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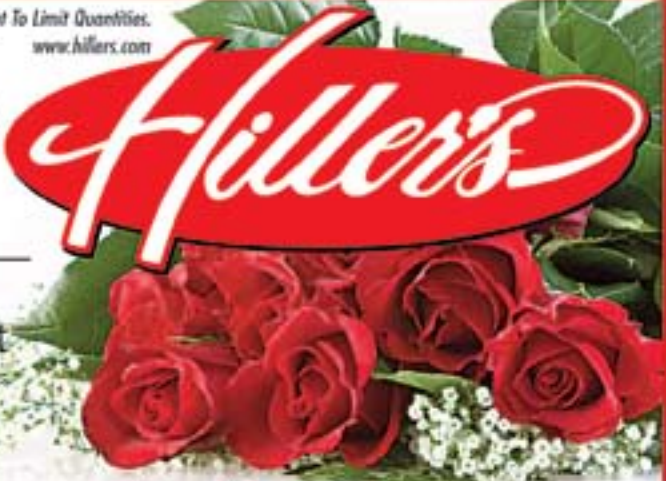
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# The nurturing kind

## Royale Theus finds meaning in giving back



Royale Theus joined Michigan AIDS Coalition in 2004 and is the agency's program director.  
BTL photo: Andrew Potter.

BY DESIREE COOPER

When he was only 20-years-old, Detroit native Royale Theus discovered he was going to be a father. It wasn't exactly what he had planned for his future.

"I had my son with my best friend," said Theus, who is gay. "Life happens."

For Theus, now 30, life has been a series of curveballs. His parents divorced when he was only two. When he was five, he was sexually abused by a relative. It took him three years to

tell his mother.

"It was so hurtful for her," said Theus, the director of programs for the Michigan AIDS Coalition, a Ferndale-based organization that promotes the health and well being of the HIV/AIDS community. "She always told me that it wasn't my fault and that she still loved me."

Theus's father, however, was an abusive alcoholic who was in and out of Theus's life after the divorce.

"When I was a kid, I thought he was a hero — he had a big car, nice clothes and worked at Ford," said Theus. "But he'd only want to come

over when he was intoxicated."

By the time Theus turned 18, he was eager to get out into the world and experience life. He worked at FOCUS:Hope and then with the Detroit Health Department doing HIV testing and counseling in a mobile unit. He'd barely established himself when he discovered he was going to be a father.

But instead of throwing him into a tailspin, fatherhood was a wake-up call.

"Having a son saved my life," said Theus, whose son is now 11. "He was my 'Stay Out of Jail' card. I knew there was someone depending on me."

### Gay fatherhood

Taking care of others seems to bring out the best in Theus.

"I was raised by a strong, independent, hardworking woman," he said of his mother, who joined the Army Reserve and earned a nursing degree as a single parent. In 1985, he watched as his mother took care of his grandmother until she died of breast cancer in 1990.

It's his mother's nurturing influence that Theus brings to his relationship with his son.

"I hug him, I kiss him," said Theus, who is fully engaged in his son's life. "I show more emotion and affection than my father showed."

Despite his comfort with his role as a father, he's not so comfortable with his role as a gay father. Theus has yet to broach the topic of his sexuality with his son, a shy kid who is a car fanatic.

"I'm waiting until he's older," said Theus. "He's mentioned that someone called another classmate 'gay.' I asked him what that meant and he didn't know."

But there's a hesitation in Theus's voice, as if he is still coming to terms with his own sexuality. "I am struggling with it," he acknowledged. "The more comfortable that I can be with who I am, the easier it will be for me to talk to my son about it. Being gay is not easy."

There are at least 650,000 same-sex couples in the United States, and one in five of them are raising children, according to Gary Gates, a demographer at the Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy. Much less is known about the number of gay or lesbian single parents.

"LGBTQ parents face the issues that other parents don't face," Theus said. "They have to deal with outsiders who do not believe that gays can be parents. And they have to deal with their own children not accepting them because of what other children may say."

There's also guilt associated with "adding another dimension of challenge to your own child's life," said Theus, who graduated from Mumford High School in 1999. "My son needs

to know about different sexual orientations so that he can be tolerant. But right now, I'm just dealing with class work and girlfriends. I don't want to put my sexuality on him now."

### Living to give

Sheltered in the apostolic church, Theus never talked to anyone about sexuality growing up—especially not homosexuality.

"Back then, I questioned God, 'Why me?'" said Theus, who did everything for the church from driving the bus, to singing in the choir and cleaning after events. "I was afraid to talk to anyone about the feelings I was having for men. They preached to me that everything I was feeling was wrong."

In high school, he came out to his mother and became an activist. As a member of an African American LGBT health organization, he went to Detroit's Palmer Park to pass out health information. After graduation, he eventually landed a job in the Detroit Health Department's HIV mobile testing unit, bringing healthcare services to soup kitchens, methadone clinics and distressed neighborhoods.

"That was a whole new world for me," he said. "I liked helping people with diverse needs."

By the time he joined the Michigan AIDS Coalition in 2004, the questions he'd asked of God as a young man were finally being answered.

"Whenever I share with people their HIV status and help them go through the process of dealing with the diagnosis — from the medical regimen, to attending their first doctor's appointments, to providing them food out of my freezer and clothes if they need it — I understand why I'm here," Theus said. "This is why I had to go through what I had to go through."

By the age of 25, Theus was the program director at the Michigan AIDS Coalition.

"I have to thank Craig Covey who started this organization for giving me a chance to demonstrate leadership," he said. "Whatever they needed, I was efficient and dependable. That's from my mother: No matter what you're doing, always do your best."

### The demands of family

Now he is living out another lesson he learned watching his mother nurse his grandmother: Honor thy mother and father.

"In 2005, my mother was in a head-on collision when she was driving to church," he said. "She survived, but she was diagnosed with dementia and a serious brain injury."

So in addition to raising a son, he is the sole caretaker of his 62-year-old mother.

A year ago, his father was incarcerated for a violent crime — at 90 years old. Diagnosed with dementia, his father served time in jail and was released into Theus's custody. Now he is also his dad's legal guardian.

It's a crushing responsibility, but Theus, takes his family demands in stride. "I see this as being normal," said Theus, who is pursuing a bachelor's degree in human services from the University of Phoenix. "This is what I should be doing and I'm blessed to be able to do it. To those who much is given, much is required."



# Poll showing most Michiganders oppose partner benefits comes under scrutiny

BY TODD HEYWOOD

A poll released last week showed significant voter opposition among Michiganders to giving health benefits to unmarried partners of public employees. But poll experts and LGBT activists in the state are accusing the pollsters of forcing out the finding with leading questions and unrepresentative demographics. Meanwhile, those who funded the poll are standing by it.

The poll of 600 likely 2012 voters, conducted by Lambert Edwards and Associates out of Grand Rapids and paid for by Denno Research of Lansing, was done Jan. 19-21. It found 54 percent opposed to providing health benefits to gay and lesbian couples or unmarried couples, while 32 percent supported the benefits.

The poll comes less than a month after Gov. Rick Snyder signed a bill prohibiting public employers from offering health benefits to public employees.

But the poll itself is coming under scrutiny because of the way questions were structured. The pollsters asked:

"Should the State of Michigan and local municipalities use taxpayer money to offer health care benefits to domestic partners of employees-in other words, offering benefits to gay and lesbian couples and couples in common law marriages? Do you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose using taxpayer money for this purpose?"

"I think this question is asked in a leading way because it emphasizes the term 'taxpayer money,'" says Bob Witeck of Witeck-Combs Communications in Washington, D.C. While Witeck-Combs is not a polling firm, it has partnered with Harris Interactive, which conducts the Harris Poll, for a dozen years in polling American opinions on LGBT issues. "For instance, if you asked about almost anything state and local gov-

ernments do, and early in the question, focus on 'taxpayer money,' it is far more likely to inflame popular biases that public funds are either wasted or corrupted."

Witeck says the poll is an "outlier" poll because of the question's wording, and the findings. Most national polls have consistently found that Americans support providing health care and other benefits to same-sex couples and unmarried heterosexual couples.

"The wording of the question - which hypes the 'taxpayer funded' language combined with skewed sampling - tells you almost nothing about how most voters really feel about the issue of domestic partner benefits. This is a question designed to achieve a certain result."

- David Holtz, executive director of Progress Michigan

the outcomes of other polls on the issue. "When the facts about differential treatment or unequal rewards is clarified, then in poll after poll most Americans consistently believe that equal pay (and benefits) should be the norm - and that whether one is gay or straight, is irrelevant. In the framing of this question, this also might sound to some respondents as 'special' or 'unequal' status for gay couples which is not the case."

"It was intended to find this result," says Witeck. "It doesn't ask it as a matter of parity."

Witeck's view on the poll doesn't phase Dennis Denno, the political operative who commissioned it.

"Questions about same-sex partner health benefits and about pay and benefits parity are frequently asked in national and local poll samples. When asking these kinds of questions, respondents often are informed that the dependents of other employees, in married heterosexual couples, are eligible for health benefits, while their co-workers' dependents or partners are not," Witeck said, explaining

See Poll, page 13

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## Ruth Ellis Center to receive Love Award

### Event part of Standing on the Side of Love initiative

**SOUTHFIELD** – Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church in Southfield will present the Love Award on Feb. 12 to The Ruth Ellis Center for its work with homeless LGBT youth.

“This year in the Detroit area 2,000 teens and young adults will become homeless or at-risk because of their identity. The Ruth Ellis Center saves the lives of many LGBTQ youth within Michigan. The center provides safe space at its drop-in center and residential facility, which serves LGBTQ youth through enrichment programs, counseling and testing, and several support services,” said NWUU Rev. Kimi Riegel.

The Love Award is presented for bold and courageous action and is a part of the UUA’s program Standing on the Side of Love. The program is a public advocacy campaign seeking to harness love’s power to stop oppression and was inspired by the 2008 shooting at a Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. The Knoxville Community responded with an outpouring of love that inspired the leadership at the UUA to launch a campaign that would harness love’s power in challenging exclusion, oppression and violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, race, religion or any other identity. For two years in a row the program re-imagined Valentine’s Day as a social justice holiday.

NWUU is a faith-based community that has been a beacon for liberal religion and social justice in southeast Michigan since the 1950s. It is a diverse church and among its many goals are to teach, learn and work to create a more just and peaceful world.

The Ruth Ellis Center, founded in 1999, is located at 77 Victor St. in Highland Park. It is a nonprofit organization and receives funding from individuals, foundations, corporations, community groups, faith based organizations and government. To find out more information about the Ruth Ellis Center visit [www.ruthelliscenter.org](http://www.ruthelliscenter.org).

# Troy Mayor calls ‘homosexual lifestyle dangerous’ on released tape, event planned

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

**TROY** – Troy Mayor Janice Daniels is not having a very good start to 2012. According to a recent poll of voters in the city conducted by Lansing-based political consulting firm Main Street Strategies and commissioned by MichiganLiberal.com, 72 percent of voters surveyed support recalling Daniels from office. Since that poll, the tape recording that Troy Mayor Janice Daniels refused to release to the public following a meeting Jan. 9 with members of Troy High School’s gay-straight alliance, was made available to the media this week by way of the Freedom of Information Act.

The meeting took place during Mayor Daniels office hours at the Troy Community Center and was supposed to be an opportunity for the students to discuss plans for a suicide and bullying prevention event. The students wanted to give Mayor Daniels a chance to redeem herself after making use of the word “queer” in an anti-gay marriage Facebook post in June 2011 before taking office.

Instead, it turned into a heated debate when Amy Weber, a youth mentor supporting the students, told Mayor Daniels’ she would be asked at the event to “discuss the issue at hand that got us here in the first place.”

On the recording, Mayor Daniels’ defended her first anti-gay statement when she said, “I didn’t think that in the total context of all of the information that is disseminated on Facebook, all of the stuff that you see on television, the radio stations, all of the vitriol and the true hate that is expressed in our various forms of media, I thought my sentence was basically inconsequential until it was made into a huge deal.”

Then she made another anti-gay statement about what the students can expect from her while at the event. “I will bring in psychiatrists who will tell you that the homosexual lifestyle is dangerous,” said Mayor Daniels.

Weber made it clear to Mayor Daniels that it’s not her place to do that as a city leader and said, “I just don’t think you should be a part of the event at all.”

## Event planned

Since the meeting, the student alliance and representatives from the group



C.A.R.E.: the Troy Diversity Coalition (Celebrate, Accept, Respect and Empathize), have been organizing a Peace Day. Just in the beginning stages, the March event is open to everyone, including Mayor Daniels, and will celebrate unity and diversity within the Troy community.

“This is not an event trying to change anybody’s point of view. We understand and are respectful of the fact that people see the world differently. The goal is to unify that belief and understanding, which will make us a stronger community, state, nation, and world,” said Weber, adding that a variety of public officials, local celebrities and religious leaders will be in attendance.

“I think all of us are kind of in a place of acceptance. We’re rejuvenated with the planning of this Peace Day event. A lot of times when things seem exhaustive and you have nothing left to give, if you can turn your perspective around, you will find something positive that comes out of it. I personally saw it like this from day one,” said Weber. “I can either harp on what she isn’t doing and what she’s never going to be or I can turn it around. What we’re doing will make more of an impact than the negativity. I would rather just wish her well and let the people of Troy decide if they want her as their leader.”

Dr. Ellen Fedon-Keyt, a psychologist at the Oakland University Graham Counseling Center, who married her partner of nine years in Buffalo, New York on Christmas Eve last year offers some insight on Daniels recent hate speech. “Skye Curtis and other young people from Troy High

School’s GSA eloquently modeled for all of us what a truly inclusive and respectful community can look like, where hateful speech is a problem for everyone and it is everyone’s duty to confront and educate people about it.

“I have been addressing this as hateful speech because that is what it is. I have never said that Janice Daniels is a hateful person. I believe that she is a person of privilege who, like many other people, never had to think twice about using this kind of language because no one ever confronted her about it. Using this type of speech maintains a system of oppression in our culture by reinforcing negative stereotypes and inequalities. This type of derisive speech and the dismissive attitudes that it’s somehow not a big deal to use them are what we call “microaggressions” - their use creates an “us” and a “them” - there is a majority group of privilege and a minority group that is constantly on the outside,” said Fedon-Keyt.

Looking ahead she added, “She (Daniels) has a real opportunity here to own up to her own unthinking prejudices, seek out the cultural awareness and sensitivity training that she so obviously lacks, and become a model for tolerance and change. If she can’t step up and do that then she’s not only missed an opportunity to heal the community she supposedly serves, but she is actively contributing to an oppressive, bigoted and separated environment that is toxic to everyone, not just those in the LGBT community.”

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# Knight Foundation grant to help train tomorrow's African American leaders

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

**DETROIT** - Coming up as a young black gay male, Curtis Lipscomb had a hard time finding longstanding training and mentorship. "When I was younger, the HIV/AIDS epidemic wiped out everyone older than me. People that would have been my educators were gone," said the 47 year old executive director of KICK. "I survived the HIV/AIDS epidemic and now I want people to have greater opportunities. I want to pass this work on to the next generation in a way that they can be better organized and better able to help themselves."

That's why Lipscomb is grateful to receive a Knight Foundation Grant that will specifically help fund one year of a new training program called LEAD. The LEAD Project will train 20 young, black gay men (ages 18-30) how to be effective community organizers.

The grant was given to ten projects in the Detroit and Philadelphia areas to increase youth activism, and the grant to KICK was the only one with an LGBT component. The \$20,000 Knight Foundation Grant will be combined with a \$15,000 Unity Michigan Grant to fund the first year of what Lipscomb hopes will be a three-year project.

"Imagine an academy for leaders, a way of educating people to train up," Lipscomb said. "We want people to learn basics of LGBT 101, and give them classes on social justice, community activism, civil leadership, and community building. We're seeking experts in these fields who can come in and teach what they know."

"It will be a six week program that we hold twice a year, one in the spring and one in the fall, ten students at a time." He is currently



KICK Executive Director Curtis Lipscomb is grateful to receive a Knight Foundation grant that specifically targets training for black gay men ages 18 - 30. BTL file photo

creating the curriculum for the program, which will be centered around what speakers he is able to bring on board.

"We have a number of young adults coming to KICK and asking how to participate. There are people who want to step up, but they need social justice skills. I am grateful for the resources to be able to do this," Lipscomb said.

From the path of a young gay black male seeking guidance in a world that didn't treat him fairly because of who he was, to the executive director of a large community organization, Lipscomb said he "worked with many great people, but we had to figure things out as we went along."

Lipscomb was the founder of KICK magazine, a national magazine for gay black males launched in 1994.

"In 1994 people were still dying of HIV, and there was no internet or email to share information. It was all print. There were all these black and white zines popping up, and that is how people were sharing information. So with KICK we sought out talented writ-

ers, artists, and photographers and we distributed it all around the country. There was a magazine put out on each coast, and then KICK for Detroit. Detroit had a very unique voice, and people took note of Detroit culture."

As the magazine grew, so did the community organizing associated with it. In 1996, they were instrumental in organizing Hotter Than July!, the first annual pride celebration for LGBT people of color in Detroit. Along with Black

See Knight Grant, page 15

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## Heard on Facebook

### What did you think of Madonna's Super Bowl halftime show?

I absolutely loved it. I think it was one of the best halftime shows ever.

—Jerome Brown

It sucked ass, you could obviously see that she was out of breath for being how old she is and therefore had to lip sync all of the words.

—Kevin Weekley

AMAZING! The queen can NEVER let her fans down.

—Tj Davis

Ok, but I would rather see the Indigo Girls or Ani DiFranco! And, of course, the Green Bay Packers in the game itself!

—Vanessa Emma Goldman

Over produced. I couldn't see magic in Madonna, only in props. On top of that new single. Sheesh. Not good.

—Matthew Blevins

Over produced? Would it have been Madonna if it wasn't? Plus these people paid a lot of money for tickets for this game. They certainly got their money's worth!

—Annalisa Snow

Yes, over produced. But again: my opinion. It was stuff she has already lived, portrayed, revealed. I expected more from someone who has layed out guidelines for entertainers after her. I just did not connect to her message at the end which was world peace. I did not see that either in her performance.

—Matthew Blevins

Comments may be edited for grammar and length.



Join the conversation ...

Search: "Between The Lines Newspaper"

# S/he Said

## Allies in business, politics and Hollywood

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL



### Miley Cyrus

*"When I shared a picture of my tattoo on my Twitter page and said, 'All love is equal,' a lot of people mocked me. They said, 'What happened to you? You used to be a Christian girl!' And I said, 'Well, if you were a true Christian, you would have your facts straight. Christianity is about love.' The debate resulted in a lot of threats and hate mail to people who agreed and disagreed with me. Can't people have friendly debates about sensitive topics without it turning into unnecessary threats? I believe every American should be allowed the same rights and civil liberties. Without legalized same-sex marriage, most of the time you cannot share the same health benefits, you are not considered next of kin and you are not granted the same securities as a heterosexual couple. How is this different than having someone sit in the back of the bus because of their skin color?"*

—Miley Cyrus, actress and pop singer-songwriter, in her column titled "Why Miley Got Her Gay-Marriage Tattoo," *Glamour Magazine* www.glamour.com, March 2012 Issue.



### Ban Ki-moon

*"Today, I appeal once again to you and to all Member States. We must adopt a preventive approach to human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a promise to all people in all places at all times. ... Let me mention one form of discrimination that has been ignored or even sanctioned by many States for far too long: discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. This has prompted some governments to treat people as second-class citizens, or even criminals. Confronting this discrimination is a challenge. But we must live up to the ideals of the Universal Declaration."*

—United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in a speech at the Summit of the African Union, addressing 30 African heads of state in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, about the future of African nations, www.un.org, Jan. 29. Homosexuality is outlawed in most African countries and discrimination against gays and lesbians is widespread on the continent.



### Lloyd Blankfein

*"I'm Lloyd Blankfein, chairman and C.E.O. of Goldman Sachs, and I support marriage equality. America's corporations learned long ago that equality is just good business and is the right thing to do."*

—Lloyd Blankfein, American business executive, CEO/Chairman of Goldman Sachs, in a video for "Americans for Marriage Equality," a Human Rights Campaign project featuring prominent marriage equality supporters, dealbook.nytimes.com, Feb. 5.



### Michael Francis

*"Ellen DeGeneres is one of the most fun and vibrant people in entertainment today, with great warmth and a down-to-earth attitude. The millions who watch her on television and follow her through social media relate to her and trust what she has to say. Importantly, we share the same fundamental values as Ellen. At JC Penney, we couldn't think of a better partner to help us put the fun back into the retail experience. Moving forward, we'll be focused on being in sync with the rhythm of our customers' lives and operating in a 'Fair and Square' manner that is rooted in integrity, simplicity and respect. We're thrilled that she's joining our team to help convey the exciting transformation under way."*

—Michael Francis, president of JC Penney Company Inc., in a news release, announcing the exclusive partnership between talk-show host, Ellen DeGeneres, and 110 year-old retailer, JC Penney, ir.jcpenney.com, Jan. 25.



# LGBT issues taught to teachers at first-ever OU conference

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

Nearly 150 people gathered on Feb. 3 for the first ever Michigan SOGI Education Conference: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues in Education at Oakland University in Rochester.

The statewide one-day conference, sponsored by OU's School of Education and Human Services, brought together community agencies, preK-12 practitioners, and faculty and administrators from teacher education programs across the state. Through workshops and sessions, participants engaged in interactive dialogue about how teachers and administrators can work, in collaboration with other schools and colleges of education, to create safe and inclusive schools for all students, staff, faculty and administrators, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

"The SOGI acronym was chosen specifically because it's an all-inclusive term. All people have a sexual or attractional orientation toward others, and a sense of self that rests somewhere along a continuum of feminine and masculine, even if either, or both, may shift under different circumstances, or at different times in our lives," said Louis Gaillen, Dean of the School of Education and Human Services.

As a supporter of the SOGI Initiative, Eliza Byard, the executive director of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), flew in from New York to deliver the keynote address.

"Please recognize I come to this as the daughter of a high school teacher, a straight woman who was one of GLSEN's first volunteers. I have tremendous respect and admiration for people who work in our schools. I work with hundreds and thousands of them every year, but something isn't working right," said Byard, who joined GLSEN's staff in 2001. Byard is responsible for all program development and oversight, including the development of GLSEN's award-winning national Think B4 You Speak campaign - the first ever Ad Council campaign on LGBT issues, and currently serves on the LGBT youth suicide prevention task force of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention.

With 35 chapters across the country, Byard said GLSEN advocates for policies that will require action at all levels of government to make sure all of the resources and opportunities provided by a preK-12 education are truly available to every child that walks through the school house door every single morning.

"55 million children go to school and they all deserve a fair education," said Byard. "At GLSEN, our job is to develop information and knowledge about the evidence the harm costs us all and identify the solutions that really make a difference. We develop and test programs to try to help prepare educators to intervene, we raise

awareness about the problem itself, support and train and work with local advocates, students, teachers and parents who will carry that message and carry those programs forward."

LGBT agencies and organizations present during the conference included PLFAG, Affirmations, Haven, Ruth Ellis Center, Neutral Zone Riot Youth, and Equality Michigan.

Some of the workshops and sessions offered were Implementing and Supporting Gay-Straight Alliances, Sexuality and Gender 101, The Coming Out Process for the Millennial Generation, and Bullying in Michigan: What Our Kids Need Now and How to Get There Through Collaboration with Local School Districts and Statewide Policy Application.

As the director of instructional equity at Farmington Public Schools, Naomi Khalil said she thought the topics discussed were relevant and engaging. "I plan on seeking this group and its material out as a resource for trainings and social identity dialogues held in my district. I look forward to future conferences and hope that they are extended in time so that we can truly delve into these topics and develop strategic plans across the state to ensure that the voice of the LGBTQA community is elevated to its rightful place in our schools and society at large," said Khalil.

"I can attest to the fact that the most prevalent cases of bullying and harassment in many Michigan schools center on LGBT students," said Erika Rust, a teacher at North Farmington High School in Farmington Hills. "As an out teacher and advisor to our schools gay-straight alliance, I have an obvious personal investment in the cause. My hope is to gain the resources and additional tools to help implement active, visible GSA's in our middle schools, while improving the existing GSA's in our high schools."

"As adults, we need to model the skills and behaviors we want to see in our students. It starts with our own self-reflection and our vision of respect for everyone. It also connects to what we are actively doing to build that for ourselves and others," said Kathy Boyd, Assistant Principal at Power Upper Elementary School in Farmington Hills.

According to Tim Larrabee, associate professor of education at OU and director of the SOGI Initiative Taskforce, for a first-time event, the conference was a great success.

"It is so rewarding to know there is so much interest and from such a broad spectrum of participants. We had high school and university students, and high school and university faculty; we had counselors and social workers; we had parents. We had site and district level administrators. We had community educators and organizers. We had health-care professionals. We

## New GLSEN reports available

On Jan. 18, GLSEN released a new report on school climate, biased remarks and bullying, "Playgrounds and Prejudice: Elementary School Climate in the United States."

While at the SOGI conference, Byard drew attention to biased-based bullying. "It's important to remember this kind of bullying that gives voice to words like 'sissy' and 'faggot' and 'dyke' and the way collectively a school community responds are the ways that the hidden curriculum is given teeth and power," said Byard.

The report, based on national surveys of 1,065 elementary school students in 3rd to 6th grade and 1,099 elementary school teachers of K-6th grade, examines students' and teachers' experiences with biased remarks and bullying, and their attitudes about gender expression and family diversity. The surveys were conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of GLSEN during November and December 2010.

In the report, half of elementary school students surveyed heard the phrase, "that's so gay," meant to be something negative. In middle school, 40 percent of out LGBT people have reported experiencing physical assault at school. For more statistics, visit [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org). GLSEN also released "Ready, Set, Respect! GLSEN's Elementary School Toolkit," an instructional resource available online developed to help educators address issues raised in Playgrounds and Prejudice, particularly teachers' willingness to address but lack of understanding of biased language, LGBT-inclusive family diversity and gender nonconformity.



had researchers and evaluators. And every one of them found great value in the time they spent at the conference," said Larrabee.

This was evident in the exit surveys collected, which were unanimously positive for presenters, workshops and sessions.

"One common theme was 'We want more. We want the sessions to be longer. We want

the sessions offered more than once. We want more sessions offered on more topics. We want sessions offered over more days. We want more opportunities to network. We want more," said Larrabee. "We're already thinking about doing this again next year, and based on the feedback, expect it will bring in even more people."

## Campaign questions Gov. Snyder 'the nerd'

**LANSING** — In response to Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder's recent signing of House Bill 4770, Equality Michigan Pride PAC has launched an ad campaign encouraging voters to "talk back to Rick." Snyder signed HB 4770 in December and targeted gay and lesbian families by stripping away health care coverage for domestic partners of public employees.

The campaign, at [www.talkbacktorick.com](http://www.talkbacktorick.com), asks Michigan families to sign an open letter to the Governor and donate to help buy airtime for the radio ad campaign.

"Michigan voters elected Rick Snyder because he had a plan to fix our state's economy. He was going to help keep the best and the brightest here and position Michigan as an economic leader," said Amy Hunter, President

of the Equality Michigan Pride PAC. "Unfortunately, somewhere along the way, the Governor has made compromises we find disappointing. After nearly a year-long policy debate, Snyder has put hardworking couples and their children into harm's way by eliminating important health care coverage. Michigan's gay residents are fed up, and this is one way that we're pushing back."

Michiganders can sign the letter to the Governor and hear the radio ads at [www.talkbacktorick.com](http://www.talkbacktorick.com).

Stay informed by signing for updates [www.eqmipridepac.com](http://www.eqmipridepac.com)





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# BTL Editorial

## The arc of justice is long

It's been a good week here at BTL reporting on the LGBT news. Ground-breaking court cases, emerging new leadership, recognition and awards for jobs well done are all covered in this current issue. After weeks of reporting what has felt like a long litany of disheartening setbacks in the state, it is good to report on uplifting and encouraging developments for a change.

We start with the historic Prop. 8 ruling supporting same-sex marriage rights in California. This is a resounding decision that reaffirms that it is unconstitutional in the U.S. to exclude same-sex couples from marriage. Our opponents will most likely try to continue the fight to the U.S. Supreme Court and implore them to overturn two lower court rulings, but for now we can celebrate a major victory. We know that time is on our side. As more states approve same-sex marriage, it will become more and more likely that the Supreme Court will eventually rule in favor of equal marriage rights. Leaders like Evan Wolfson at the Center for Marriage Equality and the lawyers who fought so hard on our behalf deserve to celebrate - and to be celebrated for this historic achievement.

Closer to home several new, young and exciting leaders are profiled this week. Royale Theus is creating change in his role as an HIV/AIDS activist and educator, and he is modeling compassionate leadership skills in his personal life. The GSA members at Troy High School and their adult leaders are planning a peace gathering in response to the decidedly un-peaceful rhetoric

This week in LGBT news reminds us that a major court victory like the one upholding Californians equal marriage rights does not happen all at once, but comes at the end of a long arc of energy. We see the beginning of new arcs of justice in Michigan and look forward to seeing them actualized by the next generation of our leaders and organizations.

of Troy Mayor Janice Daniels. They are showing us that it is better to answer hate with love than it is to stoop to the haters' level, retaliating with anger. We thank these young people of Troy for their fine example of responsible, progressive leadership.

While the students of Troy are teaching us all, over 150 teachers gathered at the Michigan SOGI Education Conference: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues in Education at

Oakland University in Rochester. They learned about creating safe educational spaces for all students. We applaud the conference organizers and the participants who saw the need for better training on LGBT issues at the middle and high school levels, and then did something about it. This first conference has sparked dialogues and questions, and created solutions and excitement that will benefit all students in their schools. The organizers are already thinking about how to expand this conference for next year.

And finally, two of our local organizations got some of the recognition they deserve. Kick! and the Ruth Ellis Center are both receiving awards and grants to support their inspiring work. We know that running non-profit social service agencies can sometimes be a thankless pursuit, and we want to add our congratulations to the executive directors, Curtis Lipscomb of Kick! and Laura Hughes of REC, for their fine work and dogged determination on behalf of their agencies.

As we go forward into 2012 there will be many challenges. It is good to know that we have strong new leadership that is willing to take up the reigns of activism and that our organizations are receiving some of the credit they've earned. It reminds us that a major court victory like the one upholding Californians equal marriage rights does not happen all at once, but comes at the end of a long arc of energy. We see the start of new arcs of justice in Michigan and look forward to seeing them actualized by the next generation of our leaders and organizations.



## Parting Glances



### Ystrad Mynach. Where?

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

"Fairy tales can come true, if you're young at heart," so go the lyrics of one of Frank Sinatra's biggest hits.

Sing along mentally with me to this truth-is-stranger-than-fiction, er, fiction fairy tale I'm about to relate. (You might also ask yourself while singing if you were ever dropped on your head as a child. It might account for a lot.)

Once upon a time there was an energetic young lad - let's call him Chris - who loved to play all kinds of sports. You name it. Baseball. Football. Basket Ball. Polo. Especially Rugby.

The talk of his kindergarten class, Chris was lifting weights at age five, bench pressing 150 pounds. (Not possible? Listen PG reader, if televangelist Pat Robertson says he can bench press 1000 pounds, anything is possible.)

Anyhow, by the time Chris turned of age, he was the star of the sports arena. He had several girlfriends, and one in particular he intended to marry. Then the unthinkable happened. He did a flip-flop on the playing field, cracked his head, spent two days in a coma.

Fairy tales often have happy endings, and when Chris awoke his was very happy. Personally, and career wise. Let's save the happy ending for last. Here's the real story for your consideration. (Again, were you dropped on your head as a child?)

The following news item got big coverage last November in England, Wales, and Canadian media. Purportedly it's all true. (You just can't make things up like this.)

"Chris Birch, 26, a rugby player from Ystrad Mynach, South Wales, spent his weekends watching sport and drinking with his mates," reports the March issue of Fortean Times. "When he attempted a back flip in front of friends, he fell down a grass bank, hitting his head and suffering a stroke.

"Regaining consciousness in hospital a few days later, he found he was homosexual. 'I was gay when I woke up and I still am,' he says. 'It sounds strange but when I came round I immediately felt different. I wasn't interested in women anymore.

"I had never been attracted to a man before - I never even had any gay friends. But I didn't care who I was before. I had to be true to my feelings. Suddenly I hated everything about my old life. I didn't get on with my friends. I hated sport. I started to take more pride in my appearance. I bleached my hair and started working out." (That sounds really gay!)

The bottom line (I'm not sure if Chris is top or bottom) is whether what happened is indeed possible. Joe Korner, a quoted British expert on strokes, thinks so. "Strokes can have a big effect on individuals and lead to personality changes.

"During recovery the brain makes new neural connections which can trigger things people weren't aware of such as accent, language, or perhaps a different sexuality."

Anyhoo! Our fairy tale and factual news story have happy endings. Chris is now partnered and - the big clincher for me - a hairdresser. (Oh, yes. Send me your own bump-on-the-head, now-I'm-gay stories. If you're young at heart.)

Charles@pridesource.com

## HIV/AIDS Alliance of Michigan reactivates

### Concerns raised about 'impactful voice' for agencies

BY BTL STAFF

The HIV/AIDS Alliance of Michigan (HAAM), originally founded in 1985, has been reactivated by its core member AIDS service organizations around the state and have contracted with Wiener Associates, a Lansing based full service governmental affairs law firm, to provide lobbying and consulting services. Elizabeth L. Weihl, partner at Wiener Associates, will work with the organization, whose members include HIV/AIDS Resource Center in the Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor area, Wellness AIDS Services serving Flint and Genessee County, Lansing Area AIDS Network, CARES based in Kalamazoo and serving southwest

Michigan, and AIDS Partnership Michigan servicing metropolitan Detroit.

The leaders have been monitoring changes within HIV/AIDS leadership, public policy and the impact of the Affordable Care Act on the future of AIDS services in the state. The decision to reactivate was reached to provide a more impactful voice for providers and the clients they serve.

"We are very pleased, to once again collaborate as a group to provide a public venue for our positions and concerns about HIV/AIDS. It is an issue each agency feels total passion and commitment to. We bring a tremendous amount of knowledge to the table, and it is time we raised our voices again, particularly as the state of Michigan and the federal government works its way through health care reform. All the member agencies have been on the front line of

one of this country's most challenging and frightening health epidemics. We know a great deal from that experience, and are prepared to share our knowledge in a way no other group can," said Barbara Murray, executive director of AIDS Partnership Michigan.

All the core member agencies currently provide wrap around services including medical case management, behavioral health services, patient navigators, early intervention services, HIV counseling, testing and risk reduction and syringe exchange. The member agencies are considered front line providers of highly targeted services with expertise in reaching high risk populations including sexual minorities, women, high risk young people, people of color, and parolees from the Michigan Department of Corrections.

### ► Poll

Continued from p. 7

"I stand behind the validity of the question and the results," Denno said in an email statement. "The question is clear-cut and not confusing."

Denno, who now runs Denno Research, was formerly chief of staff to former Democratic state Sen. Buzz Thomas of Detroit.

### Demographics issue

Questions have also been raised about the demographics of the poll participants.

More than 400 of the poll respondents - about two-thirds - were above the age of 50. The U.S. Census puts the adult population of 45 and older at about 40 percent. In addition, nearly one third - a total of 168 - of the poll respondents hailed from West Michigan. This was the largest geographic demographic in the sample and West Michigan is considered a very conservative part of Michigan.

"And you will notice that we used cell phone lists of voters to successfully include the opinions of younger people," Denno wrote about the age question. "Finally, the Western portion of the state is defined as the following counties:

Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Cass, Grand Traverse, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lake, Leelanau, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, Ottawa, St. Joseph, and Van Buren."

"Simply put, this kind of poll result seems intended to distort the public policy issues and public understanding," Witeck says. "It is framed in a leading way, does not offer enough information to individuals about the topic, and as a matter of polling



"With questions worded that way, this result is, unfortunately, predictable. It's totally inconsistent with any reputable poll done in recent years."

- Emily Dievendorf

ethics, when released to the media, it must include its methodology which assures readers the survey was conducted according to industry standards, and that the sampling was properly weighted to reflect a demographic cross-section of Michigan citizens."

Witeck is not alone in challenging the question - and the results. Emily Dievendorf, policy director of Equality Michigan, also slammed the poll.

"With questions worded that way, this result is, unfortunately, predictable. It's

totally inconsistent with any reputable poll done in recent years, but I would guess the firm's goal was earned media - not necessarily survey integrity," said Dievendorf in an emailed statement. "This is not an appropriate time to risk misrepresenting the will of Michigan residents when the call for equality has been so consistently strong. Discussion surrounding the needs of the gay community should not be treated as just an opportunity to be visible. We are talking about Michiganders and their families who are being harmed in this political climate. The social climate needs to be portrayed as it is - fed up with intolerance and ready to include everybody."

David Holtz, executive director of Progress Michigan, expressed anger at the poll.

"My God, I guess the corporate press will report the results of any old poll regardless of how flawed it is," Holtz said in an email statement. "The wording of the question - which hypes the 'taxpayer funded' language combined with skewed sampling - tells you almost nothing about how most voters really feel about the issue of domestic partner benefits. This is a question designed to achieve a certain result."



## Creep of the Week One Million Moms

D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Let there be any confusion, this week's Creep is not just a million random ladies with kids. One Million Moms is an affiliate of the American Family Association. So you can imagine how much these moms love homos.

OMM loves homos so much that they won't stop calling JC Penney to talk about them. Or, specifically, "her," as in one particular homo: Ellen DeGeneres.

I know what you're thinking: "JC Penney still exists? And there are really people who are freaked that Ellen's gay? I thought both of those things became non-issues in 1997."

Well, not so much.

In any case, DeGeneres recently signed on to be JC Penney's celebrity spokesperson and anti-gay folks are fuming because obviously JC Penney is obviously trying to recruit young ladies onto Team Lesbo by selling Hush Puppies, tailored suit jackets, and softball jerseys in the junior miss section. Also Ellen will most likely be giving live, in-store lesbian sex demonstrations. Otherwise, what's there to fuss over?

Plenty, if you read the One Million Moms' poorly written alerts on their website.

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### And there are really people who are freaked that Ellen's gay?

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"Funny that JC Penney thinks hiring an open homosexual spokesperson will help their business when most of their customers are traditional families," OMM muses. "DeGeneres is not a true representation of the type of families that shop at their store. The majority of JC Penney shoppers will be offended and choose to no longer shop there. The small percentage of customers they are attempting to satisfy will not offset their loss in sales."

I'm not sure of OMM has noticed, but Ellen DeGeneres has a wildly popular TV show and millions of people love her. So it seems a bit of a stretch to say the "majority" of JC Penney shoppers are going to go buy their \$8 knit fashion tops and \$4 bath towels somewhere less gay friendly.

Well, I'll give them one thing: DeGeneres really isn't a true representation of JC Penney's customer base. But it's not because she's a lesbian. It's because she's rich.

OMM is determined to bring JC Penney to its gay-loving knees and they've been working the phones demanding that Ellen be fired.

"Ask JC Penney to replace Ellen DeGeneres as their new spokesperson immediately and remain neutral in the culture war," the OMM website reads.

And, of course, to groups like OMM and its parent group, the AFA, being "neutral" means pretending that LGBT people do not exist. And having a prominent lesbian representing a store where "families" shop makes that fiction ever harder to live by.

Apparently the OMM call-in campaign isn't working as JC Penney has announced it has no intention to fire Ellen. And OMM is complaining on their website that JC Penney's corporate HQ keeps hanging up on them. Their solution? Call the managers of local stores and harass them instead.

Rather than bother folks with actual work to do, why not fight fire with fabulous and go shopping? Plopping some of your hard earned dollars down on a JC Penney counter is the best way to thank them for not caving to anti-gay bigotry.

And I wasn't kidding when I said they had \$4 bath towels. They even have them in totally gay colors like Purple Opulence, Garnet, and Exotic Pink. Remember, when the going gets tough, the tough go shopping!

# GOP gays backed Romney in Florida

BY LISA KEEN

R. Clarke Cooper, head of the national Log Cabin Republicans group, said Mitt Romney won an "informal vote" among the leaders of Florida's three chapters on the Saturday before Tuesday's primary.

And voters in Florida's Republican primary on Tuesday gave Romney a victory, too, albeit a less resounding one than did Log Cabin Florida leaders. In the Log Cabin Florida straw poll, Romney won 24 votes to Newt Gingrich's 6, Ron Paul's 4, and Rick Santorum's zero.

Among voters participating in Tuesday's Republican primary in Florida, Romney won 46 percent of the vote, compared to Gingrich's 32 percent, Santorum's 13 percent, and Paul's 7 percent.

A week out from the January 31 primary, Log Cabin leaders in Florida suggested their members were pretty evenly split between Romney and Gingrich.

But in trying to catch up with Romney in the polls in the days leading up to the Florida voting, Gingrich began hammering Romney for being "pro-abortion, pro-gun control, pro-tax increase, and pro-gay rights." He described the former governor as a "Massachusetts moderate - a liberal by Republican terms."

Romney had acknowledged to one debate audience that, as governor of Massachusetts, he had a policy of not discriminating based on sexual orientation but he opposed same-sex marriage.

Cooper said he thought Gingrich's attempt to use Romney's support for "gay rights" against him probably back-fired.

"Any candidate attempting to use gays as a dividing rod in the 2012 election is bucking public trends of inclusion and will find themselves unable to win a general election," said Cooper. "Politics is about addition and the long term gains are made through building coalitions, not employing wedge issues." The Log Cabin national board has not yet made an endorsement in the primary.

While "gay rights," abortion, gun control, and taxes are very significant to many voters, there is evidence to suggest that voters are giving heavier consideration to other issues. The CNN exit polls Tuesday night showed the majority (62 percent) of voters surveyed identified the economy as their most important issue, followed by the budget deficit (23 percent), abortion (7 percent), and illegal immigration (3 percent).

CNN did not ask exit poll participants to identify their sexual orientation, but it did ask about marital status. Eleven percent of voters were unmarried men; 50 percent voted for Romney, 24 percent for Gingrich, 13 percent for Paul, 11 percent for Santorum, and 2 percent for others. Fifteen percent of voters were unmarried women; 47 percent voted for Romney, 28 percent for Gingrich, 11 percent for Santorum, 7 percent for Paul, and 7 percent for others.



Romney made contributions to groups like the Massachusetts Family Institute, which has opposed nearly every effort to secure equal rights for gays in Massachusetts. AP photo

## Romney tax returns include anti-gay group donations

The Republican primary campaign in Florida made considerable issue of how much the contenders have paid in taxes. A week prior to the Florida vote, when Romney released his tax returns for 2010 and 2011, there was a flood of attention over the discovery that the multi-millionaire is paying only about 15 percent in taxes on his enormous earnings.

But there was something specific for the LGBT community to scrutinize, too. It wasn't on Romney's regular returns, but rather on the returns he files for his private Tyler Charitable Foundation.

Romney pours a million or so dollars into the foundation every year and the foundation contributes the money to other charitable groups, including ones to help kids, to fight certain diseases, to help a homeless shelter for veterans, the United Way and the Red Cross. But CNN found, and other returns this reporter discovered online, show the Romney foundation also gave money to such virulently anti-gay groups as the Massachusetts Family Institute, the Salvation Army, and the Beckett Fund for Religious Liberty.

"The biggest part of this money," said CNN reporter Tom Foreman, has been the Mormon Church. Foreman didn't mention it, but the Mormon Church was heavily involved in funding the successful campaign to pass California's ban on same-sex marriage, Proposition 8.

According to a report in the Chronicle of Philanthropy, the Romney family made its largest annual donation to the Mormon Church - \$1.8 million - in 2008. That is the same year the Mormon Church gave heavy financial support to Proposition 8.

The Huffington Post reported last week that the family foundation has also given to the Boy Scouts of America, and

gave \$10,000 to the Massachusetts Family Institute.

Asked whether he thinks Romney's contributions to groups like the Massachusetts Family Institute, which has opposed nearly every effort to secure equal rights for gays in Massachusetts, would push away gay voters who might otherwise support Romney, Cooper said Log Cabin members are "not single issue voters."

"Like most Republicans," he said, "they take a macro view of each candidate running for office. Domestic bread and butter issues are showing to be prime interest in the 2012 election cycle for voters, including the LGBT community."

## Gingrich donatons

The 2010 returns for the Gingrich Foundation showed modest contributions to the Catholic Church, some small historic associations, a couple of disease research groups, and some small colleges. His personal returns show just \$9,000 to the Catholic Church and other "miscellaneous" contributions.

Both the Catholic Church and the Mormon Church have contributed heavily to political efforts to ban same-sex marriage, and neither Romney nor Gingrich has been supportive of full equality for LGBT citizens. But Romney's funding presented the most trouble for his prospects of securing 27 percent of the LGB vote in the general election this year, as Republican nominee John McCain did in 2008.

"The donations by the Romney family to these far right groups," said Michael Cole-Schwartz, communications director for the Human Rights Campaign, "only proves the point that Mitt Romney has had every position imaginable on LGBT issues, from first saying he'd be better on gay rights than Ted Kennedy to funding the groups that want to turn back the clock on marriage in Massachusetts."



# Prop 8 declared unconstitutional

BY LISA KEEN

Proposition 8 is unconstitutional, said a divided federal appeals court panel in San Francisco Feb. 7.

The highly anticipated ruling also rejected a motion from Proposition 8 proponents to vacate the district court ruling of former Chief Judge Vaughn Walker because he had not disclosed, prior to presiding over *Perry v. Schwarzenegger*, that he was in a relationship with a man.

And, as expected, the three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals agreed with a California Supreme Court ruling that Yes on 8, the coalition which successfully campaigned for the ban on same-sex marriage in 2008, did have legal standing to appeal Walker's decision, even though state officials chose not to.

The 2 to 1 majority opinion was written by Judge Stephen Reinhardt and joined by Judge Michael Hawkins. A partial dissent was registered by Judge Randy Smith, a Mormon.

The court will almost certainly be asked to issue a stay on its ruling, pending further appeal. In the meantime, the ruling is a relatively narrow one, said an attorney on the American Foundation for Equal Rights' legal team – one that would affect only same-sex couples in California, not



A three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals during the Dec. 2010 trial. The judges ruled Feb. 7 in a 2-1 majority opinion that Prop. 8 was unconstitutional. AP photo

the entire Ninth Circuit.

The majority opinion upheld Judge Walker who found Proposition 8 to violate the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of equal protection and due process.

The Ninth Circuit panel heard oral arguments concerning these key issues in the case in December 2010.

Yes on 8 attorneys argued during the December 2010 argument before the appeals panel that the ban on same-sex marriage was justified because same-sex marriage would make children "prematurely

preoccupied with issues of sexuality."

Conservative icon Ted Olson, arguing against Proposition 8 at the oral argument before the panel called the reasoning "nonsense" and said, "If believed, that would justify the banning of comic books, television, video games, and even conversations between children."

Yes on 8 claimed the ban was justified to protect children from the idea that marriage between same-sex partners is OK.

Follow this online at [www.pridesource.com](http://www.pridesource.com).

## ► Knight grant

Continued from p. 9

LGBT community groups including the Baldwin-Parker Society, Billionaire's Boys Club, Men of Color Motivational Group, A. Lourde Collective, Project Survival, Ladies of a Current Affair and Full Truth Unity Fellowship Church, KICK Publishing helped bring candle flames of effort together for a fire of inspiration.

Hotter Than July! was so hot that

other projects sparked from the fuel and eventually KICK's focus became less on publishing and more on community activism and social justice.

In 2003, KICK transitioned from a business to a nonprofit and zoomed in their focus on organizing and helping. Last year the group moved into a community center space at 41 Burroughs Street, Suite 109 in Detroit. Lipscomb was also invited out to a holiday reception at the White House with President Barack Obama and family in December as a result of his activism work.

2012 is looking promising for Lipscomb and the many volunteers who keep KICK vibrant and progressive. Their ongoing discussion series Live and Learn continues to grow and tackle tough topics, and they are working on community organizing for the upcoming election. The Knight Foundation Grant is a good way to start the year as well.

"I am very excited about the opportunity," he said.

Find out more about KICK at [www.e-kick.org](http://www.e-kick.org).

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photo by Sean Carter

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## Dance troupe performs at Lansing's Wharton Center

BY BRIDGETTE M. REDMAN

**EAST LANSING** – Five years after the Stonewall riots, a group of professional male dancers gathered in New York and decided to take drag performance to a new level. They formed Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, affectionately known as the Trocks, and launched a company that has grown in popularity in the nearly 40 years since its inception.

Who are they? They're an all-male professional ballet troupe that parodies famous ballets with men performing en pointe, wearing tutus and showing that they can be ballerinas too.

As society has changed, so has their audiences. While they were once attended primarily by hardcore ballet fans and members

of the gay community, they now see art lovers of all ages and stripes, according to its artistic director Tory Dobrin, who has been with the company since 1980.

"The audience has changed (since) the early '80s when we got more of the crowd that was veering toward the fringe," Dobrin said. "Now we get just about everybody, including children. We never had children in the '80s. It's not a kids' show. It is a comedy dance show that really does appeal to everyone."

They started off performing far off-Broadway in New York at late-night shows. Then came the critical acclaim and a company that grew to today's size where they put on more than 150 shows all around the world every year. They've performed in 30 different countries

### Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

8 p.m. Feb. 18 (\$25-38)  
Wharton Center, East Lansing  
[www.whartoncenter.com](http://www.whartoncenter.com)

and been featured in numerous television appearances as diverse as BBC specials and "Muppet Babies."

They'll be bringing their show to East Lansing's Wharton Center Feb. 18, performing their signature work, "Swan Lake, Act II,"

a modern ballet and a parody of the Cuban National Ballet.

"What's important is that the audience sees a variety of different personalities," Dobrin said. "'Swan Lake' is visual – everyone knows the music and story – so we have fun with all of it. The Cuban National Ballet has a lot of flair. Certain parts (of the program) are campy and fun and colorful, while the last is a more hardcore parody of a dance style."

Dobrin resists calling the performance a gay show, as it does not address gay issues, though they do address gender issues in dance.

"It really came out of the Stonewall movement and gay liberation," Dobrin explained. "In New York there was a lot of

See Trockadero, page 23



# Raunchy for a reason

## Dirty Show director performs so others can 'see the light'

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

Be open-minded for a moment. Imagine a gay man on all fours decked out with head-to-toe leather horse gear. On his back, riding him around the stage, is a large-breasted straight girl who is playing the part of a 17-year-old boy with a horse fetish.

Hot and bothered? Confused? Maybe disturbed is more like it.

That's OK. All that you're feeling is normal. The Dirty Show, for gays and straights and everyone in between, is meant to provoke.

"The 'Equus' piece is a perfect example," said Christopher Leadbitter, the performance director of Detroit's best attended erotic art exhibition and performance art extravaganza. The Dirty Show will feature art from more than 200 local, national and international artists on Feb. 10-12, 14, 17 and 18 at Bert's Warehouse Theatre in Detroit.

This year's Stripper Theater portion of the show features selected scenes from "Equus" – such as the one teased above – written by British playwright Peter Shaffer in 1973 and revived in 2007 in London's West End Theatre, starring Daniel Radcliffe (aka Harry Potter) in one of the leading roles.

"I don't know how many people know of the play, but it's uncomfortable even for the Dirty Show," said Leadbitter, who taps into his personal experience with bondage and SadoMasoChism to play the role of the horse. Some of it's fun, as the dialogue is wordy and lines are read in less-than-convincing British accents while a sensuous female delivers cues from off-stage.

Leadbitter, the former Causing a Scene Productions director (a local multimedia performance art troupe), is taking a more hands-on approach to the performances. "I want to try and tweak them in a way or guide them down the path of being more creative and experimental," he said.

For instance: the Erotic Kabuki Theater piece he has staged. Traditionally, all roles are performed by men, but Leadbitter has introduced women to his version of the classical Japanese dance-drama. "All performers are dressed the same in beautiful kimonos, wearing white masks," he said. "The audience won't know who is male and who is female until later. I have created an element of surprise, mixing gender roles and expectations of what gender needs to be."

Leadbitter has established a lifelong career as a ballet dancer and will expose the audience to a variety of talented dancers trained in pointe



### The Dirty Show 13

Feb. 10-12, 14, 17 and 18  
Bert's Warehouse Theatre  
2739 Russell Street, Detroit  
[www.dirtydetroit.com](http://www.dirtydetroit.com)

work, the art of dancing on one's toes. Among the 50 to 70 performers hoping to arouse the crowd will be the legendary Deangela "Show" Shannon, who has blurred the line between transgender and drag queen as a female illusionist for more than 20 years.

"This is nothing like I've ever done before – and I've done a lot. The diversity, racially and sexually, is something Detroit really had a need for," said Shannon, adding that she plans to take it up a notch for her second year with the Dirty Show. "Each night will be something different, but my main number is my domination number.

"I still think open-mindedness is a bit lacking in our community as well as others, but I use art along with my naked ass to help people see the light."

– Christopher Leadbitter



Performing for the first time at the Dirty Show is the Ann Arbor-based Drag King Rebellion featuring A-Train, the last remaining original member of the troupe since its onset in 2004. Unlike a typical "drag troupe," DKR are self-described gender performers whose work ranges from campy to sexy to thought-provoking. And they don't limit themselves.

"That allows us more freedom to explore any and all facets of gender that we choose," said A-Train. "We choose to rebel also from the queen/king binary of traditional drag. Why can't we be kings and queens if we feel so inclined?"

As for what to expect of their performance, DKR plans to keep the audience on their toes and leaving them guessing. Said A-Train: "We will be doing what we do best: fucking gender...and believe me, gender likes it."

Check out the troupe at <http://dragkingrebellion.webs.com>.

It's wild, it's crazy, and it's over the top. There will be some semi-nudity," teased Shannon.

But the Dirty Show is about more than just nakedness. Sort of. There are many other performing acts to see, including the Satori Circus, Cirque Du Soleil-style aerialists who will use aerial lyras (hoops) and silks for their routines, and voluptuous burlesque dancers.

"This show has given me a platform which allows me to be 100 percent myself with absolutely no judgment," said Leadbitter. "The freedom to express and explore my sexuality through erotic performance art has helped me feel comfortable in my shoes, and with those high-heeled shoes I am able to reach out to others who may feel like outcasts or who may have secret desires they want to explore.

"I still think open-mindedness is a bit lacking in our community as well as others, but I use art along with my naked ass to help people see the light."



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# V-Day in Michigan

## Gay goings-on across the state spread love... for all

BY JEREMY MARTIN

Unlike most major holidays, Valentine's Day is not based on any ancient Pagan rituals. It holds no links to the solstice, the sewing or harvesting of crops, nor does it fall on the beginning or end of any major lunar cycle.

But despite its lack of historical significance, Valentine's Day holds a special place in the hearts of countless couples worldwide, including those of Michigan's LGBT community.

So whether you see Feb. 14 as a day to share your love with someone special or as just another schmaltzy Hallmark holiday there will be several ways to celebrate your feelings with friends, loved ones and other like-minded individuals across the state. Here's a taste:

### Domestic Partnership Program Re-launch

**Where:** 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale

**When:** 6-8 p.m. Feb. 14

**Contact:** 248-398-7105

Ferndale's Affirmations will be providing both light refreshments and an opportunity to sign domestic partnership forms at its office. Beginning in 2003, the domestic partnership program has helped bring Detroit-area LGBT couples together. In recent years, however, the program has suffered from a lack of funding and support. Affirmations will host the re-launch of this popular program by hosting a justice of the peace and have folk on hand who can discuss state-wide and national domestic partnership law. All paperwork signed through the program will be kept on file in the office until LGBT partnerships are legally honored in Michigan, where in Affirmation will take appropriate steps to have each union legally recognized by the state.

### Queer Card Making

**Who:** Eastern Michigan University LGBT Resource Center

**Where:** EMU Student Center (Room 300), Ypsilanti

**When:** 7 p.m. Feb. 13

**Contact:** 734-487-1075, [www.emich.edu/lgbtrc](http://www.emich.edu/lgbtrc)  
If you've ever had trouble finding the perfect Valentine's Day card for that special someone, maybe it's because it hasn't been made yet. But now, thanks to EMU's LGBT Resource Center, the ideal love infused stationary can be yours to take home. All you have to do is create it.

The Resource Center has an open invitation to its first-ever Queer Card Making event, an evening of pre-Valentine's crafting. All supplies will be on hand, from card stock to crayons and of course plenty of glitter.

### Valentine's Dance

**Who:** The Forum Foundation

**Where:** Ukrainian Cultural Center, 26601 Ryan Road, Warren

**When:** Feb. 10

**Contact:** 586-573-9932, <http://www.theforumfoundation.org/events.htm>

On Feb. 10, the Forum Foundation presents its 17th annual Valentine's Day

Dance. Proceeds from this

year's event will benefit

the Forum Foundation's

LGBT Scholarship Fund,

which supports college-

bound LGBT high

school students

across Michigan.

The \$45 event

includes an open

bar, family style

dinner and

dessert. A

raffle, silent

auction and

entertainment

from

DoublePlay

DJ's will

round out

the night.



## Together We Can 2012



**Date:** 2/11/12 Saturday

**Time:** 9 pm to 12 am

Drayton Avenue  
Presbyterian Church  
2441 Pinecrest Ave  
in Fabulous Ferndale

**Suggested donation: \$5**

A sober dance to celebrate Valentine's Day. Coffee & snacks provided, soda available for a nominal fee. This is a substance-free event. Proceeds benefit the 2012 Together We Can conference. The goal of Together We Can is to provide educational opportunities on substance abuse issues to the LGBT and allied communities.



[twcdetroit.com](http://twcdetroit.com)



**Cupid's Ball****Who:** Together We Can**Where:** Drayton Ave. Presbyterian Church, 2441 Pinecrest, Ferndale**When:** 9 p.m. Feb. 11**Contact:** 248-838-9905, [www.twcdetroit.com](http://www.twcdetroit.com)

A sober alternative to an occasionally wine-soaked holiday, Cupid's Ball will be a benefit dance supporting the Together We Can Conference, which provides educational opportunities on a wide range of substance abuse issues. Music, dancing and light refreshments will be on hand to help you and yours usher in another fun and romantic Valentine's day.

**Love in All Forms****Who:** Drag King Rebellion**Where:** Angel Hall Auditorium, 435 State St., Ann Arbor**When:** 6-9 p.m. Feb. 17**Contact:** <http://www.umich.edu/~Italady>

Ann Arbor's notorieties and non-conformist clutch of Drag Kings and Queens have planned a post Valentine's blow-out not soon to be forgotten. Self-described as "glitter in the kaleidoscope of drag performance," DKR's ever-shifting lineup takes an "art as activism" approach to opening minds and changing attitudes. In a nod to Valentine's Day, the group's first show of 2012 will be dedicated to the seductive art of love and its many incarnations.

**The 2012 Jammies****Who:** Until Love is =**Where:** The Intersection, 133 Grandville Ave., Grand Rapids**When:** 5:30 p.m. Feb. 14**Contact:** [www.untilloveisequal.com](http://www.untilloveisequal.com), [www.grmc.org](http://www.grmc.org)

The ultimate accolade for a Michigan musician is to be awarded a Jammie by Grand Rapids' WYCE. The 13th annual event, co-sponsored by Until Love is = and West Michigan Pride, includes nearly 20 state-wide artists on two stages. Ann Arbor duo Nervous But Excited is among those nominated.

**Down With Love****Who:** Richard Payton and Five15 Royal Oak**Where:** 515 S. Washington St., Royal Oak**When:** 7 p.m. Feb. 12**Contact:** 248-515-2551, [www.five15.net](http://www.five15.net)

Broadway bred thespian Richard Payton delivers an unconventional valentine through music and song.

**Xena embraces Detroit fan**

Kyle Burns got a hug and a kiss from lesbian-heartthrob Lucy Loveless at the final Xena Warrior Princess convention in California last week. Burns of Ferndale, a devoted Xena affectionado, said fans can't forget the fabulous dynamic couple of Xena and Gabrielle, even though the popular TV show has been off the air for 10 years.



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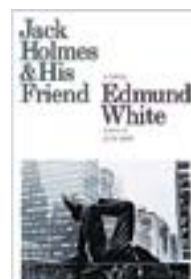
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# Book Marks

## Biography investigates secret gay relationships

BY RICHARD LABONTE



**“Jack Holmes & His Friend,”** by Edmund White. Bloomsbury USA, 400 pages, \$26 hardcover.

One of the many charms of White’s latest novel is that there is nothing pretentious about it. The writing is sensuous and stylish, the story is sexy and straightforward, the characters are cultured and always ready to cavort sexually – though not with each other. Handsome, well-hung Jack, who escaped his rigid Midwestern upbringing with a porn star name that belies his initial reluctance to live a queer life, falls hard at first sight for Will, the well-bred sophisticate who becomes his colleague at an upscale literary magazine in the late 1960s – but who is, alas, irredeemably straight. Turns out that a promiscuous gay man in pre-AIDS Manhattan and a (for a time) suburban family man can at least be friends.



**“Franky Gets Real,”** by Mel Bossa. Bold Strokes, 236 pages, \$16.95 paper.

Five old friends, a long weekend at the lake and 15 years of fear, regret, disappointment and denial – that’s the volatile mix of Bossa’s bravura third novel.

Charismatic Wyatt’s marriage is falling apart after an unexpected reminder of youthful sexual pain; law student Holly, the most level-headed of the lot, is pregnant and blissfully in love with a solid, stolid man; brainy but naive Nevins, swindled by a hooker, is stealing to cover his debts; Wyatt’s baffling younger brother, Alek, is coping with disease; and Franky – who 15 years earlier rebuffed Alek’s gentle, desperate offer of love – is torn between his strained relationship with a woman and his nascent desire for men. Blending the melodrama of the 1983 movie “The Big Chill” with the unsettling drunken confessions of a high school reunion, Bossa has crafted a textured novel that captures the drama of complex, realistic characters confronting the secrets and lies that threaten to fracture their friendship – and, in the end, learning to strengthen the ties that bid.

**“Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots: Flaming Challenges to Masculinity, Objectification, and the Desire to Conform,”** edited by Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore. AK Press, 224 pages, \$17.95 paper.

“My business is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable,” it’s said that social activist Mother “Mary” Jones once said (though a polemical 19th-century journalist is often cited as the original source). In this third anthology, after “Nobody Passes” and “That’s Revolting,” Bernstein, herself something of an activist and polemicist, honors both of his antecedents. With a sharp editor’s eye, she has collected 29 visceral essays celebrating defiant nonconformity and subversive flamboyance – writing that afflicts the gay mainstream while comforting the outcast rebels, fierce queens and gender-redefining queers who birthed Queer Lib but are now forsaken by it. D. Travers Scott dreams of a less fetish-rigid drop-down Internet; CAConrad offers body fascism-defying delight in his fat self; Lewis Wallace recalls youthful trans lust; James Villanueva writes about his spunky presence as a queer Latino in a straight, white cowboy bar. These contributors and their sisters and brothers are flipping their middle finger at both LGBTQ-phobia and the manifest intolerance of mainstream gays for their sort with candid cockiness and glamorous gutsiness.

**“J. Edgar Hoover & Clyde Tolson: Investigating the Sexual Secrets of America’s Most Famous Men and Women,”** by Darwin Porter. Blood Moon Productions, 576 pages, \$19.95 paper.

Tightly closed closet doors haven’t got a chance when it comes to the fiercely tabloid tendencies of prolific biographer Porter. In earlier books, he has chronicled the same-sex hijinks of the likes of Marlon Brando, Howard Hughes, Katherine Hepburn, Steve McQueen and many more, mining Hollywood lore for the scandalous and the salacious. And though the focus shifts from Los Angeles to Washington, DC, in this explicit depiction of FBI honcho Hoover and Tolson, his BFF (and way more), there’s no shortage of Hollywood cameos – Hoover sent his G-Men minions to ferret out the sexual secrets of the likes of Fred Astaire and Ramon Novarro, even as he and Tolson were frequenting boy bordellos and ogling sex acts in Havana in the 1930s. In anecdote after anecdote, many sourced in the text (though there is no bibliography of books used as reference), Porter leaves no doubt that the two men were more than bachelor friends; this breathless biography goes way past the innuendo of Clint Eastwood’s film depiction of J. Edgar and Clyde.

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



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# The don'ts of dating

## Cautionary tales – from popping pimples to text faux pas – on the quest for love



BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Being on the market has its advantages: friends love stories that are sick, strange and full of you-gotta-be-kidding-mes. I've had my share of those (see below) – enough, anyway, to question

my life as reality or a Katherine Heigl rom-com. Just a few observations as you man (or woman) hunt:

**1** They always tell you not to pop a zit. But if that thing looks like it's ready to attack Sigourney Weaver in "Alien 5," I'm all for giving it a pinch. Just don't do it in front of someone you're trying to impress. Over food.

**2** Aw, the museum: it's so pretentiously romantic and mostly un-awkward... until the other one goes all hall-monitor on a sweet, innocent family of four who's climbing on a sculptured public swing that's meant for kiddie play. He chides them, but unconvincingly because they're still swinging. And even though you know they're right, you wish they weren't. Because what's next? Getting security involved. Lesson: Avoid museums until you know if someone's capable of minding their own business. And: Yes, you can play on the swing.

### ► Trockadero

Continued from p. 17

experimentation with drag, and the company really came out of that movement. The drag element has been associated with gay sensibility. In our own way, we have brought a piece of gay culture all around the world."

He points out they are welcomed all around the world and in even the most conservative areas of the United States. They've never once been booed or even had people protest their appearance.

"We're all connected by television and the Internet. Everyone is very familiar with all kinds of entertainment possibilities," Dobrin said. "The people who might not enjoy what we do don't come. We get the audience that will enjoy themselves, and they do."

As a comedy ballet company that uses drag as one of its vehicles for comedy, the troupe is filled with dancers who have excellent technical skills and are good comedians. The combination makes for a show that can appeal to

**3** How meta of you to take a work call during the opening of "Scream 4," just as Ghostface slays another group of horny teens. Yes, I get that you're very important, Mr. Movie Producer, and that the call can't wait because you're making a very important indie film in Michigan. But ditching your date? Not cool.

**4** Don't be rubbing up all horny-like on some other guy while another prospect is hanging out nearby. "I'm in the corner watching you kiss her, ooh / I'm right over here, why can't you see me?" Didn't Robyn teach you anything?

**5** Think before you "speak," otherwise your text talk might end up like this, where a compliment reads more like a high school diss:

Him/Her: *You were doing plenty of smiling last night. Or maybe you didn't notice. :-P*

You: *I had a reason to, though.*

Him/Her: *I just giggled like a schoolgirl.*

You: *Haha. Cute!*

Him/Her: *YOUR FACE!*

**6** Only deep into a relationship is it acceptable to let one rip, from either end, in front of your partner. And only then, too, is it not strange to make weird requests – like for a cup – while using the potty. You might be asking, "A cup?" Right. So was I. Turns out some people do DIY bidets. And hey, I appreciate a clean butt as much as the next person. But you're using a cup I drink my morning O.J. from. That's just too "one guy, one cup" for... anyone.



Photo: Sascha Vaughn

people regardless of their background or artistic knowledge.

"We use ballet and comedy," he said. "If a woman likes ballet and she has children that are studying ballet and a husband who hates ballet and a mother who doesn't go to the theater much and a gay brother or sister – all of them can really enjoy the show a lot," Dobrin said. "It's a comedy – a fun, professional show."

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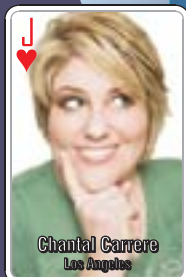
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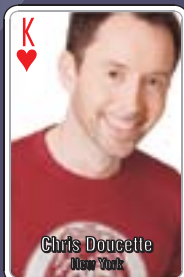
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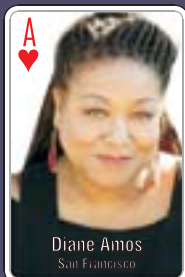
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## Dating Diet



### The Gay with the Skinning Knife

BY ANTHONY PAULL

Did I mention I write in a park now? It's organic and therapeutic until the old people and middle school kids start fighting over which homeless person smells the worst. Personally, I like the homeless people. There's only one that pisses me off and that's because he serenades me with a saxophone, taking a seat beside me each time I attempt to think. Who knew poor people could be so talented?

Wait. I'm poor. Oops. Let me restate that. Who knew the disadvantaged could be so amazing? Does that sound better? Good. I want to get in heaven and I already have the gay thing weighing me down. That's why I try to see the best in people. Like my friend Carey – who would have guessed him to be so crafty with a skinning knife? I would have never known if he hadn't begun a love affair with a beefcake bartender. I know, you'd think he'd know better. He is in the same field. I'm a bartender dating a bartender. The tale could never end well. But it would make a good story.

So let's flash back! Carey gets a dream job, slinging beer at a flashy downtown bar. Then he's dating two, three, no four regulars at the same time. They each have a story, yet none of them is particularly tangible. There's always some sort of scribble, a backstory that's never clear. One has cold balls. Another is an alcoholic. Another is a drug dealer. There's always a glitch. But it's attention that Carey craves so he has his allowances. Besides, attention makes Jack, the beefy bartender, jealous. The problem is: Jack shouldn't be getting jealous. Why? Jack has a boyfriend. It's just a little fact he forgets when he drinks.

"It's no big deal," Carey insists.

He doesn't really like Jack anyway. Well, unless they're shitfaced, hooking up. Then he's in lurrve. "It's electric," Carey explains, meeting me for sushi. Outside, the city is painted by jazz music, stringing lights. "It's like he gets me. Like we have this connection." Waiting on a table Carey romanticizes the situation. His eyes shine with insomnia. He picks at his bandaged hand.

"What's that? Did you get cut?" I ask.

He blushes, laughing it off. "Yeah...I um...pulled a skinning knife on Jack in the parking lot last night." He looks off. "It's

I want to get in heaven and I already have the gay thing weighing me down. That's why I try to see the best in people. Like my friend Carey – who would have guessed him to be so crafty with a skinning knife?"

funny, really."

My limbs go still. "Are you serious?"

A host escorts us to a table while Carey explains it was a misunderstanding. He was filing a nail. It's not his fault an argument broke out during a manicure in the front seat of his car. Besides. It was cute. Jack sucked the blood from his wound. "Doesn't that sound romantic?" Carey gushes.

"No. It sounds like a biohazard."

"Why? I'm not diseased, you pervert!"

"It's still gross."

"Well, some guys get off on that stuff."

"Yeah. Maybe if you're dating Edward Cullen."

With a frown, Carey states he's calling it quits anyway. He doesn't want to be in a love triangle with Jack and his boyfriend. If only he could cling to that thought. You see, in no time, the two are back to their shenanigans, except now Jack is flirting with other guys at the bar as well. Angry, Carey shoots me a text. "Can you believe the nerve?"

"Oh give me a break. You're jealous that someone else's boyfriend is checking out someone else?"

"Kind of."

"Think about that."


To which he replies, "I know. It's bad. But you have someone. You don't know what it's like to be lonely, to hug yourself to sleep."

I flash back, recalling the isolated confusion of being single, the long nights of writing my heart out, wondering if I'd ever love again. I wasn't like Carey. Somehow I didn't need four lovers to fill the void of one. In fact, I hid, refusing to hook up with a single soul. Instead, I'd have play dates with fast friends, hosting emotional affairs. Who knows? Perhaps I didn't do "single" well either. Who does? Therefore I bite my tongue, trying to understand why Carey engages in such behavior. What is he getting from it? Would he still be interested if Jack were available?

To this day, Carey pleasures Jack if the opportunity arises. Then he shoots me a text, sensing it's wrong. Perhaps it is. Perhaps it isn't. Who am I to judge? As a friend, I'm just supposed to steer Carey down the path of being single even if that means admitting there might be more than one visible route.



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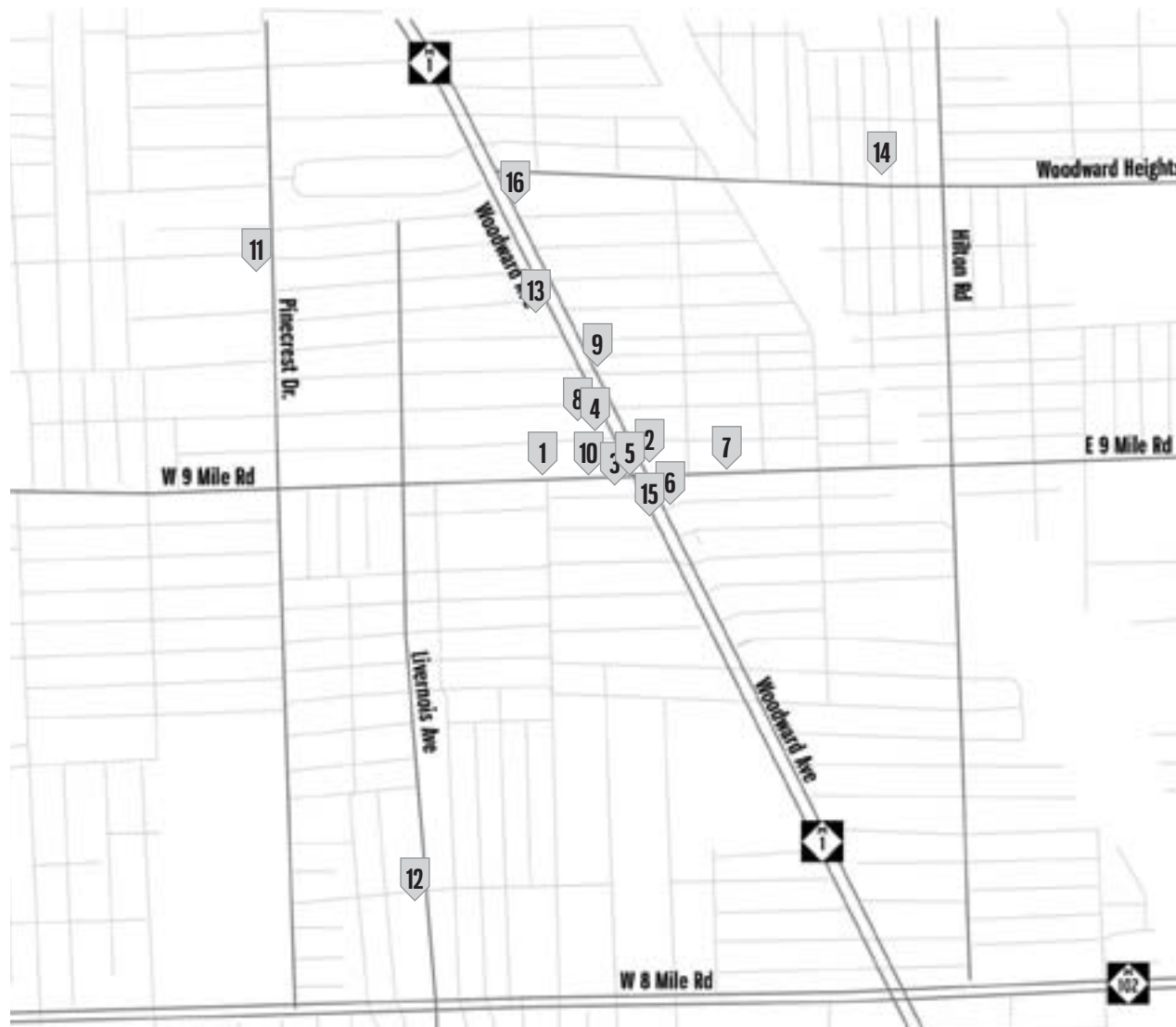
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A black and white photograph of two shirtless men standing on a Mardi Gras float. The float is decorated with large, ornate masks and beads. The background is dark with light trails and bokeh effects. The overall theme is festive and celebratory.

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# UDM's 'Dogman's Last Stand' is a howl

BY JOHN QUINN

The savvy gardener will tell you that a little bovine excrement makes for a fertile field. I don't know what kind of fertilizer playwright Rick Cleveland used to enrich his imagination before turning out his 1985 charmer, "Dogman's Last Stand," but from the amount of male bovine excrement thrown around in this play, I might hazard a guess. I am happy to report the "green-thumbers" are right on the mark – Cleveland has reaped a bountiful harvest of entertainment.

They say in the news biz that there's no story in "dog bites man." If "man bites dog," well, you're on to something. Yet "dog bites a punk of a paperboy who has an affinity for firecrackers" starts this plot rolling.

We can infer Dogman Thompson earned his nickname by taking in stray pooches. His favorite canine companion, "John Wayne," is so ashamed of his momentary madness he's off hiding under the bed and we never get to meet him. "Dog" is waiting on his porch for the inevitable visit from the police. Although a laid-off steel worker in a run-down mill town, he's obviously a force to be reckoned with. He's not giving up John Wayne for quarantine and we may yet have the story "man bites cop" as tomorrow's headline. Instead, he is joined by his younger and equally un-

## REVIEW

### Dogman's Last Stand

UDM Theatre Company at Marygrove Theatre, 8424 W. McNichols Rd., Detroit. Friday-Sunday through Feb. 12. \$18. 313-993-3270.

<http://theatre.udmercy.edu>

employed co-worker, Wally. The outcome is an existential afternoon as the men hash out the mysteries of life, love and dogs. "Dogman's Last Stand" is "Waiting for Godot" for the Common Man.

But on the topic of male bovine excrement – not only is it one of Dogman's favorite expletives, he's also not above tossing it around in the form of stories of dubious authenticity. The playful prankster is so fickle we are uncertain about his past. We're uncertain about his future. We can only grasp a timeless "now." It's a very engaging device.

The Theatre Company at University of Detroit Mercy offers students of the Performing Arts Department an opportunity to work on and off stage with associate guest artists and directors. It's always a delight when the students step up to the challenge and go toe-to-toe with the pros. Under the direction of director David L. Regal, Chris Jakob is an affable, engaging Wally, almost like a puppy



UDM Theatre Company's "Dogman's last Stand" continues through Feb. 12 at Marygrove Theatre. Photo: UDM Theatre Company

learning new tricks from the old "Dog." As his girlfriend, Pam, sassy Char'Tavia Mushatt's is a scene stealer. Also of note is a cameo by UDM faculty member Dr. Arthur J. Beer as Harry, Dogman and Wally's laid-off colleague. Beer is so comfortable in the role it might have been written just for him.

But clearly the show belongs to Joel Mitchell. From Dogman's first appearance in bathrobe and cowboy boots to the wishful, wistful second act curtain, Mitchell deftly handles both the comedy and pathos intrinsic in this complex character. Dogman is a hero – given to profanity, fortified by mass quantities of PBR and Wild Irish Rose. But a hero just the same. And that's no excrement.

# 'Burn the Red Banner': an 'absurdist romp'

BY JOHN QUINN

Frannie Shepherd-Bates, artistic director of Magenta Giraffe Theatre, introduced the works of local playwright Franco Vitella when her company hosted its 2010 Staged Reading Festival. His zany vignettes were so well received she looked forward to mounting a full production. The result is "Burn the Red Banner: Or, Let the Rebels Have Their Fun," 80 minutes of non-stop mayhem now playing in the shabby-chic confines of The Abreact Performance Space.

It's obvious from the start that rebellion is afoot. The black walls are crudely painted with Socialist slogans ("Revolution is the locomotive of history," "Communism is the riddle of history solved."). There's a poster of Lenin – Vladimir, not John. Long before we see them, we hear the surly cast and their cantankerous stage manager exchanging barbs in atrocious Russian accents more reminiscent of Boris Badenov than Boris Yeltsin. (Google them, children, if you must.) The cast includes Steve Xander Carson, Jonathan Davidson, Keith Kalinowski and Kirsten Knisely. Their task master and stage manager, David Woitulewicz, sits in the lighting booth, barking orders and announcing the scenes.

And what absurd scenes they are! A

## REVIEW

### Burn the Red Banner: Or, Let the Rebels Have Their Fun

The Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Friday-Saturday through Feb. 25, plus Sunday, Feb. 19. By donation. 313-454-1542.

[www.theabreact.com](http://www.theabreact.com)

barrage of sketches, some only seconds long, is delivered with all the force of a machine gun attack. Some are right on target, others are a little off the mark. Some are so out there you're left in a "what-the-heck-just-happened?" daze. There are some interwoven storylines; the easiest to follow are the trials and tribulations of a fellow whose name I'll render here as "Leonid Komorov, soft-spoken part-time banker." In sum, "Burn the Red Banner" is tremendously entertaining.

Franco Vitella has an agenda here, and it's a pip. The works of Russian playwright Anton Chekhov are sterling examples of the 19th century theatrical aesthetic known as "the well-made play." Rebellion against that convention sparked Theatre of the Absurd, and, to a lesser extent, the political dramas of Bertolt Brecht. So now here comes "Burn



Kirsten Knisely, Steve Xander Carson, Jonathan Davidson in "Burn the Red Banner: Or, Let the Rebels Have Their Fun" at The Abreact. Photo: Angie Kane Ferrante

the Red Banner," a thoroughly absurdist romp, set in the times when the Soviet regime gave way to Perestroika, yet having Anton Chekhov as a recurring character. It's a sharply drawn parallel between political and artistic revolt. Mix in Brecht's principle of "alienation," never letting the audience forget that they're watching a play, and we find that Marshall McLuhan was right yet again: "The medium is the message." If my terminology confuses you, well, you remember what Google is for.

Who knew USSR really stood for "Unbridled, Silly, Subversive Riot?"

**GOD OF CARNAGE**  
BY YASMINA REZA  
TRANSLATED BY CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON

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# Editor's Picks

## Outings



University Musical Society will present hymn and gospel group Sweet Honey in the Rock on Feb. 17 at the Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor. For over three decades, the all-women a cappella group has celebrated our collective humanity, singing about the challenging issues of racism; social, economic and environmental injustice and equal rights.

Sweet Honey in the Rock focuses on music that challenges, inspires, teaches, encourages and empowers audiences from all walks of life to become interested and involved in issues central to their lives.

Sweet Honey in the Rock will perform 8 p.m. Feb 17 at 825 N. University Ave. in Ann Arbor. For more information, go to ums.org or call 734-763-3333.

## Theater

Nothing says Valentine's Day like love songs and chocolate, both of which are available at the Paul's Players production of "Love Notes." This concert of love songs from Broadway, served with desserts and coffee, will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 11 and 3 p.m. Feb. 12. Performances are at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, 27475 Five Mile Road, in Livonia.

"Love Notes" features singers Allison Soranno Boufford and Jason Wilhoite, along with instrumentalists Sue Nienhaus, Michael Soranno and Paul Soranno, performing selections from a wide variety of Broadway composers such as Rodgers and Hammerstein, Stephen Sondheim, Andrew Lloyd Weber and Jason Robert Brown. The performances will be followed by a dessert buffet, coffee bar and reception with the performers.

Boufford and Wilhoite are active members in the local theater scene, performing regularly in musical and dramatic productions at Farmington Players Barn and Spotlight Players in Canton. Tickets prices are \$10. To reserve tickets, call 248-347-4134.



# OUTINGS

## Friday, Feb. 10

**Oakland County Women In Leadership Summit** 10 a.m. Call or email Frank Russell today for details. Luncheon Fee: \$50. Oakland County Employment Diversity Council (OCECD) & Michigan Works Oakland, 3600 Centerpoint Parkway, Pontiac. 248-858-5204. ocedc.net

**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. Through leadership skill building, community organizing, networking, support and socializing, Riot Youth connects youth to build an inclusive community. Meets every Friday. The Neutral Zone, 310 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor. 734-214-9995. Neutral-zong.org

**Valentines Dance** 6 p.m. A Valentine's Day dance to benefit The Forum Foundation GLBT Scholarship Fund. \$45 per ticket includes Open Bar, Family Style dinner, and dessert. Participants can join in on 5050 raffle and silent auction. DoublePlay DJ Service will be providing the musical entertainment. The Forum Foundation, 26601 Ryan Road, Warren. 586-573-9932. jdidonat09932@comcast.net

**Dinner at Hayden's** 6:15 p.m. Lesbian supper group meets up for dinner at Hayden's in Canton. Plymouth Lesbian Supper Group, 39895 Ford Rd., Canton. Meetup.com/Plymouth-Lesbian-Supper-Group/

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

**Womyn's Film Night** 7 p.m. Film: Whoopi Goldberg; Discover the amazing story of actress, comedienne and activist Whoopi Goldberg, who discusses with candor and humor her colorful life in an in-depth interview. The program also includes testimonials from plenty of stars and family members. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

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

## Saturday, Feb. 11

**Derby! U** 8 a.m. Derby! U is a two-day crash course in the basics of flat track roller derby open to any women interested in joining the Detroit Derby Girls. In order to attend the try-outs in June, you must attend one of the sessions of Derby! U 101. Registration is limited for each session, and spots fill up fast. Detroit Derby Girls, 500 Temple St., Detroit. 313-832-7100. Detroitrollerderby.com/info.html

**Motor City Bears** 7 p.m. Social group for metro area bears. Meets every second Saturday of the month. Motor City Bears, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

**Cupid's Ball** 9 p.m. A sober dance to celebrate Valentine's Day and benefit TWC, an AA/Al-Anon conference in the spring. Suggested donation \$5, coffee & snacks are free, soda \$1. Together We

Can, 2441 Pinecrest, Ferndale. 248-838-9905. twcdetroit.com

## Sunday, Feb. 12

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

**Conversation Station** 5 p.m. Meet every Sunday for good conversation and food. LGBTQI and allies. New topic for discussion each week. Topic: If you could plan your last day on earth, what would you schedule to do? Get Out And Live!, 714 S Washington, Royal Oak. 248-981-4227. GetOutAndLive.me

## Monday, Feb. 13

**Rochester Hills Area Citizens Against HB 5039** 7 p.m. Attend the Rochester Hills City Council meeting to discuss your thoughts on House Bill 5039, which would prohibit municipalities from adopting nondiscrimination ordinances that include gay and transgender residents. Rochester City Council, 400 Sixth St., Rochester. 248-651-9061. Facebook.com/groups/rochesterhillresidentsopposingHB5039

**Gender Explorers** 8 p.m. A social and support group for transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, TG-questioning people and those who transgress gender binaries. Meets 2nd and 4th Monday of each month. Spectrum Center, Michigan Union-Spectrum Center 3200, Ann Arbor. spectrumcenter.umich.edu

## Tuesday, Feb. 14

**Parents of Gender Nonconforming People** 5 p.m. Free facilitated support group for parents and parental figures of gender nonconforming people. Location has free parking. Univ. of Michigan Comprehensive Gender Services Program, 2025 Traverwood, Suite A1, Ann Arbor. 734-998-2150. med.umich.edu/transgender

## Thursday, Feb. 16

**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. 734-678-2478. Jimtoycenter.org

## Friday, Feb. 17

**Memories: An Appreciation Celebration** 6 p.m. A Benefit for the AIDS Committee of Windsor. Keynote Speaker: Four-Time Olympic Gold Medalist and Health Advocate Greg Louganis. AIDS Committee of Windsor, 201 Riverside Dr. W., Downtown Windsor. 519-973-0222 x. 230. Aidswindsor.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

**Womyn's Film Night** 7 p.m. Film: Precious: Based on the novel Push, by Sapphire. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

## Saturday, Feb. 18

**Tea Party** 3 p.m. Tea Party is a quarterly fundraiser that benefits our family, friends and community. This quarterly event provides funds for the free programs

and services offered by KICK. KICK, 6426 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-285-9733. E-kick.org

## Sunday, Feb. 19

**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. sites.google.com/site/pflaglenawee

**Conversation Station** 5 p.m. Meet every Sunday for good conversation and food. LGBTQI and allies. New topic for discussion each week. Topic: What makes you laugh? Get Out And Live!, 714 S Washington, Royal Oak. 248-981-4227. MarciWilliams@yahoo.com GetOutAndLive.me

# MUSIC & MORE

## CLASSICAL

**Detroit Symphony Orchestra** "Classical Roots" This season's Classical Roots concert features a new work by Haitian-American composer and violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain. His "Dancers, Dreamers, & Presidents", commissioned for this concert, is the latest statement of this imaginative young master. Tickets: \$15. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 16-March 17. 313-576-5111. Dso.org

**Detroit Symphony Orchestra** "Ravishing Rachmaninoff" Conductor, Leonard Slatkin, and leading violinist, Julian Rachlin perform Cindy McTee's Einstein's Dream, Shostakovich's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in A minor, and Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances. Tickets: \$15+ The Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 9-Feb. 11. 313-576-5130. Dso.org

**Michigan Philharmonic** "Sunday with Schubert" Michigan Philharmonic's own principal clarinetist Lisa Raschiatore steps out as the soloist for Aaron Copland's Jazzy Clarinet Concerto. Tickets available online. First United Methodist Church, 45201 North Territorial Road, Plymouth. 2 p.m. Feb. 12. 734-451-2112. Michiganphil.org

**University Musical Society** "The Tallis Scholars" Artistic renegades, presenting music of the wealthy Italian prince Carlo Gesualdo. Gesualdo's infamy relates to his obsessive double murder of his wife and her lover. He was also a maverick Renaissance composer whose eccentric approach to creating music inspired many others hundreds of years later. Ticket information available at ums.org. St. Francis of Assisi, 2250 E. Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 16. 734-764-2538. Ums.org

## CONCERTS

**Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings** "Love Your Brass" Fall in love with brass works spanning four centuries, including a new work by young composer-in-residence, Paul Dooley. Tickets: \$25 regular, \$22 senior, \$10 students. Concert preview begins at 2:15 pm. First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak, 529 Hendrie Blvd, Royal Oak, MI 48067, Royal Oak. 2 p.m. Feb. 19. 248-559-2095. Detroitchamberwinds.org

**Eisenhower Dance Ensemble** "New Dance Fest X" Highlight of the performance will be the revival of Steven Iannacones Bolero to the iconic music of Maurice Ravel. Tickets: \$25 general admission, \$20 Berman Center Members. The Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 7 p.m. Feb. 11. 248-661-1900. Ede-dance.org

**Kerrytown Concert House** "The Broadway We Love" A Valentine's Day melange of Broadway music spanning 7 decades. Tickets: \$15-30 general, \$10 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. 4th Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 14. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

**Kerrytown Concert House** "Roman Stoylar" Siberian master piano improviser. Tickets: \$25-10 general, \$5 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. 4th Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 15. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

**Lansing Symphony Orchestra** "Lansing Symphony Big Band" Vocalist Ryan DeHues joins the Lansing Symphony Big Band for a special loved-theme concert just in time for Valentine's Day. Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 378 State St., Charlotte. 3 p.m. Feb. 12. 517-541-5690. LansingSymphony.org

**Olympia Entertainment** "The Whispers" Motor City Casino Hotel is proud to welcome back An Evening with The Whispers. Tickets: \$41 and 43. Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Feb. 9. 866-782-9622. Motorcitycasino.com

**The Ark** "Solos" Tickets: \$17.50. The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 14. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

**The Ark** "William Fitzsimmons and Denison Witmer" Contemporary Songwriters. Tickets: \$17. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 9. 734-761-1818. Theark.org

**The Ark** "Newfound Road" Bluegrass performance. Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 10. 734-761-1818. Theark.org

**The Ark** "My Folkly Valentine" Local performance. Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 12. 734-761-1818. Theark.org

**University Musical Society** "Sweet Honey in the Rock" Focuses on music that challenges, inspires, teaches, encourages and empowers audiences from all walks of life to become interested and involved in issues central to their lives. Ticket information available at ums.org. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 17. 734-764-2538. Ums.org

## OTHER

**Detroit Opera House** "An Evening with Anthony Bourdain and Eric Ripert" Good Vs. Evil: An Evening with Bourdain and Ripert. Tickets begin at \$46. Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. 8 p.m. Feb. 17. 313-237-SING. Michiganopera.org

**Detroit Passport to the Arts (DP2A)** "DP2A Oscar-Nominated Short Films & After-party" Tickets: \$25 for pass to event. Purchase a pass to join all remaining DP2A events for \$99. Detroit Film Theatre, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 5 p.m. Feb. 16. 248-559-2095. Dp2a.org

**University Musical Society** "Random Dance" Instrument upon which Wayne McGregor evolved his drastically fast and articulate choreographic style. Uses radical approach to new technology, incorporating animal, digital film, 3-D architecture and virtual dancers into choreography. Ticket information available at ums.org. Power Center for the Performing Arts, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 18. 734-764-2538. Ums.org



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

# THEATER

## CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

**Cheaper by the Dozen** \$18. Spotlight Players, Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Rd., Canton. Feb. 17-26. 734-394-5300. www.spotlightplayersmi.org

**Kiss of the Spider Woman: The Musical** \$18-20. Stagecrafters at Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Through Feb. 12. 248-541-5430. www.stagecrafters.org

**Smokey Joe's Cafe** \$20. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Feb. 16-26. 517-482-5700. www.riverwalktheatre.com

**The Outsiders** \$10. Center Stage Jackson at Jackson Middle School, Parkside Auditorium, 2400 Fourth St., Jackson. Feb. 17-25. 517-782-0322. www.centerstagejackson.org

**Whose Wives Are They Anyway** \$16. Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Feb. 17-March 3. 248-553-2955. www.farmingtonplayers.org

## COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY THEATER

**Dead Man's Cell Phone** \$15. EMU Theatre at Sponberg Theatre in the Quirk Dramatic Arts Bldg., Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti. Through Feb. 16. 734-487-2282. www.emich.edu/emutheatre

**I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change** \$10. LCC Performing Arts at LCC Black Box Theatre, room 168 Gannon Building, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. Feb. 10-18. 517-483-1488. www.lcc.edu/cma/events

**Intimate Apparel** \$12-15. Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 10-19. 313-577-2960. www.bonstelle.com

**No Child...** \$15. EMU Theatre at Sponberg Theatre in the Quirk Dramatic Arts Bldg., East Circle Dr. & Best Hall, Ypsilanti. Feb. 9-19. 734-487-2282. www.emich.edu/emutheatre

**Pump Up the Volume** Free. Michigan State University's Department of Theatre at Arena Theatre, Auditorium Building, Michigan State University, East Lansing. Feb. 10-12. 517-355-6690. www.msu.edu

**The Tender Land** \$5-20. Western Michigan University Department of Theatre at Gilmore Theatre Complex's Shaw Theatre, Kalamazoo. Feb. 16-19. 269-387-6222. www.wmutheatre.com

## PROFESSIONAL

**A Stone Carver** \$17.50-\$40. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through March 10. 734-433-7673. www.purplerosetheatre.org

**Amber Waves** \$12-14. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Feb. 10-March 4. 810-237-1530. www.FlintYouthTheatre.org

**Bard on the Run** \$15. Pigeon Creek Shakespeare at Dog Story Theatre, 7 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids. Feb. 17-19. 616-850-0916. www.DogStoryTheater.com

**Burn the Red Banner** By donation. Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Through Feb. 25. 313-454-1542. www.theabreact.com

**Dead Man's Shoes** \$20-25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. Through Feb. 26. 517-655-7469. www.williamstontheatre.org

**Elizabeth the Beautiful** \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Feb. 17-March 12. 248-545-5545. www.TheRingwald.com

**Elvis to the Max** \$25-40. Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E. 14 Mile

Road, Warren. 8 p.m. Feb. 18. 586-268-3200. www.andiamoshowroom.com

**Frank Langella's Cyrano** \$12-30. The Hilberry Theatre Company, The Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Plays in repertory through March 20. 313-577-2972. www.hilberry.com

**God of Carnage** \$22-41. Performance Network, Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Feb. 19. 734-663-0681. www.performancecenter.org

**Les Ballets Trockadero De Monte Carlo** \$25-38. Wharton Center, Bogue and Wilson Roads, East Lansing. 8 p.m. Feb. 18. 517-432-2000. www.whartoncenter.com

**Love Letters** Features three real-life couples; one per night. \$13. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes and Noble Booksellers Theatre, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Feb. 7-Feb. 14. 248-850-9919. www.TwoMusesTheatre.org

**Love, Loss, and What I Wore** \$49.50. Gem Theatre, 333 Madison Ave., Detroit. Feb. 8-March 4. 313-963-9800. www.BroadwayinDetroit.com

**My First Time** \$8-10. Wharton Center, 1 Wharton Center Dr., East Lansing. Feb. 9-11. 517-432-2000. www.whartoncenter.com

**Rain: A Tribute to the Beatles** \$25. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Feb. 8-9. 810-237-8689. www.thewhiting.com

**Romantic Fools** \$18-\$24. Stormfield Theatre, 201 Morgan Lane, Lansing. Through Feb. 19. 517-488-8450. www.stormfieldtheatre.org

**Smokey Joe's Cafe** \$18-32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Through Feb. 26. 734-268-6200. www.theencoretheatre.org

**Snowbound** \$20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. Feb. 16-March 10. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

**Superior Donuts** \$21-25. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Feb. 10-26. 269-343-2727. www.farmersalleytheatre.com

**The Love List** \$28-30. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Through Feb. 19. 248-347-0003. www.tippingpointtheatre.com

**Tony n Tina's Wedding** \$63. Detroit Actors Guild at Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren. 6:30 p.m. Feb. 10. 586-268-3200. www.andiamoshowroom.com

**Under the Poppy** Free with museum admission. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. Feb. 17. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

# ART 'N' AROUND

**Ann Arbor Art Center** "Artini 2012" 4th Annual Artini, a fundraiser for the Ann Arbor Art Center in search of the most artful martini. Sample the creations of this year's Artini Artists and vote for the most artful at the end of the evening. Tickets: \$45. Ann Arbor Art Center, 117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Feb. 17. 734-994-8004. Annarborartcenter.org

**Cass Cafe Gallery** "New Work" Featuring the art of two Detroit based artists, M. Saffell Gardner and Tylonn J. Sawyer, this exhibition features two strikingly different approaches to art creation as the artists demonstrate in their work. Cass Cafe, 4260 Cass Ave., Detroit Midtown. Jan. 14-March 17. 313-831-1400. Casscafe.com

**Flint Institute of Arts** "FIA Art School's Lego Contest" Contest for children K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Categories are most technically challenging, most creative and people's choice. Contest guidelines and more information at flintarts.org Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 1 p.m. Feb. 18. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.org

**Grand Rapids Art Museum** "Gazing at GRAM" This exhibition features works of art created by participants in the Gazing at GRAM pilot program. Grand Rapids Art Museum, 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. Jan. 27-Feb. 12. 616-831-1000. Artmuseumgr.org

**Lawrence Street Gallery** "The Body Eclectic" This juried competition and exhibition celebrates the figure in all forms and media, both two and three-dimensional. This is one of the most popular annual shows at the Lawrence Street Gallery and attracts artists and collectors alike. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Feb. 1-Feb. 29. 248-544-0394. Lawrencestreetgallery.com

**Michigan State University Museum** "On Equal Terms" A new exhibit at the Michigan State University Museum takes a look at tradeswomen's 30-year struggle for access and equality in the construction industry. Michigan State University Museum, West Circle Drive, East Lansing. Feb. 5-May 13. Facebook.com/MSUMuseum

**Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit** "Joshua White and Gary Panter's Light Show" Joshua White and Gary Panter's Light Show is a new exhibition organized especially for the Museum by two great pioneers of multimedia art. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 10-April 29. 313-832-6622. Mocadoetroit.org

**The Detroit Institute of Arts** "Gift of a Lifetime: The James Pearson Duffy Collection" The DIA received the rich art collection from James Pearson Duffy, Detroit's most unorthodox collectors. Showcases drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures and photographs. Free with museum admission. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward, Detroit. Sep. 15-Feb. 29. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

**The Henry Ford Museum** "Celebrate Black History!" The Henry Ford Museum, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. Feb. 1-Feb. 26. 313-982-6001. Thehenryford.org

**The Scarab Club** "Silver Medal Exhibition" Annual unthemed, all-media exhibition. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Jan. 11-Feb. 19. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

**University of Michigan Museum of Art** "Mark di Suvero: Tabletops" University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 South State Street, Ann Arbor. Oct. 8-Feb. 26. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

**Wyandotte Arts Center** "The Games We Play" A series of large scale oil paintings by Judy Enright, inspired by playing cards. Each card has a game or sport incorporated in the work. Wyandotte Arts Center, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Jan. 19-March 3. 734-720-0671. Downriverarts.org

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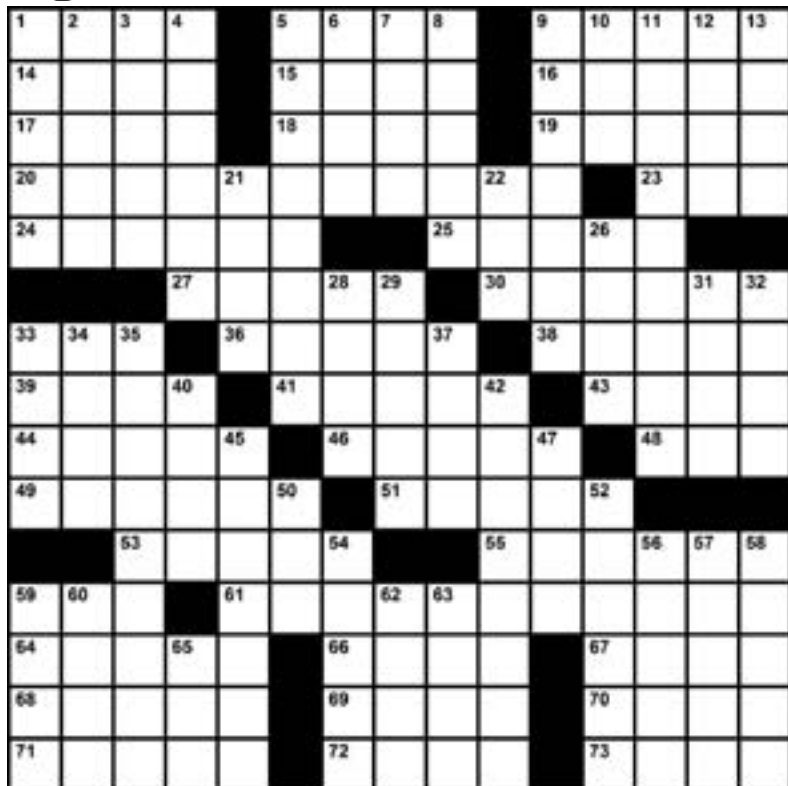
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# Eight



## Across

- 1 Cathedral of Hope area
- 5 Nintendo rival
- 9 Tuesday to 50 million Frenchmen
- 14 "Boys Don't Cry" character
- 15 Parka feature
- 16 You blow them among the reeds
- 17 Processes wine or cheese
- 18 Person in opposition
- 19 Lord Byron, for one
- 20 He plays a lawyer in "8"
- 23 "Norma \_\_\_\_" (Field film)
- 24 Next to bat, to Billy Bean
- 25 Come together
- 27 Disney Uncle
- 30 Handle on a streetcar, for Williams?
- 33 JFK's successor
- 36 See-through material brand
- 38 Was excessive with the mouth
- 39 "Six Feet Under" creator Ball
- 41 Conductor Boulanger
- 43 Trust, with "on"
- 44 Less nuts
- 46 Evans of "Dynasty"
- 48 "Breakfast on Pluto" actor Stephen
- 49 Symbol of discipline
- 51 Queer, to straights
- 53 Mine bonanzas
- 55 Bride's family, to the other bride

- 59 In-case connector
- 61 Former "Star Trek" star in "8"
- 64 Paul of "Hollywood Squares"
- 66 Time for cowboys to shoot off
- 67 At deuce
- 68 Designer's job
- 69 Guy under Hoover
- 70 Flying fisher
- 71 Threesome member for Dumas
- 72 S&M root
- 73 Calendar boxes

## Down

- 1 You must remember this
- 2 One who kneels before Apollo
- 3 He was a real dummy
- 4 South Pacific island
- 5 "Hairspray" director Adam
- 6 Many, many moons
- 7 Rock music style
- 8 St. Lo "so long"
- 9 Beach partner
- 10 Red Cross system
- 11 He plays a supporter of marriage equality in "8"
- 12 Crème-crème filling
- 13 Chin stroker's words
- 21 Tops a cupcake
- 22 Split one in the locker room

- 26 Peter or Paul but not Mary
- 28 Continent-separating range
- 29 When repeated, a "Funny Girl" song
- 31 Part of a play
- 32 Irish pop singer
- 33 Avoid premature ejaculation
- 34 Not so exciting
- 35 She plays an opponent of marriage equality in "8"
- 37 U.S. Supreme Court count
- 40 DVD recording software
- 42 That's Rich!
- 45 "South Pacific" composer
- 47 Isn't informal
- 50 "Look at Me, I'm Sandra \_\_\_\_"
- 52 Tickled pink
- 54 What Melissa Etheridge puts out
- 56 "The Seven Samurai" director Kurosawa
- 57 Put a condiment on it
- 58 Slaws and salads
- 59 Vinick portrayer on "The West Wing"
- 60 Nikita's no
- 62 Caesar's city
- 63 Stick it in the slow ones
- 65 Whoop-de-\_\_\_\_

Solution on page 35



# Pet of the Week



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# Horoscopes

## Don't hold back, Aquarius

BY JACK FERTIG

*Venus is entering Aries, good for sports and trashy fun, not so much for emotional and financial investments. But then she aspects Uranus and Jupiter, so be open for some very fun surprises.*

**ARIES (March 20 – April 19):** A new you is set to break into the open. It could be a daring new look or a talent that refuses to be hidden any longer. If you worry about that disrupting your relationships, holding it in will be even worse.

**TAURUS (April 20 – May 20):** Trust those instincts and intuitions. That little voice deep inside has some very important messages, and perhaps some lucrative ones. Friends will disappoint you. They're only human, but are they really friends? Keep a shrewd eye on their motives.

**GEMINI (May 21- June 20):** Showing off your intellectual brilliance can cause more trouble than it solves. If you want to shake things up, you could be very effective, but the only way you can make peace is to stay quiet.

**CANCER (June 21- July 22):** In the struggle between body and soul remember the soul is eternal. Attend to material realities. Success could pull you away from home and family, but is that so bad? A little separation there doesn't need to be a complete break.

**LEO (July 23 – August 22):** Whatever you say could sound more serious and heartless than you intend. Winning arguments by intimidation will cost you. Gaining allies takes lots of conscious effort and attentive listening. You can change your mind about strategy and details without sacrificing principles.

**VIRGO (August 23 – September 22):** Be very careful of nervous inflammations, especially as they may impact the bowels. Cleanliness, relaxation and a healthy sex life are the best care. Efforts to improve the work process will likely irritate colleagues. What do they want improved, and how?

**LIBRA (September 23 – October 22):** New efforts to

start or refresh a relationship will open surprises that take you in directions you're not ready for. Being a control queen will backfire horribly. Just roll with it and see where it goes. The adventure will do you good.

**SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21):** Nobody can be right all the time, but you can always correct your own mistakes. Did your friends really screw up, or were your expectations unfair? "What's" right is always more important than "who's" right.

**SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20):** You can't hold back your rebellious streak, but if you can channel it creatively it can help boost your standing at work and invigorate your partnership (or chances for one!). Go ahead and take a chance!

**CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19):** A little confusion is good for the soul, provoking you to examine yourself deeper and to improve your orientation. Changes at home should feel uncomfortable if they are to provoke real opportunities; and yes, the opportunities are there! Stay focused on the long haul.

**AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18):** Your dazzling brilliance may offend some people. Don't hold back, not much anyway. Just try to be sensitive and ready to apologize where necessary, or just politic. It doesn't have to be a big deal, but arguing will make it one.

**PISCES (February 19 – March 19):** It's too easy to say too much and give away the store. Rather than spouting off, letting people wonder how much you do know makes you look wiser. Set aside some money for an impulse purchase.

*Jack Fertig is available for personal and business consultations at [www.starjack.com](http://www.starjack.com), and by email at [QScopes@qsyndicate.com](mailto:QScopes@qsyndicate.com).*



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**Solution to puzzle from page 33**

A	P	S	E	S	E	G	A	M	A	R	D	I				
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# Cocktail Chatter

## The Rob Roy: A Wee Tale

ED SIKOV

"A Rob Roy," Chipper announced much too loudly. He looked around the table at our stunned expressions and seemed quite pleased with himself.

As we stared – Chipper is a devout martini drinker – the server asked in a bright tone of voice, "How would you like that, sir?" "Perfect, please," Chipper said. He leaned back in his chair and asked, "And what will you all be having?"

"Rob Roy!" Craig cried.

"Same!" said Dan.

"Make mine a Rob Roy!" Paolo decided after pretending to think about it for a moment.

"Who am I to break this chain of fools?" I inquired. "Rob Roys all around."

"Perfect!" Chipper said.

"What's so perfect about it?" Craig asked.

"It's a different kind of perfect," I started but was immediately cut off by Chipper.

"A perfect Rob Roy is made of Scotch mixed with equal parts sweet and dry vermouth," he explained. Everybody turned to me for verification.

"Och! The laddie's right. Even the wee

bairn o' Scotland know it." Having once played Harry Beaton in a community theater production of "Brigadoon," I'm prone to launching into a Broadway brogue at the least excuse. Dan groaned. "There he goes," he said wearily. "He'll be Harry Beaton for the rest of the evening."

"–I'm leavin' Brigadoon!" I blared and got up to use the men's room. When I returned, there were five Rob Roys on the table. "We waited for you," Paolo said. "To make an appropriate toast," Craig added. Dan harrumphed.

"Och!" I sang out. "I cannae believe how kind ye are! To the Rob Roy, to wee Chipper, and to Sean Connery's kilt and the bonnie peenie that lies beneath!"

Craig rather spoiled the festivities by spitting out a mouthful of Rob Roy onto the tablecloth. "Blechhhhh!" he said redundantly. "That's the worst drink I've ever had!" Chipper was appalled; the rest of us couldn't help but giggle.

"Noew then," I began, only to feel Dan's hand squeeze my thigh. "Put Harry Beaton to bed, hon."

"Och!" I cried – Dan was not going to have the last word on this – "OK. I think it's the 'perfect' that makes it imperfect."

"How so?" asked Chipper.

"It's the wee – I'm sorry, this is hard for me – the small amount of sweet vermouth that clashes with the smoky scotch. If anyone cares for a second one, I suggest ordering it dry. And by the way, Chipper, what's with the Rob Roy

to begin with?"

"My aunt Kate started doing genealogical research and she just told me that she's sure that we're related to Rob Roy McGregor, for whom the drink is named. He was the Robin Hood of Scotland."

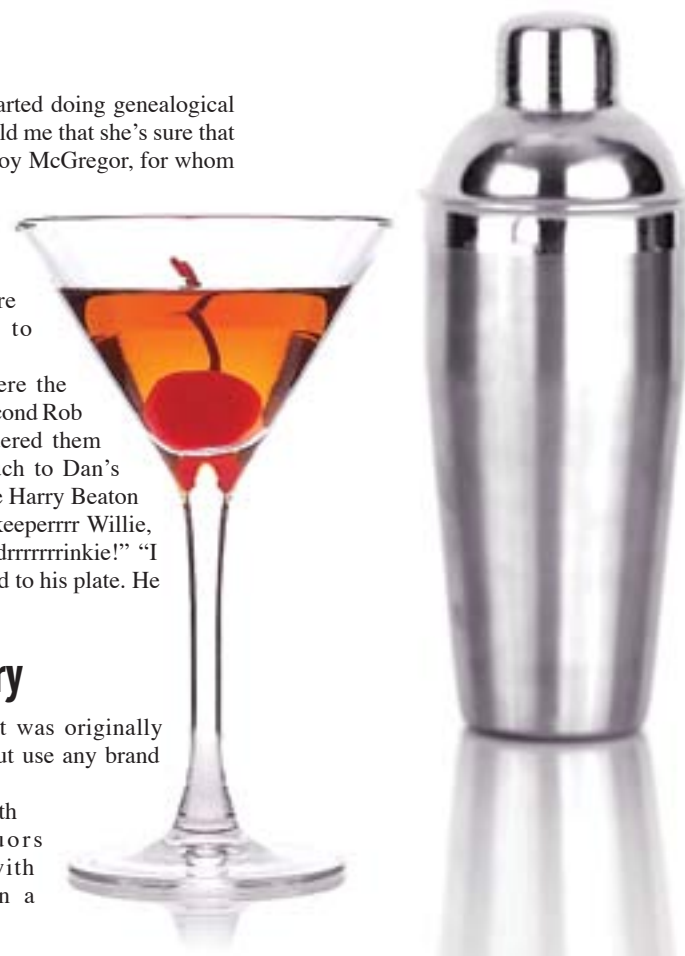
"Bullshit," Craig snapped. "You're more likely to be related to Farmer McGregor."

Chipper and I were the only ones to go for a second Rob Roy, and we both ordered them dry. "Och!" I said much to Dan's consternation. "I'm nae Harry Beaton noew. I'm Grrrroundskeeperrrr Willie, an' I say it's a fine a'drrrrrrinkie!" "I live with this," Dan said to his plate. He received no answer.

## The Rob Roy, Dry

4 parts Scotch (it was originally made with Dewar's, but use any brand you like)

1 part dry vermouth  
Mix both liquors in a shaker filled with ice; shake; serve in a martini glass.



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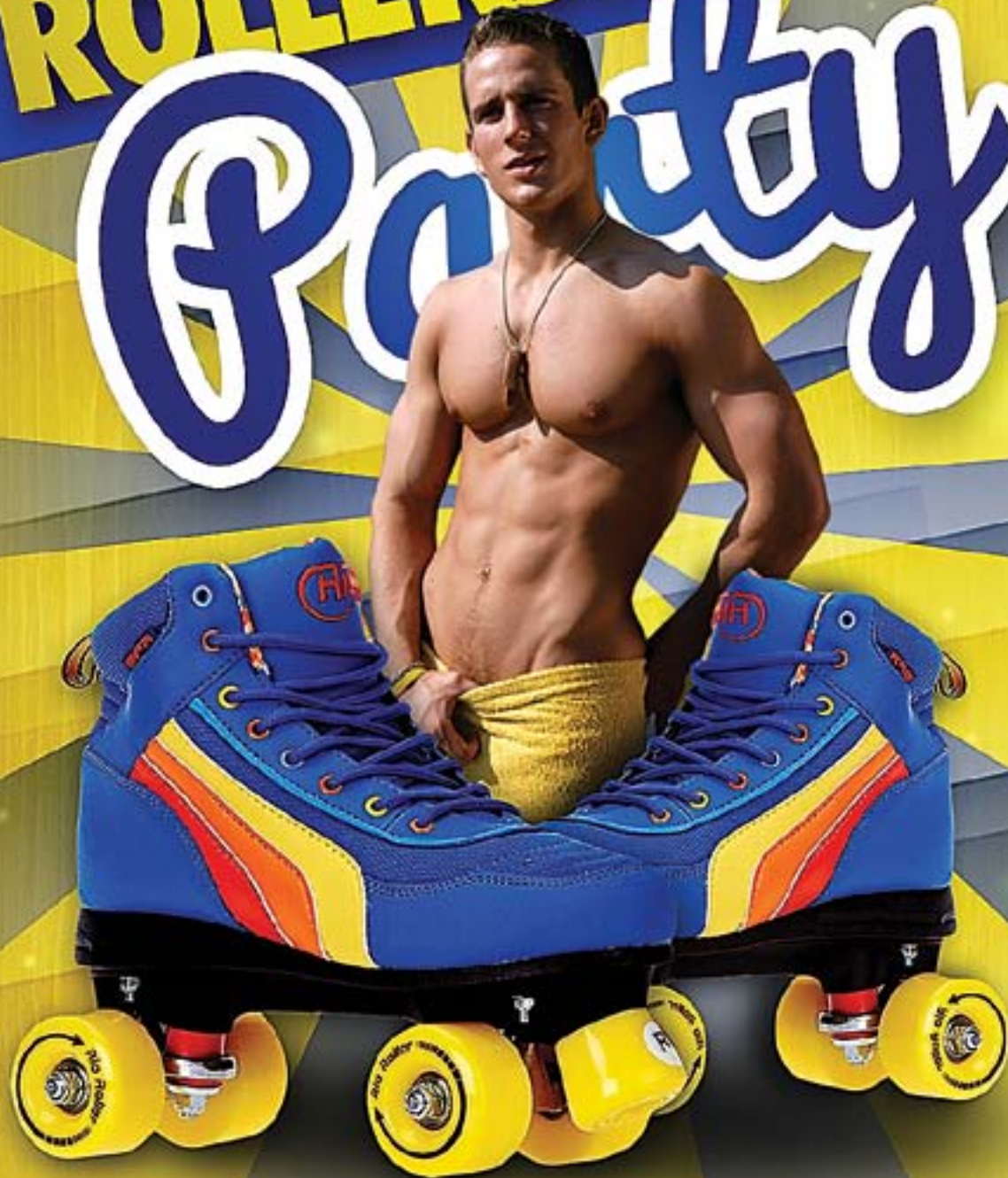
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**DETROIT DHWP** DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELLNESS PROMOTION

HIV/AIDS Programs  
Bureau of Substance Abuse Prevention, Treatment & Recovery (800) 467-2452  
Herman Kiefer Health Complex  
1151 Taylor, Detroit 48202



# MUST BE LOVE DAYS

FEB. 6TH THRU 14TH



Tell time in style  
Ladies' Baby-G Casio watch  
\$99



Men's bracelets in sterling silver and rubber with magnetic closure  
Priced from \$59.99 to \$79.99



Expressions of love with diamonds in sterling silver  
\$159.99 each



Woven bracelets in sterling silver  
Your choice  
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Michele diamond Caber watch  
\$1775



Diamond and ruby "Love" necklace in 14K gold  
From designer Miera T  
\$745



Onyx and hematite beaded bracelets  
Priced from  
\$39.99 to \$99.99 each



Diamond heart in sterling silver on a silk cord  
\$99.99



Inspired by the aquatic world - Tag Heuer Aquaracer  
\$2550



Support your favorite team in style!  
Cufflinks - \$60 each  
Money clip - \$45 each



From the Hearts On Fire Beloved collection  
Prices (starting from)  
Engagement ring - \$4200  
Matching band - \$2500  
Pendant - \$1990  
Matching earrings - \$2990



From Gregg Ruth's Karina collection  
Diamond pendant in 18K gold  
\$11,400



Diamond jewelry set in sterling silver  
18" necklace - \$399, 36" necklace - \$499, Ring - \$299, Earrings - \$449

## During Tapper's Must Be Love Days you can give *and* receive.

Get the perfect gift for someone special and earn a gift card towards a future purchase.



February 6th - February 14th  
Spend \$300 and get a \$30 gift card • Spend \$500 and get a \$50 gift card • Spend \$1,000 and get a \$100 gift card

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