and material assets. Some problems you can solve. Others you just need to let go of.


SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20): Trying too hard to be a big shot only guarantees you'll never be one. Focus on modesty, self-awareness and letting your hard work speak for itself. Be eager to learn from criticism. With criticism or praise, consider the source.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19): Knowing your worth and inner strength should make you generous and kind. Being mature, thoughtful and aesthetically conservative can help you get ahead. Being smug, prim and attached to position will only bring you down.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18): Difficult family secrets can leave you wondering who you really are. Analyzing sibling rivalry can shed some light on the mystery. Feeling lost is the admission that leads to finding your true self.

PISCES (February 19–March 19): Be mature, open-minded and philosophical; you might be able to avoid arguments that threaten your relationships and career. You don't have to like, accept, or agree with everything you hear, but the less you like it the more you should consider it.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available through his website at www.starjack.com.



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Solution to puzzle from page 28

GRAD	RASTA	OKRA
RIVE	ERNES	DIOR
OVAL	COORS	SLOT
CURIOUS	WINE	DSL
ELI	PREP	IRATE
RECAPS	ETAGERES	
STEP	DAUGHTERS	
	HALO	BETE
OFBILITIS	SECT	
BLUDGEON	ACTNOW	
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ROY	LESBIAN	NUNS
URIS	THING	ASTO
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63					64							65		
66					67							68		

Across

- 1 Jodie Foster, to Yale
- 5 Bob Marley, e.g.
- 10 Craig Claiborne's gumbo pod
- 14 Gauche side, for Debussy
- 15 Sea eagles
- 16 Fashionable Christian
- 17 Kind of round
- 18 Brand of foamy heads
- 19 Position to fill
- 20 Katherine Forrest novel published by Grier's Naiad Press in 1983
- 23 High-speed connection
- 24 Giant ball-handler Manning
- 25 Get ready for action
- 26 About to blow
- 28 Sports reports
- 30 Bust sites
- 33 Brady Bunch brother beginning
- 34 With 39-Across, Grier edited "The Ladder" for this group
- 35 Mary topper
- 38 Brest beast
- 39 See 34-Across
- 43 Splinter group
- 47 Club
- 48 Infomercial urging
- 50 Trunk of Charles Atlas photos

Down

- 51 Big name in razors
- 53 Batman and Robin, e.g.
- 54 Siegfried's partner
- 55 Controversial subject of a book published by Naiad in 1984
- 59 "Exodus" author Leon
- 61 "I haven't a ___ to wear!"
- 62 Concerning
- 63 Result of getting rear-ended
- 64 Brando's last one was in Paris
- 65 Come off as
- 66 Beat, but barely
- 67 Shakespearean forest
- 68 Family diagram

Across

- 13 Like a Paul Simon solo?
- 21 Pos., to neg.
- 22 Black billiard ball
- 27 Examine the testes again, e.g.?
- 29 Sap suckers
- 31 Rubber ducky spots
- 32 Personal-ad stat
- 34 Have an impact on
- 36 Star in Perseus
- 37 Controversial Michael Cuesta film
- 39 Push outward
- 40 Left with mouth wide open
- 41 Covering bones
- 42 Passive in S&M?
- 44 Top?
- 45 Poet Cullen
- 46 Heather's two mommies, e.g.
- 48 Bloody Mary's mom's home
- 49 Pink-slip
- 52 Hint of hue
- 56 Katharine's Butch Cassidy role
- 57 Author Rednour
- 58 Cartoonist who drew the Democratic ass
- 60 Mary, in Montmartre (abbr.)

Solution on page 27

Dating Diet



Love in a Hopeless Place

BY ANTHONY PAULL

It's a whirlwind, growing up. I can't get the hang of it. I'm on tour with a new book but I don't know how I got here. I say aloud, I have to earn my stripes. But am I ready for scars too?

At my first venue, a smoky gay bar, my face is on a poster above a dirty toilet and nobody knows who I am. I read from a kindle but they'd rather see me disrobe. Pointing to the stripper pole a few patrons cackle. I try to be polite but I lose it, telling the crowd to download the book on its buttole. That way, they can get a super hot STD too. "Think of it as a free bonus," I sing. "Herpes! It's the gift that keeps giving!"

Following my performance, my assistant says that mentioning herpes might be a weak selling technique. Also, I need to stop telling gay men that it hurts taking it up the butt. Apparently, they don't want me to ruin what

awaits them at the end of the night. "Focus on the book," he says. "Just read. You don't want to insult them."

"But they're not listening!" I cry. "And I have a week of this? I don't know if I can do it."

On the drive to Ft. Lauderdale I'm convinced that I'm a closeted masochist. The pain gets me off. Why else would I agree to go on a bar tour with a young adult book? "Because gay people need to hear it," my assistant insists. "Your book reminds people about what it means to love." He casts me an assuring wink. "Besides, your friends will be at the next stop."

Yes, I forgot. My friends are waiting to support me. Yes! Well except for Juan who decides to break up with his boyfriend an hour before I arrive. His pickup truck is packed with boxes when we meet. "Sorry. I can't stay," he says. Sweat falls along his tan forehead. "I'm headed to Miami to party."

"You're kidding. You just ended a three-year relationship and you're going to party?"

"It's what I do," he says, matter-of-factly. Upset, I take his phone from him to call his boyfriend. He huffs as his boyfriend answers the phone.

"Can you two NOT do this the one night I'm in town?" I ask.

"Do whaaaaaat?" his boyfriend replies. His lavender voice soothes my ear as if

I'm over the obsessive gays, the ones fighting for the mirror at the gym. There's more to being gay than sex and the latest hot guy on Grindr. I like to think that. But when I was young, I couldn't find a book that agreed. I had no training wheels. It was zero to one hundred before I hit 30.

nothing's wrong.

"Please," I beg. "Just stop the drama and get over here so Juan will stay for the reading."

He sighs, hesitating. "Fine. I'll get my purse."

"WHAT? He's coming???" Juan yells, as I hang up the phone. Immediately, he's in need of a drink. So we find a bar next to the coffee shop where I'm reading and the owner gives us free shots in celebration of my new book. I shouldn't be drinking but I am. I'm on my fifth shot when I find myself counseling Juan on how to work on the issue with his boyfriend. Listen to what he has to say. He loves you. Fighting is normal. Enjoy it. I have a heap of

advice, but I can't heed my own words.

The question is, what am I fighting for?

I don't know what I'm doing here. True, I put myself on this tour, but I had an idea that someone would pay attention. Now, it's wearing on me. The laughing, the heckling, the snarky statements flying at me each time I pull out my kindle – I soak up every wound as the crowd wonders aloud about why I'm reading to them. I have something to say. Yes, that why I'm here. Because I'm not happy with the status quo, the hiding, and the men who think they're "less" gay because they're masculine.

I'm over the obsessive gays, the ones fighting for the mirror at the gym. There's more to being gay than sex and the latest hot guy on Grindr. I like to think that. But when I was young, I couldn't find a book that agreed. I had no training wheels. It was zero to one hundred before I hit 30. Does that make me emotionally stunted? Is that why I can't understand how it's acceptable to send a nude pic to a stranger but be afraid to say a public hello? What are you scared of? Why am I equally afraid? Where is Juan? Why did he leave before the reading? Where are the rest of my friends?

For me, it doesn't add up, feeling so alone. I suppose that's why I write...because nothing's adding up. It's just the mic and me, just one voice talking about love. You can laugh, yes. But I'm Anthony Paull and I can talk over it.

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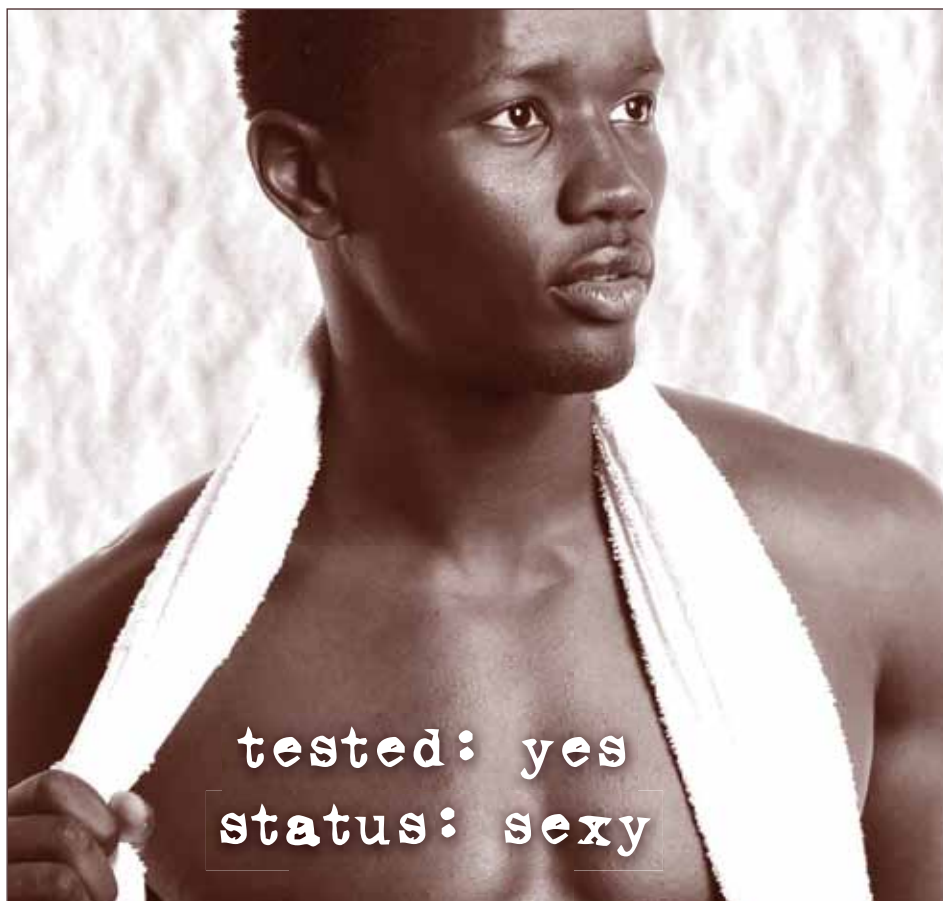



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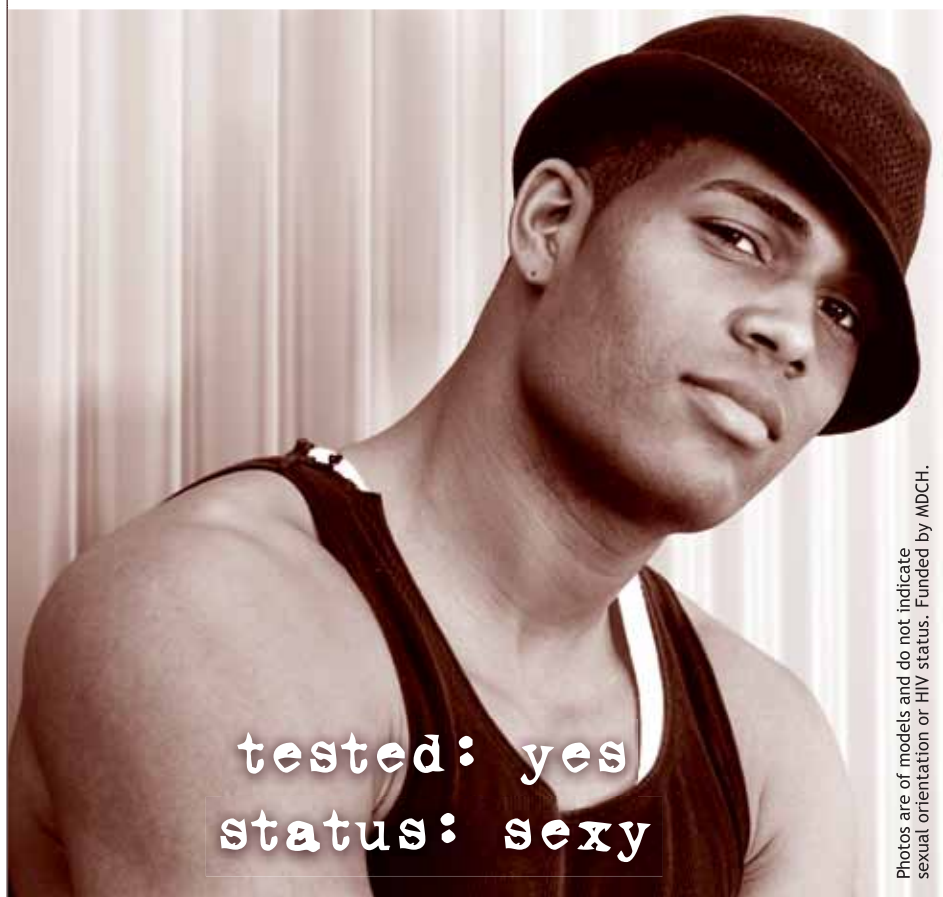
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Cocktail Chatter

The Union Square

BY ED SIKOV

You can't go to the Olive Garden without your server pushing "specialty cocktails," a euphemism for toxic waste. These poisonous catch-alls are enough to make you hurl. "McSewer's 12-year bourbon, chrysanthemum syrup, birch tea, peppermint drop." Or "Pukey's small-batch rye, rosemary, Barfington gin, Sambucca, house-made cola." *Who drinks these messes?* I made the mistake of ordering one last week at an upscale Italian place. The interior was so tasteful that I assumed the cocktails would be too. Wrong! It was billed as "hand-crafted whiskey, mint syrup, lemon juice." Okay, but I didn't want a lot of either the mint syrup or the lemon. "The drink will be off balance!" the waiter scolded. "That's the way I want it." "OK," he huffed. "Then you'll get an unbalanced drink."

I was stunned. What was that ancient dictum about the customer always being right? That's gone the way of the dodo and civil political discourse. He returned with a syrupy-sweet mess. The whiskey was lost in a wash of minty syrup and lemonade. Why drown a small-batch whiskey in lemon-mint Crystal Lite?

My pal Mike, the ex-priest, told me about a great cocktail he'd had at a restaurant called Print. So I made it at home — *my* way. Print calls the drink the Bee's Knees, and Mike used what Print's bartender told him were the ingredients and proportions. The ingredients were brilliant, the proportions ghastly. I haven't been to Print, so maybe their Bee's Knees works. But I wanted it to taste good to me, so I changed the proportions and renamed it.

The result was fabulous. *To me*. Start by making lavender-infused gin. This is not difficult; you just have to find either loose lavender blossoms or herbal lavender tea bags. Try a health food store. Use good but not hideously expensive gin. It's foolish to buy a super-premium brand if you're going to flavor it yourself. Pour as much gin as you want to lavenderize into a clean, odor-free jar with a tight-fitting lid. (If the jar or lid still smells like

pickles, use another jar.) Dump in a handful of lavender (or open some lavender tea bags and pour the contents into the jar). Don't worry about proportions; they don't matter. Let it stand for two days; shake it whenever you pass by. Then use a tea strainer and a funnel to decant the infusion into an attractive bottle with a tight-fitting lid or unblemished cork. The gin will not have turned purple. Miraculously, it will be honey colored.

Make a small bottle of Really Simple Syrup, but instead of using sugar, use equal parts raw honey and water. Just shake them together until the honey dissolves. Be sure to have a lemon on hand.

You could continue the theme by using honey produced by bees that collect lavender pollen, but I prefer honey made from tough, streetwise New York City bees. Yes, there are honey-producing bees in the city, and I buy as locally as possible — honey made by my neighborhood bees. Hence the drink's name.

This recipe is simply the way *I* like it. Make it taste good *to you*.

The Union Square

1 part lavender-infused Beefeater gin

Lemon juice to taste

Really Simple Honey Syrup to taste

For a strong drink, pour the ingredients into a shaker filled with ice, shake quickly, strain and serve. For a less potent drink, serve it on ice and let it water down.



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