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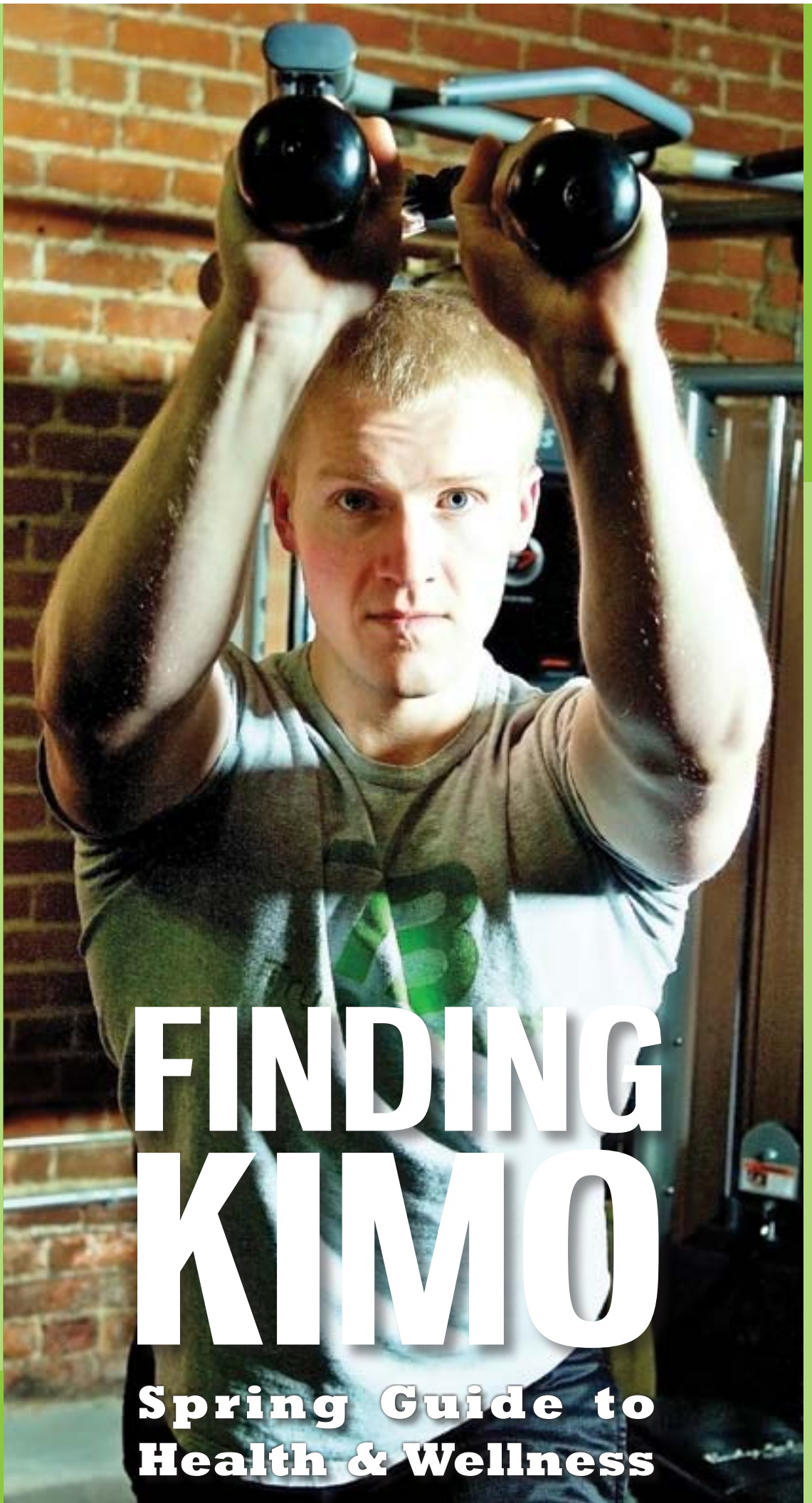
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How Detroit trainer changed his life – and how he hopes to change others. *Photo: Andrew Potter*

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Housing equality and homeless youth key topics at White House conference

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

DETROIT – At the 2012 White House LGBT Conference on Housing and Homelessness, New York's Ali Forney Center Executive Director Carl Siciliano shared the story of his experience with a previous administration. He said it was about ten years ago that he got a phone call from top officials in Washington.

"They wanted to have a press conference at our shelter, showing the Bush administration's commitment to addressing homelessness," Siciliano said. "For about three weeks we had background checks, meetings, secret service all around. Tommy Thompson (who was director of Health and Human Services, HHS, at the time) was supposed to come. It was a big deal. But as soon as I mentioned that many of the youth we served were LGBT, they scattered...I learned then that if you want the government to leave you along, just say LGBT and they disappear."

The experience was a far cry from the way President Barack Obama and his administration have connected with the LGBT community.

On March 9, Siciliano sat on a panel addressing the problem of gay and transgender youth homelessness. Top level HUD (Housing and Urban Development) and HHS officials came from Washington to help promote a new rule that prohibits discrimination in HUD-funded programs, and to do other outreach with the gay community.

The conference was a partnership between the White House and Detroit's Ruth Ellis Center, one of only four homeless shelters nationwide that specifically addresses the needs of homeless LGBT youth. Siciliano came from New York along with Theresa Nolan who works with LGBTQ youth in a center called Green Chimneys. Barbara Poppe, the executive director of U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, moderated the LGBT Youth Homelessness Panel, and Ruth Ellis Executive Director Laura Hughes was also on the panel.

HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, the keynote speaker for the conference, listed the ways President Obama has addressed the needs of the LGBT community.

"You can see this commitment in the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' Donovan said. "In his first State of the Union, the President called for its repeal. And earlier this year, at the President's third, an active duty Air Force colonel who is openly lesbian sat as a guest in the First Lady's box without fear of being discharged for who she is or who she loves."

Donovan cited the record number of Presidential appointments of gay and transgender individuals to government positions, a Presidential Memorandum on Hospital Visitation stating that care facilities receiving Medicare and Medicaid funding must allow patients to designate



Above, Ruth Ellis Executive Director Laura Hughes, left and Theresa Nolan who works with LGBTQ youth in a center called Green Chimneys, on a panel in Detroit March 9 addressing issues of LBGTQ homelessness. To left, HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan discusses the new housing rule. Photos: courtesy of Renna Communications

visitors of their choosing, and his work giving transgender individuals access to passports. The Office of Personnel Management announced that gender identity is a prohibited basis of discrimination in federal employment under the Obama administration, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made the historic announcement that "Gay rights are human rights."

The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Law was another step forward, and now the Equal Access to Housing Rule can be added to the list of the President's accomplishments.

The rule prohibits any housing entity from inquiring about a person's gender identity or sexual orientation, prohibits discrimination based on those factors, and protects people from discrimination when applying for a mortgage with institutions that are FHA insured.

President Obama sent several high-ranking officials to the conference along with Secretary Donovan. John Trasvina, Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity for HUD, Raphael Bostic, Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research for HUD, Mercedes Marquez, Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development for HUD, and Bryan Samuels, Commissioner of



Administration on Children, Youth and Families from HHS joined U.S. Attorney Eastern District of Michigan Barbara McQuade on stage to talk about how LGBT people are receiving increasing protections through court cases, rules and ultimately laws.

U.S. Attorney McQuade said that despite Michigan not having hate crimes legislation, the Shepard Bird Act gives hopes that cases can be tried at the federal level, and that she's been able to use federal housing regulations to successfully litigate discrimination cases where

a perceived gay tenant was discriminated against because he was perceived to have AIDS, thereby making the discrimination based on disability. She also shared the U.S. Attorney's Civil Rights Hotline that anyone can call if they feel they have been discriminated against. That number is 313-226-9151.

Another promising announcement came from HUD Secretary for Policy Development and Research Bostic, who said that his office has begun

HIV crisis in Detroit: The sobering numbers

BY TODD HEYWOOD

DETROIT — As the city of Detroit struggles to find a way out of a massive funding crisis — one that has left parts of the city streets without cops or street lights — another crisis has been brewing.

While the city is likely to enter into a consent agreement with the state and thus avoid the appointment of an emergency manager, it is still facing cash shortfalls and has a budget deficit of nearly \$200 million. Under all these financial issues lurks a familiar, but formidable opponent: HIV.

The disease has reached critical levels in the city. State HIV statistics show that nearly half of the city's zip codes have prevalence rates of three, four, or five percent. Three zip codes have a staggering HIV prevalence rate of six percent — nearly the Ugandan rate in 2009 of 6.5 percent.

But the zip codes don't show the whole picture. Laura Hughes, executive director of the Ruth Ellis Center, which works with LGBT homeless youth in Detroit, says that "nearly 40 percent" of the youth who utilize the center's drop-in services self-identify as HIV-positive. Last year the group served 4,309 youth.

"I always talk about our youth being at the intersections," Hughes says. "Those intersections are race, gender, sexuality, and poverty — all of which can increase the chances you become HIV-positive."

Yet with these staggering numbers, the epidemic has been silently festering. Some leaders have spoken out about the epidemic — Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh called it a "crisis," while progressive activist Van Jones said, "If it gets worse, they could send in blue helmets from international relief sources."

"Detroit has to recognize the HIV epidemic as an epidemic that Detroit needs to address uniquely to this region," says Curtis Lipscomb, executive director of the African American LGBT group KICK. "The numbers aren't shocking. What's shocking is the lack of response from the black community about those numbers."

But Mayor Dave Bing and Gov. Rick Snyder have thus far remained silent on the crisis — and activists and community leaders say their leadership on this issue is urgently required.

Understanding the epidemic

The risk category of men who have sex with men (MSM) looms large over all other risk categories in Detroit. Those men account for 43 percent of all cases of HIV in Detroit, while

an additional four percent of men have the dual risks of needle sharing and being men who have sex with men.

The numbers are even more revealing when viewed through the prism of race. While the U.S. Census reports that 82.7 percent of city residents identify as black, 89 percent of all HIV cases in the city are found in people who identify as black. Black men account for 88 percent of all male HIV cases, while black women account for 91 percent of female cases.



This table above shows HIV prevalence rates per Detroit zip code as of January 2012 (source: Michigan Department of Community Health).

The Ruth Ellis numbers reflect a national trend of high levels of new HIV infections in young, black MSM. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta reports that young black MSM (ages 13-29) account for 75 percent of the new HIV infections among young black men each year. In addition, a 2008 study of 21 major U.S. cities, including Detroit, found that 21 percent of black MSM under age 30 were HIV-positive, while of those, 70 percent were unaware of their status. Studies have found that between 50 and 90 percent of new HIV cases are caused by people who are unaware of their HIV-positive status.

Young black men are also taking the brunt of the deaths in the U.S. The CDC reports that in 2006, 63 percent of the young people 13-24 who died from AIDS complications were black.

Many people interviewed by The American Independent said it was time for leaders to take action on the crisis. And not just political leaders. The LGBT community has to take action as well.

"It's not even that it's time now [to address the crisis], it's something we should have done," says Hughes. "But it most certainly isn't too late, and the opportunity is in front of us for folks to step up."

Lipscomb says that the history of the HIV

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BTL Editorial

What a difference a president can make!

The Ruth Ellis Center and its executive director, Laura Hughes, deserve much praise for attracting and hosting the 2012 White House LGBT Conference on Housing and Homelessness held in Detroit last Friday. REC has gained a national reputation for innovation and excellence, and its leaders showed themselves to be fully capable of forcefully advocating the issues facing LGBT youth.

As we listened we were struck by how open, direct and free the senior White House officials were in talking about LGBT issues. There was no double-speak, or averting the truth to “not offend” people who might be uncomfortable. They were completely comfortable discussing LGBT issues and using all the appropriate pronouns and terminology.

President Obama’s Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Shaun Donovan, listed an impressive litany of policy decisions that benefit the LGBT community, including more appointments of openly LGBT people than ever before, the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” the Obama administration’s refusal to defend the federal Defense of Marriage Act, the Presidential Memorandum on Hospital Visitation, the federal Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Law, and now the Equal access to Housing Rule.

This rule means that all HUD housing projects cannot discriminate on the basis of gender orientation or gender identity. It also applies to all HUD insured mortgage lenders, which encompasses about 30 percent of all residential mortgages in the country. So when we go buy a home, mortgage lenders will no longer be able to refuse to lend to any same-sex couple or LGBT single because of who they are. Landlords who finance apartment complexes with a HUD-backed mortgages will no longer be allowed to refuse to rent an apartment to someone based on who they are.

HUD Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research Raphael Bostic and HUD Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development Mercedes Marquez, both identified as being out, gay HUD officials. Marquez also served in the Clinton White House, and she recalled that although it was okay then, some people were still uncomfortable with her because

she was an out lesbian. But now, in the Obama administration, she described the atmosphere as being totally different – much more open and free. Being LGBT in the Obama White House is completely accepted and understood.

This sweeping sea-change of attitude and approach would be inconceivable in a Republican-led White House, either past or present. Those who can remember back to the Reagan years know that LGBT people were invisible to them, and AIDS was not even mentioned until almost seven years into the epidemic. The Bush years – both senior and junior - were only marginally better. Instead of dealing openly and honestly with youth homelessness, suicide, AIDS and civil rights, we were fighting against federally funded, faith-based social services that specifically and legally discriminated against us. There were no Cabinet level officials that spoke out supporting any LGBT issues, domestic or foreign. Neither Bush would spend any political capital to protect and support LGBT citizens when attacked by hostile right-wing legislators.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recently made the historic announcement

It is not only the administration’s words, but their actions and policy positions which have inspired us and convinced us that, come November, the LGBT community had better get strongly behind President Obama’s reelection bid.

that “Gay rights are human rights.” She was speaking on behalf of the Obama administration. And it is not only the administration’s words, but their actions and policy positions which have inspired us and convinced us that, come November, the LGBT community had better get strongly behind President Obama’s reelection bid. With him in the White House we will continue to see Cabinet and sub-cabinet appointments that produce policy and rule changes that will benefit us for many years to come.



'Bully' sparks activists, parents, teachers to stop the violence, 'Defeat Label'

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

Bullying isn't something that can be stopped by school policies or legislation alone – it's up to the individual to create change. That was the overall message during a panel discussion on Saturday afternoon following the Michigan premiere of the film "Bully" at the Palladium 12 Theatre in Birmingham.

At the Second Annual Uptown Film Festival, the national anti-bullying group, Defeat the Label, hosted the event in collaboration with the Michigan chapter of the Anti-Defamation League. The purpose was to educate the local audience about the dangers of bullying and effective ways to identify and respond to bullying when it occurs.

On the panel was Darren Ofiara, detective sergeant with the Oakland County Sheriff's Office; Michelle Klein, a West Bloomfield-based social worker who specializes in working with adolescents; high school counselor Lisa Graff; JoAnn Andrees, superintendent of the West Bloomfield School District; local area seventh grader Ethan Wolf and his father Richard; as well as Kevin Epling, father of Matt Epling, a Michigan teen who committed suicide in 2002 after being bullied.

"We stand witness to it, but few times do we come forward," said Wolf. "This was the most poignant film I've ever seen."

The film, which follows five bullied children and their families during the 2009-2010 school year, has stirred some controversy after Katy Butler from Ann Arbor made a valiant effort to overturn the film's R rating, which would prevent teen audiences from seeing it. The Motion Picture Association of America turned down the most recent appeal for the rating change, citing multiple instances of profanity during the film.

"It's not about passing and making policies. It's about how we treat each other as human beings," Andrees said. "We have to be proactive in this movement rather than wait for something to happen."

"We have to be honest about this problem. The suicide rate is astounding. We must treat it as the major problem it is. Kids are going to make a change if we give them the tools," said Epling.

A concern for some panelists and audience members are the covert forms of bullying like cyber bullying, mean-spirited gossiping or

lunchroom politics. In response, Epling drew attention to Matt's Safe School Law which was signed into law in Dec. 2011. He urged parents to attend open school meetings to ensure anti-bullying policies are being developed properly before schools turn them into the State Board of Education for approval.

According to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Safe and Drug-Free Schools, more than 13 million American kids will be bullied this year, making it the most common form of violence experienced by young people in the United States.

"One of the biggest problems when it comes to bullying is adults," said Epling. "Adults don't want to change, to acknowledge this is a problem. But by doing this and talking about this, we're saving lives everyday."

Ofiara said parents need to "dig" and need to "be more highly involved" in the lives of their children. His fellow panelists agreed that parents must communicate better and prepare themselves for more honest discussions. To help parents and school officials learn more about the anti-bullying movement, Betsy Kellman, regional director for the Michigan Chapter of the Anti-Defamation League, referred them to their website, adl.org, for resources, school curriculum guides and more.

Defeat the Label May 4

"I don't have a tragic story to share, but that doesn't mean I don't care," said Jeff Sakwa, president of the Michigan chapter of Defeat the Label. "I'm passionate about education and I want to help give kids a safe environment to learn."

Defeat the Label, which is getting under way and stirring up support, has designated May 4 as "Stand Up Against Bullying Day," which encourages every American student to physically stand up at 12 p.m. eastern standard time on that date as part of a silent protest against bullying. Through various forms of fundraising, the organization will use a portion of their proceeds to launch a 24-hour anti-bullying hotline.

Students are urged to visit defeatthelabel.com and nominate their school to "join the movement." The top schools with the most nominations could win appearances by celebrities, autographed goods and more. The group's cause is celebrity-laden, but Sakwa



"One of the biggest problems when it comes to bullying is adults," said Epling. "Adults don't want to change, to acknowledge this is a problem. But by doing this and talking about this, we're saving lives everyday."

- Kevin Epling, father of the deceased teen Matt Epling for whom Michigan's anti-bullying law is named.

said, "A lot of celebrities and movie stars were actually bullied, which is why they honed in on their craft. They're all so happy to help us, and kids really respond well to celebs. If they were bullied, and they're OK now, it gives kids hope."

Muskegon commission passes LGBT protections into all city policies

MUSKEGON – With little fanfare and no opposition, the Muskegon City Commission added LGBT inclusive language to the city's non-discrimination policy March 12. Resident Roberta King presented her request to the commission to add the LGBT language into city policies that already protect other classes of people based on race, gender and religion among others.

After hearing from two other citizens in support of the request, commissioners briefly discussed the topic, then directed City Manager Bryon Mazade to work with the city attorney to craft the correct language for final commission approval.

"To me this is cut and dry ... we need to take action and move forward," Commissioner Larry Spataro said of the proposed LGBT inclusion. "This is not an issue. At the city, we pick the best candidate for each job and don't discriminate. There is no reason not to add this."

King, who addressed the commission on the need for such a policy, said after the meeting that she was "proud" of the city's reaction. "The commission reaction pleases me greatly," said King, who lives in the city and is the vice president of marketing and public relations for the Grand Rapids Community Foundation.

King made the argument to commissioners that the stated protection of the LGBT community is an economic issue as more and more companies would want such a policy in the city they do business and entrepreneurs looking to start new businesses might seek the same.

"Muskegon should be a head of the curve on this," King told commissioners, saying the first gay and lesbian rights policy enacted by a city was East Lansing 40 years ago. Today, 17 other local governments in Michigan have adopted the policy. "Muskegon needs to be on the right side of the history of this particular issue," King said.

The LGBT anti-discrimination policy was supported by two other citizens who came to the commission's work session to address the issue. "To pass this would be a good sign," said Erin Wilson of Grand Rapids, who said he grew up in Muskegon and still has strong family ties to the city. Appearing with his three small children, he said: "I have a wife so I have no skin in this game. But I'd be proud if the city approved it."

Wilson is an actor and is a leader in Until Love is Equal: Holland Is Ready, a community group formed to make the area more inclusive of LGBT people.

Mazade said that the city may include the LGBT groups into its anti-discrimination policies but there is a bill pending in the Michigan Legislature that would void such language from all local government policies. If approved by the state, such a law would nullify all LGBT inclusive city policies.

Heard on Facebook

Bill Maher tells liberals to accept Limbaugh's apology. Do you think it looks bad for liberals to continue to press the issue?

No, it doesn't. Accountability is more than an apology. He needs to follow up by changing his behavior and he has not. Additionally, Bill Maher is no friend to women in any case. He was just standing by his fellow misogynist.

-Cristy Cardinal

It wasn't even an apology.

-Rachel Lutz

I agree with Cristy Cardinal. Even my five year old knows that just because she mutters the words "I'm sorry," that doesn't mean she is truly apologetic, or that she understands the steps she needs to take to change her behavior. It just means that she knows that people expect to hear you say those words when you have made a mistake.

-Kellie Carbone

I imagine he is sorry. Sorry that advertisers pulled their financial support. To truly mean his apology, he would have to change his misogynistic ideologies that he has aired over a decade. Many make the excuse that he's just an entertainer. He's a bigot spreading hatred.

-Shayne Phillips

It was the lamest of non-apologies. And the idea that Limbaugh is going for laughs with his diatribes is outrageous - take one look or listen to him while he's on a rant and you know he's not joking. He's playing to anger, resentment, bigotry, and fear.

-Nancy Squires

Comments may be edited for grammar and length.



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S/he Said

Obama, LGBT history

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL



Christy Mallory

"President Obama has been called on to issue an executive order prohibiting sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination by federal contractors. In considering such a policy, the president can rely upon a long and successful history of experience with similar ordinances adopted by Detroit and more than 61 other cities and counties. Detroit was a leader in adopting these policies. The city's civil rights ordinances prohibited contractors from discriminating based on sexual orientation in 1979 and from discriminating based on gender identity in 2008. While the policies of cities and counties are successful and reaching thousands of employees, President Obama could help protect up to 16.5 million workers by requiring that the U.S. government only do business with companies that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. After all, a majority of states, including Michigan, do not have laws prohibiting such discrimination. The president should follow the leadership of the nation's leading companies, and cities like Detroit, which have decades of experience to show that doing so is good for employees, good for business and good for government."

-Christy Mallory, legal research fellow, University of California, in her guest commentary titled "Equality is good for business - and government," Detroit Free Press, www.freep.com, Feb. 28.



Ace Robinson

"After 30 years of AIDS, we know what works and, more importantly, what does not work. We know that first and foremost, education is the greatest deterrent to infection. And we have seen effective public health initiatives that have saved countless lives, domestically and internationally. Moreover, after 30 years of AIDS, we know that our leaders have a choice of when, how, and to whom any and all interventions are available. To the ultimate detriment of 20 million people each year, those interventions are often not available, sometimes due to funding, and sometimes due to normative culture values that punish those most in need: the world's outcasts."

-Ace Robinson, Managing Director of Community Health & Research, Public Policy, and Advocacy, Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), in his column titled "If We Knew Then What We Know Now..." www.huffingtonpost.com, Mar. 07.



Christopher Bram

"Ernest Hemingway indicated why he said a writer must learn to recognize 'what you really felt, rather than what you were supposed to feel, and had been taught to feel.' Which is what all gay people, not just writers, must learn before they can create their own lives. This book is about a few authors who decided to write about what they really felt, even when it made their working life more difficult."

-From the Introduction of "Eminent Outlaws - The Gay Writers Who Changed America," a new book by Christopher Bram, www.twelvebooks.com, Mar. 01.



Mark Potok

"The LGBT community made significant advances in 2011. But it was precisely these advances that seemed to set off a furious rage on the religious right, with renewed efforts to ban or repeal marriage equality and what seemed to be an intensification of anti-gay propaganda in certain quarters. American Family Association official Bryan Fischer, for instance, said that 'gays are Nazis,' claimed that HIV does not cause AIDS but gay men do. In another development, most of the religious right groups that started out opposing abortion but moved on to attacking LGBT people have recently begun to adopt anti-Muslim propaganda en masse. Overall, the number of anti-gay hate groups in the United States rose markedly, going from 17 in 2010 to 27 last year."

-Mark Potok, reporting the findings in the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) Spring 2012 Intelligence Report, www.splcenter.org.

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Ready for a vacation that offers both leisure and new discoveries? Then it's time for you to come and learn about the amazing Royal Caribbean and Azamara Club Cruises on Tuesday, March 20th at 6:30 p.m. at the Livonia VisTaTech Center at 18600 Haggerty Rd., Livonia, MI 48152-2696. Guest speaker Marianne Hessler, from Royal Caribbean International, owner of Azamara Club Cruises.

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RESERVE YOUR ROYAL CARIBBEAN VACATION WITH US TODAY!

Serving LGBT seniors reception planned

SOUTHFIELD – On March 21 specialists in the field of aging will meet at 10 a.m. at Credit Union One in Southfield, to learn more about sensitively caring for the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults in southeastern Michigan. Hosted by the LGBT Older Adult Coalition of Detroit, the reception is part of a larger plan to identify culturally competent service providers who will ultimately serve as a referral base for LGBT older adults residing in the region.

“There are currently few, if any, known LGBT culturally competent service providers for older LGBT people in Michigan,” said Jay Kaplan, co-chair of the LGBT Older Adult Coalition. “This is a first step toward growing a strong base of trained and reliable providers.”

There are an estimated 68,000 LGBT people ages 65 and up currently living in Michigan with approximately 20,000 of those residing in southeastern Michigan. “LGBT Older Adults face significant disparities as they age with only one in nine having children or extended family to help care for them,” says Kathleen LaTosch, co-chair of the LGBT Older Adult Coalition. “They are much more likely to live alone and for folks who choose to live in a retirement community, many opt to go back into the closet after a lifetime of freedom, to avoid stigma and potential mistreatment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.”

The reception is one of four that will be held throughout southeastern Michigan in 2012.

Planned as an informational meeting for service providers to learn more about how their organization can become an LGBT culturally competent provider, organizers welcome any service provider in the field of aging.

About the coalition

The LGBT Older Adult Coalition was formed in 2010. It is a collaboration of people and organizations in southeastern Michigan who are working to establish effective programs and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults. It is hosted by the ACLU of Michigan and is supported by a grant from the HOPE Fund. Participating representatives include: ACLU of Michigan, Advisory Council to Michigan’s Commission on Aging, Adult Well-Being Services, Affirmations, Area Agency on Aging 1-B, KICK, The Jim Toy Community Center, MediLodge of Southfield, and Oakland Family Services.

For more information, visit www.LGBTOlderAdults.com

Six month community collage project begun at Affirmations

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

FERNDALE – Affirmations will be full of art and love this spring and summer, with a six month community art project called Arts & Advocacy: Out 4 Equality Collage Workshops. From now until August adults and youth will be able to talk about LGBT issues while also taking part in a massive collective art project that will be featured at Affirmations in the fall, and also possibly go on tour.

The masterminds behind Out 4 Equality Collage are Affirmations Program Coordinator Meghan Hollowell and her partner Karainne Spens-Hanna. Spens-Hanna is an artist by profession, whose work has been shown at Re:View Gallery, Art Prize, and in the Body Eclectic showing at Lawrence Street Gallery. She is also on the verge of completing her bachelor’s degree from College for Creative Studies in Detroit, with a minor in art therapy.

She and Hollowell started the project with the help of Program Director Johnny Jenkins as a way to “make change, raise awareness and bring people together to express what we are going through.” She hopes the experience will connect people of all ages, including allies.

“Art is important because it’s about bridging gaps between what people are feeling and what they’re making. It’s a cognitive process that paves the way for more openness and understanding,” Spens-Hanna said. She hopes there will be a lot of family involvement, and says some days will have themes just for the youngsters. “I want to have a day where kids will make art about what love is to them,” she said. “Kids are so uninhibited and I love that. They’re not afraid of it looking bad. It’s beautiful to see.”

The first Out 4 Equality Collage Workshop was held March 10 with the focus of equal marriage and workplace protections. The plan is to have art days each month through the spring and summer, and then in the fall Spens-Hanna will fill the Pittman-Puckett Art Gallery with a massive instillation of the collected works.

Jennifer Shear of Ferndale brought her eight-year-old son Peyton to the workshop. Peyton painted a picture of his favorite dog Sadie. Jennifer made a collage representing a marriage between two males using a large letter “m” that used to be on a marquee or sign of some sort, a pit of plastic plumbing and a paisley cut from wallpaper fabric. “I like to hint at things and let people use their own imagination,” she said.

The workshop also help Florida-native Nitin Jalan get his first introduction to the community center. “I moved to Bloomfield Hills from Florida four months ago, and I wanted to find something where I could come out and meet people. I like that this brings people together



Top Jennifer and Peyton working on a crafts project. Below, Affirmations staff member Meghan Hollowell gets creative. BTL photos: Crystal Proxmire.

with the same idea and helps spread it,” he said.

So far about a dozen people have participated, and the project is growing quickly. The workshop is free to attend, and organizers are hoping for people to donate items.


“We’re using a lot of found objects and trying to be more artsy than crafty,” said Hollowell, who said she isn’t fond of glitter and feathers, but prefers the old calendars, fabric, magazines, industrial bits and pieces, buttons, ribbons and other re-purposed items they’ve

collected for the project. Art supply donations are appreciated, and may be dropped off at Affirmations.

Along with the collage, Hollowell is working on Out 4 Equality Open Mic, an effort to give “all slam poets, poets, writers, musicians, comedians, and rappers” a voice. The monthly series is free for youth age 13-20, and a \$5 suggested donation for those 21 and up.

Find out the latest dates on these events at www.goaffirmations.org.

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Gay teacher fired from Catholic school weds in NYC

NEW YORK (AP) - A gay teacher fired from a Roman Catholic school outside St. Louis after church officials learned he was planning to get married has tied the knot in a ceremony in New York.

Al Fischer lost his job in February after an official with the Archdiocese of St. Louis overheard him telling co-workers about his plans to wed his partner of 20 years. He had been a music teacher at the St. Ann Catholic School in Normandy, Mo.

The New York Times reports that Fischer and his partner, Charlie Robin, were married in a ceremony in front of a fountain in Central Park.

New York legalized same-sex marriage last year. Missouri still doesn't allow it.

The archdiocese said Friday that Fischer was publicly demonstrating a life inconsistent with Catholic teaching.

Priest who denied communion placed on leave

GAITHERSBURG, Md. (AP) - A priest who denied communion to a lesbian at her mother's funeral has been placed on leave.

The Washington Post reported Sunday that a letter from an archdiocese official says the priest was placed on leave for engaging in intimidating behavior.

The archdiocese has already apologized for the priest's actions at the February funeral in Gaithersburg.

Barbara Johnson and her relatives, meanwhile, have asked the archdiocese to remove the priest. The archdiocese issued a statement after the funeral saying the Rev. Marcel Guarnizo's actions violated policy but any action against him would remain confidential because it is a personnel issue.

Johnson's family issued a statement Sunday saying the letter doesn't pertain to the funeral, but they hope the action will ensure others won't suffer the same treatment.

► Detroit HIV

Continued from p. 7

epidemic has been the history of the modern gay rights movement. He says that HIV drove the movement to create responses to the tidal wave of deaths in the 80s, and the community should be proud. But he says the movement has moved away from that history, leaving HIV to AIDS service organizations (ASOs), and creating a "wall" between HIV and the gay civil rights movement.

"I think that it is an epidemic that has moved to black and brown people, and it's an issue that's believed black and brown people should address," says Lipscomb. "I don't have any immediate solution, but I do know that there has to be ownership from the gay and lesbian movement. It can't be left to ASOs. It can't."

For Lipscomb, another key ingredient in addressing the HIV epidemic is the black church in Detroit. He says many "still believe that gay men deserve to get HIV," and as a result, the church has not fulfilled its usual role in addressing issues within the community. He says he is only aware of two mainstream black churches that are open and affirming of people

TABLE 3. Prevalent HIV Infection Cases in DETROIT by Zip Code at Diagnosis

ZIP CODE AT DIAGNOSIS	ZIP AREA	REPORTED PREVALENCE*			Total
		HIV Infection men-stage 1	HIV Infection men-stage 2	Women	
48201	520	116	128	244	4%
48202	570	130	190	320	3%
48203	580	130	180	310	2%
48204	290	97	107	204	4%
48205	400	100	100	200	3%
48206	130	40	40	80	3%
48207	270	70	130	200	4%
48208	470	50	50	100	3%
48209	540	60	60	120	2%
48210	500	87	87	174	3%
48211	190	27	27	54	3%
48212	80	27	27	54	3%
48213	340	57	107	164	3%
48214	290	124	131	255	5%
48215	180	44	72	116	3%
48216	90	32	32	64	3%
48217	70	27	27	54	3%
48218	30	0	0	0	0%
48219	160	160	160	320	3%
48220	70	0	0	0	0%
48221	80	0	0	0	0%
48222	10	0	0	0	0%
48223	200	80	80	160	2%
48224	230	127	127	254	3%
48225	10	0	0	0	0%
48226	120	50	50	100	2%
48227	400	138	138	276	4%
48228	400	132	132	264	4%
48229	10	0	0	0	0%
48230	10	0	0	0	0%
48231	10	0	0	0	0%
48232	10	0	0	0	0%
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Parting Glances



Pages past tense #3

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Sundays my mother took me to First Baptist Church from ages five until 12. We rode with neighbor Mrs. Williamson, her two sons, William and Robert.

First Baptist (now Detroit's People's Community Church) was affiliated with the more liberal American Baptist Convention, in contrast to the fundamentalist Southern Baptists, soon to vote on a name change.

At 12 ("the age of accountability") I was eligible for church membership through the rite of total-immersion baptism. I took this step seriously, even though I peeked with some interest at the other boys who, naked, were putting on full-length baptismal robes for baptism.

I was also somehow aware that Dr. Cyril Baker, organist and choir director, had girlish mannerisms. But his selection of music was impeccable and contributed at some level to my appreciation of good church and choir music.

Following my baptism I was given a Holy Bible, in which Pastor Rev. Ernest L. Honts wrote, "To Charles Robert: May you always be a good monk." To this day I don't know what he meant exactly. (Surely, not celibacy!)

My mother insisted I go to Baptist Camp. I was eager to get away that summer. It would be my first time away from home on my own. I took along my baptismal Bible for good luck and verse-learning reference.

I did everything expected of a Christian camper. I prayed, read scripture, wrote poetry ("A day at camp is a happy one."), swam, canoed, played baseball, got brown as the proverbial berry. I also developed an attachment - actually a crush - on my camp counselor, Jerry. I hated to leave him.

I stopped going to First Baptist shortly thereafter, probably because Mrs. Williamson moved and there was no one to drive us to service. By the time I turned 15 I found a friendly neighborhood church: The Missionary Workers Tabernacle (Interdenominational). I attended faithfully three times a week.

Unusual for the mid-1950s, the Tabernacle was run by women who, despite the biblical admonition "suffer not a woman to speak in church," felt the call to preach the gospel. They played banjos, guitars, trumpets, mandolins, tambourine, sang and actively saved souls on street corners.

The Tabernacle was founded in 1923 by Anna Curry Spellman, who was related to notoriously gay Francis Cardinal Spellman. Attending there - I was usually the only teen at the Wednesday Night Testimonial Service - certainly kept me from getting in trouble in a very rough neighborhood.

A few things puzzled me. I speculated about what sort of sins regularly drove Brother Townsend to the altar to confess. I also felt it was somewhat unChristian for Sister Norton to say that "Blacks should attend their own churches. Races shouldn't mix."

Most disturbing was the sad plight of one of the younger Missionary Workers, blond-braided Sister Anderson, who I recall one Sunday service being completely distraught, sobbing uncontrollably. Her brother had died unexpectedly. "Unsaved!" And was now surely suffering torments of Hell.

Growing aware of my own physical needs, trying through prayer, will power, determination, to ignore them - with less and less success - I wondered if I too would be lost forever in an eternity without my beloved Jesus?

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Creep of the Week

Utah Legislature

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Yes! Utah is on a fast track to becoming the first sex-free state in the country. I know, I know, a lot of people already thought it was. But the status was never official. Thanks to Utah's legislators (dominated by Republicans. Surprise!), the dream could become reality.

The Senate and House passed a bill that dismantles sex education in the state. It's an incredible, groundbreaking bill that, among other things, absolutely forbids any discussion of homosexuality, premarital sex, or contraception, even if kids ask about it. Teachers are *not allowed* to talk about such horrible, horrible, things. It also allows schools to choose an abstinence only sex education program, or to just say, "Fuck sex education," and not teach it at all, leaving it up to parents.

"I recognize that some parents do not take the opportunity to teach in their own homes, but we as a society should not be teaching or advocating homosexuality or sex outside marriage or different forms of contraceptives for premarital sex," Sen. John Valentine (R-Orem) told the Salt Lake Tribune. Damn straight (pun totally intended).

For some reason, a lot of people are upset and are urging Gov. Gary Herbert to veto the bill. Will he or won't he? Only his hairdresser knows for sure. For now, he's saying his signature or veto depends on whether it's "good policy for the state of Utah."

Uh, listen Herbert. The choice is obvious. The bill makes perfect 100% no shit Sherlock sense. Sign it!

Everyone knows sex is a menace to society (especially the gay kind). It's something that should not be happening under any circumstances besides a man married to a woman making a baby (not *trying* to make a baby, folks, but life-begins-at-conception making only. Anything else is cheating. No freebies!). And yet, somehow, as the wise members of the early 90s group LaTour once lamented, "People are still having sex." And that was over 20 years ago! Why won't sex just crawl back into its hole (or any other inappropriate metaphor)?

The answer is deceptively simple: people be talkin'. That's right. The Sex Problem in America is due to the Talkin' About Sex Problem in America (Salt-N-Pepa, I'm looking at you). The key to solving any and all problems is to stop talking about them. If you don't talk about it, it doesn't exist. Wa la! It's genius, really.

Not everybody sees the wisdom, however.

"What this bill is, is a mandate against reality," Sen. Pat Jones (D-Salt Lake County) told her fellow lawmakers. Clearly she has never had an unintended pregnancy that she just pretended wasn't happening so it would just go away.

Other naysayers include the Utah Education Association. "Frankly, we see ... this as a need to protect children who may not have the opportunity to get the needed information on critical issues that are life saving in some cases," the UEA's Kory Holdaway told the Salt Lake Tribune.

Ugh, that old "protecting children" argument. You know what we need to protect children from? Their evil sex-parts.

Other forces also seem to be conspiring against Utah's wise lawmakers, too: "If the goal is to prevent teen sex, however, Utah lawmakers may be working against their own ends. Research released yesterday by the reproductive health research organization The Guttmacher Institute found that receiving sex education actually delays teen sex." The source for this info? LiveScience.com. Boo!

The Utah legislature is already working on an abstinence-only science education bill.

Viewpoint



BY DR. KOFI ADOMA

The now historic State of the SGL/BT Community international teleconference was conceived by Ifalade Ta'Shia Asanti as way of connecting the lives of Black LGBTs across the globe, and engaging in self-empowering conversations. It took place on Feb. 26 and was sponsored by Black Mens Exchange, Women Healing Women, and Azaan Kamau Media. Community supporters included Detroit's own A.L.O.R.D.E. Collective, Agape Spirit Life Ministries and Detroit Black Pride Society. It was open to the public and allies were especially welcomed.

Ta'Shia stated in a press release, "The summit will convene a panel of grassroots SGLBT/LGBT leaders to dialogue on the current challenges facing SGLBT/LGBT communities of African descent. What's important about this event is that it includes members of the community who've made major contributions to social change in African, African-American and the SGLBT community but whose voices are rarely heard at mainstream LGBT events."

Ifalade Ta'Shia Asanti is a renown award-winning journalist, author, TV producer and activist, whose website can be found at www.tashiaasanti.com. She contributed her artistic, literary, and spiritual gifts during last year's Hotter Than July celebration at Karibu House's Poetry Night, the candlelight vigil, and the writer's panel. I had the pleasure of befriending her at Nia, Sistahfest, and the National Black Lesbian Conference (Black lesbian retreats) since the early 90's.

Ta'Shia asked me to join her prestigious panel of leaders from around the globe. Feeling extremely honored and blessed, I gladly accepted this invitation which turned out to be a phenomenal moment in time. Words to describe it are inadequate.

With almost 200 attendees on the line, the synergy was earth-shaking. It felt like a lovefest, a village gathering of

Historic tele-gathering

State of the Black SGLBT/LGBT community, Brainstorming solutions summit

kindred spirits; men, women, youth, and elders fellowshipping, brainstorming, strategy-sharing, prioritizing, and uplifting each other. Ta'Shia facilitated the entire meeting. It began with an elder blessing by Archbishop Carl Bean and Gale Sky Edeawo and the pouring of libations by Queen Hollins to invoke the ancestor spirits. This was to ground us in our purpose and intention. African tradition continued with song by Lillie Carol Russ on vocals and guitar. Next

this request was a call-out for securing safe spaces such as community centers in our urban areas, replacing "sexual" with "attractional" when referring to our identities, becoming proactive in improving school climate and child welfare practices to support our LGBTQ youth who are at-risk for homelessness, suicide, and bully victimization, and emotional healing considering that many of us have been victims of trauma in some form or fashion. I took the opportunity

to let everyone know about the efforts made by Detroit's Black LGBT community to do intensive work on building cohesion, such as Detroit Black Pride, PFLAG Family Reunion, Race Matters, Kwanzaa, Healing Detroit, town hall meetings, Black lesbian intergenerational gathering, and Wanna Be Startin' Somethin' cross-attractional dialogues. Detroit was also represented by Kimberly Jones of Black Pride Society who spoke of the importance of maintaining community partnerships. Rev. Darlene Franklin of Agape Spirit Ministries was also invited but was unable to attend.

I was deeply moved and humbled by the power of the truth-telling, authenticity, honesty, realness, energy, and the love expressed throughout this process. I gained a greater sense of commitment and loyalty that now expands worldwide. If you would like to hear more details about my experience, you may call the Karibu House helpline at 313-865-2170 ext. 3.

Dr. Kofi Adoma is a licensed clinical psychologist practicing in and around Detroit. She is a native and resident of Detroit and is a graduate of Highland Park High School. She received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology at Oberlin College, and her Masters degree in Educational Psychology at the University of Michigan. In 1996, she graduated from the University of Michigan with her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology.


"What's important about this event is that it includes members of the community who've made major contributions to social change in African, African-American and the SGLBT community but whose voices are rarely heard at mainstream LGBT events."

-Ifalade Ta'Shia Asanti, conference founder

were the keynote speakers, Cleo Manago of the African, American Advocacy, Support-Services & Survival Institute (AmASSI) and Ruby Sales, a Black studies feminist scholar and theologian, followed by a host of other speakers around the U.S. and Africa.

Invited panelists shared their remarks and ideas for solutions toward community wholeness, equality, and solidarity. Topics explored an array of issues including economic empowerment, media, communications, protection of our elders and youth, preserving African traditions, Kwanzaa, Black gay pride, same gender marriage, HIV/AIDS, health and wellness, support for transpersons, building relationships with allies, spirituality, and much more.

When it was my turn to speak for four minutes, I made a list of concerns regarding the mental health of our Black SGL/BT communities, with an emphasis on self-care and a request to de-stigmatize mental illness. Within



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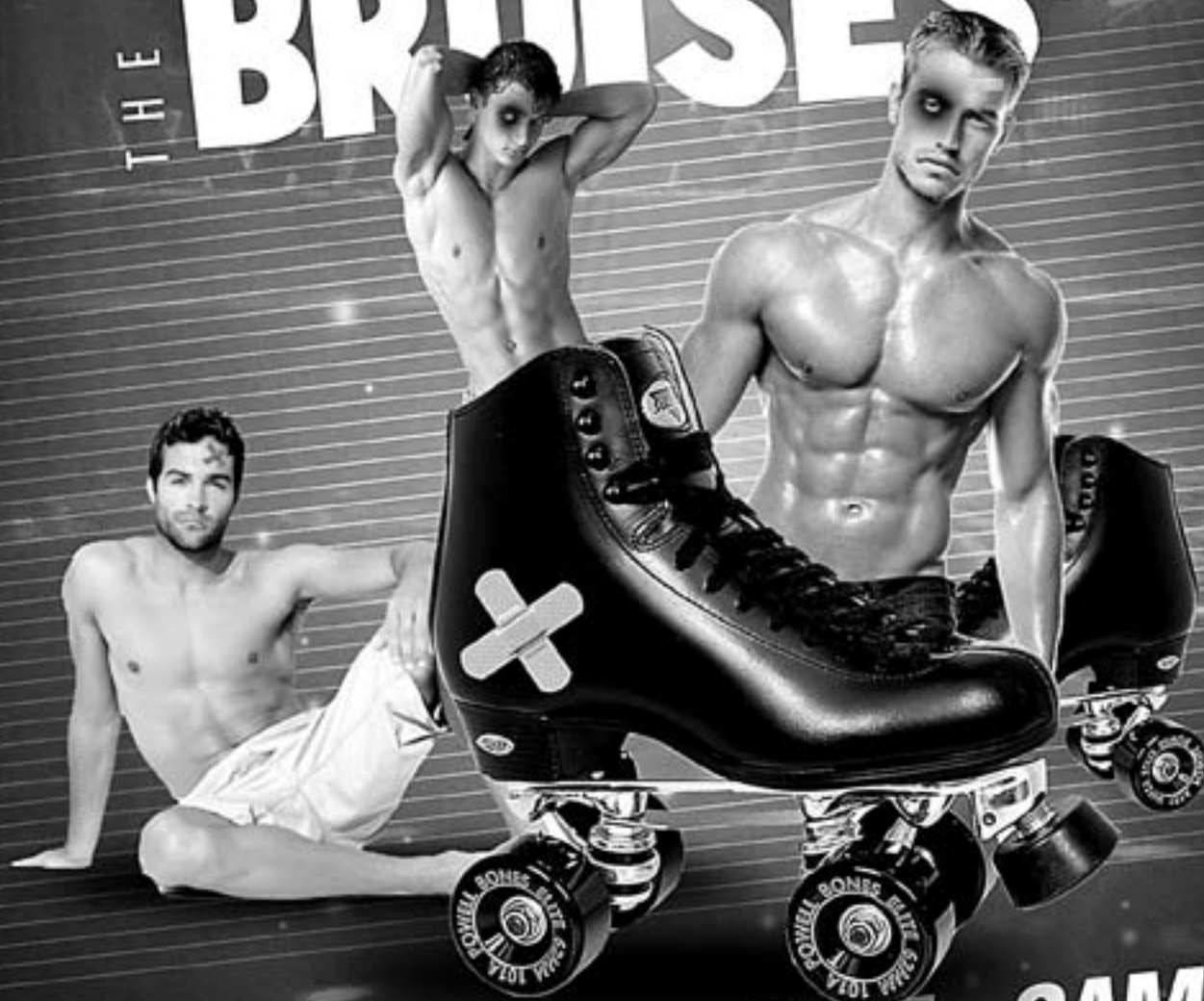
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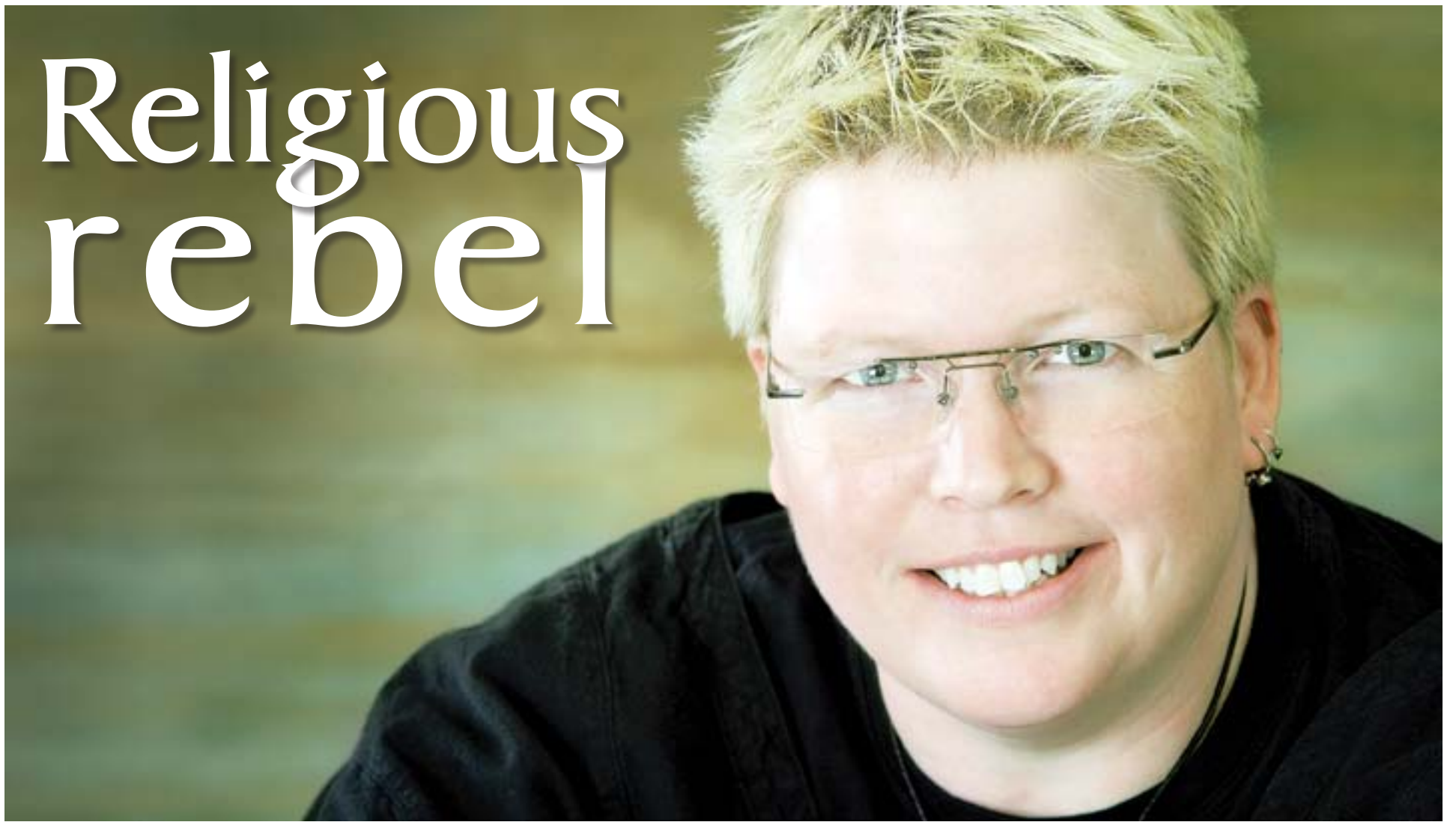
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Religious rebel



The Rev. Amy DeLong to speak out during three Michigan appearances

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

When the Rev. Amy DeLong performed a lesbian wedding at a United Methodist Church in Wisconsin in September 2009, she did not get defrocked. Instead of immediately dismissing the lesbian reverend, church leadership held a trial, charging her with violating church teaching by blessing the same-sex union and with being a “self-avowed practicing homosexual.”

After a lengthy church trial, the charge of being homosexual was dismissed and she was found guilty of violating the Book of Discipline. She was suspended for 20 days and assigned to write an essay “about a better way to handle disagreements between clergy.”

DeLong has remained a welcome part of the Methodist Church and as a reverend doing outreach, DeLong is traveling the country spreading the idea of more love and acceptance in the Methodist community. In June, she will present a set of procedures to put before the Wisconsin United Methodist Clergy, and hopes to be able to present them to the United Methodist General Conference 2012 in Tampa, Fla., which is where major church policy decisions are made.

The empowering story of DeLong’s

“I’d tell people that living your ultimate truth is empowering. Doing the thing that scares them the most will open their life. Living a divided life was way more soul-threatening than telling the truth, even when the consequences are hard.”

religious rebellion, and the kind response she has received since standing up for her beliefs, will be shared at three different Michigan events.

On Friday, March 16, DeLong will take part in Coffee House and Conversation from 7-9 p.m. at Newburg United Methodist Church (36500 Ann Arbor Trail) in Livonia. This casual evening will include music by folk singer Katie Geddes and poems by poet and Pastor Jeff Nelson. There will be a chance to hear DeLong’s story and converse about inclusivity, while enjoying beverages and snacks. This is a free event.

On Saturday, March 17, in a presentation on “Mapping our Journeys,” DeLong will be part of a panel with representatives from Farmington, Birmingham, Ann Arbor and Central United Methodist Churches to discuss how they have had conversations about faith and sexuality in their respective settings. The event is from 9 a.m. to 2

p.m., with lunch included, at Nardin Park United Methodist Church (29887 W. 11 Mile Road) in Farmington, and the cost is \$10. Pre-registration, to wesbrun@gmail.com, is requested.

On Sunday, March 18, DeLong will share a free Welcoming Worship at 5 p.m. at the Detroit Central United Methodist Church (23 E. Adams) in Detroit.

DeLong tours the country as part of her extension ministry Kairos CoMotion, a nonprofit whose mission states, “Now is the time to: reform the way we live together so as to more fully embody a radically expansive love of God; network for solidarity, advocacy and action; and act-up on behalf of those who are silenced, excluded or dispossessed.”

While she has not since violated church doctrine, DeLong has been working within the church rules to spread her message of acceptance.

Prior to the suspension, Kairos CoMotion focused on educational events and conferences with progressive theologians. Since the trial, DeLong has worked to connect more with the everyday churchgoers than conservative religious leaders.

“Change will come if people stand up for what is right in their churches,” DeLong says. “I have not met much resistance, and I am less concerned about (it) than with showing people the light they have when they embrace themselves and all the members of their congregations.”

“I’m way less concerned with my enemies. People don’t like when I use strong language like that, but remember: Jesus said love your enemies. He didn’t say not to have them.”

DeLong said that being herself and helping the couple she married was worth overcoming her fears.

“I’d tell people that living your ultimate truth is empowering,” she says. “Doing the thing that scares them the most will open their life. Living a divided life was way more soul-threatening than telling the truth, even when the consequences are hard.”

Find out more about DeLong and her journey at <http://loveontrial.org>.

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ReDesign shop Retail Merchandising Director Robert Lebow. BTL photos: Andrew Potter

Furniture with a twist

Royal Oak store sells unique pieces, supports charities

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

In these times of tighter wallets, careful shoppers are looking to thrift, consignment and resale stores for high-end merchandise at bargain prices. With a helping hand, the National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Detroit Section, opened its third Council ReSale Shop in November 2011.

The new ReDesign HOME Consignment store on Woodward Avenue in Royal Oak features a variety of one-of-a-kind home furnishings such as rugs, chandeliers, end and dining tables, works of art, sofas and chairs from manufacturers including Baker, Henredon, Brueton, Dunbar, McGuire and Poulsen. Collectibles, lamps, mirrors and other home accessories are also available for purchase.

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of store as people in this economy want to donate to help during difficult times and want to consign because they, too, will make money. It's a win-win situation,"

says Susan Gertner, executive director of NCJW/GDS.

Founded in 1891, NCJW is a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideals into action. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW strives for social justice by improving the

See Twist, page 22

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Continued from p. 21

quality of life for women, children and families, and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms.

Fifty percent of sales from the ReDesign HOME Consignment and Council ReSale Shops support more than 25 projects of NCJW/GDS, including Dress for Success, Wrapped in Love, Project Friendship, Kosher Meals on Wheels, All Kids Playground, Share Your Soles, Safe Place, Strategies to Prevent Domestic Abuse, Adventures in Reading and Bookstock.

The Council ReSale Shops in Berkley and Royal Oak offer merchandise such as gently-used men's, designer and vintage women's and children's clothing, toys, accessories, jewelry, handbags and shoes, to name a few.

"At the ReDesign shop, we're looking for and are selling quality home goods that meet current market demand," says Robert Lebow, retail merchandising director. The consignment criteria are available for reference online (www.ncjwgds.org/councilresale).

"We have design center products without the design center rules and regulations. In terms of variety, we have everything from the traditional English Club Chair fully-upholstered with wooden legs to the very contemporary current product, along with a wide selection of antique and vintage pieces," says Lebow, who has more than 30 years of experience as a high-end, residential interior designer.

The ReDesign shop attracts people from all economic levels. According to Lebow, the shop is perfect for any value-conscious consumer – the one looking to



purchase home goods on a budget, or the interior designer looking for that great piece at a reduced price, and even those seeking to liquidate good furniture.

Special sales and events take place year-round, and promotions are available for frequent customers. Lebow reaffirmed that everything is thoroughly researched before it is priced for sale and displayed in an elegant atmosphere. "Our prices are fabulous and so far people have been thrilled."



"We have everything from the traditional English Club Chair fully-upholstered with wooden legs to the very contemporary current product, along with a wide selection of antique and vintage pieces." – Robert LeBow

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'Kevin' of the corn

Ezra Miller and Tilda Swinton star in "We Need to Talk About Kevin." Photo: Oscilloscope

Mother-son relationship disturbs in Tilda Swinton horror pic

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

We need to talk about Kevin. The kid's practically demonic in his pursuit to drive his mother nuts, sickly terrorizing Eva and the family – without giving too much away, he makes a mess of the house and sucks up to his father to spite her – with a smirk that's eerily devilish, like some demon child. Seriously, all that's missing is the corn.

The crazy-kid film has been done to death (see: "The Bad Seed," "Children of the Corn," "The Good Son"), but never so terrifyingly true-to-life as in "We Need to Talk About Kevin," a consuming cautionary tale for anyone who ever wanted children. Tilda Swinton, the androgynous drama-mama favorite, spellbinds as the mother to the titular evil son that could very well be the devil incarnate: he shits his pants on purpose, takes the smaller-sibling razzing too far and, as the film drops

hints to the gut-punching climax, does something horrifically effed-up. This gritty stomach-turner is very real, and very good.

We know something's up early on, when Eva is approached by suburban mom on the street, where one slaps her dead in the face. The motive is unclear (though the over-symbolized color red – danger, danger! – is a pretty clear indication), but as the films progresses it's obvious who the culprit is: Kevin. In seesawing scenes, we learn that Eva hooked up with Franklin (John C. Reilly), now her husband, and went ahead with an unplanned pregnancy. When the baby's born, it's clear she's not fit to raise him. She pushes a stroller in front of a noisy construction site to drown out his wailing. Screaming problem fixed.

Kevin grows up, but he doesn't grow out of his spiteful, me-against-mom ways. And despite her efforts – a nice dinner, some mini-golf – there's no getting through to what he's become as

a teenager, essentially a sociopath. It's truly awful watching Kevin make Eva's life hell, and even though he's hardly empathetic, the question still looms: Nature or nurture? Maybe he's a result of Eva's poor parenting. Or maybe he was just, well, born that way.

Ezra Miller, who played a gay teen in 2010's "Every Day," is fully dedicated to Kevin's craziness; pure evil disguised as emo boi in tummy-exposing Ts. Everything he says is dripping with disdain and evil-spirited hatred – toward his mother, toward his family, toward the world. No wonder his real-life mom broke down at the premiere.

Swinton, per usual, wears the role like that spunky pompadour of hers – extremely well, and with satisfying ease. She slips right into Eva's lifeless stare as if it were her own, especially in the film's final scene shocker that rips out the floor from under your feet.

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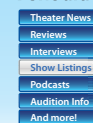
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Kimo Frederiksen (right) trains Marie Drever at his Detroit studio. Photo: Andrew Potter

How Detroit trainer changed his life – and how he hopes to change others

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

It was no big deal for Kimo Frederiksen to single-handedly devour an entire pizza in one sitting or, in just a 48-hour period, finish off a gallon of cookies 'n' cream. "I could eat it three times a day," he recalls, smiling fondly over his dessert infatuation. "In fact, I sometimes did!"

He was a lazy bum who only took the occasional walk, but it wasn't enough to keep the pounds down – even at just 2 years old, when, looking back, he was first overweight. For much of his adolescence, he fluctuated between 220 and 230 – peaking at 235 – until he was 15.

"Every time I visited a friend or my dad took us out, it was always fast food or pizza," recalls Frederiksen, who grew up in Brighton (Kimo is a Hawaiian name). "So, even though my mom

was health conscious" – she owned a health food club and cooked tofu and rice frequently – "it was every other environment I was in."

Image pressure that comes from being gay and "feeling lonely" initially motivated him to take control of his health, but Frederiksen's knowledge of weight loss was limited to family hand-me-downs – oh, ThighMaster – and Tae Bo videos. Not much was happening. It was time to take it more seriously.

"I remember my 21st birthday: I was a smoker," the 28-year-old says, "and on my 21st I quit drinking, I quit smoking and decided to get into shape. After getting more involved in taking care of myself and teaching myself how to eat healthy and work out, I decided to help get people in that mindset."

Frederiksen, who is certified through a

six-month accelerated program at the National Personal Trainer Institute in Rochester Hills, was training out of a home he rented in Howell before opening True Body Fitness, a work-out studio at Trumbull and Michigan Avenue in Detroit's Corktown Historic District, in November 2010.

It's a small loft-like space, and that's the point: Frederiksen wanted the at-home vibe to feel cozy – for instance, the music is left up to you, and it helps that he's always smiling – to take the pressure off his clientele. That's part of why he adopted a no-attitude motto for True Body, modeled after everything he abhorred about his pervious work at a corporate gym, which he likened to performing on a stage for a crowd of people: "They were all about sales and a lot of the trainers didn't have the passion, and I was sick of feeling like I had to pressure people," he

says. "When I left there, I wanted to make it not only more affordable for people but also create an environment where people felt more comfortable to open up and be themselves. In a big gym, you have people watching you, people cruising and a lot of attitude. It's just intimidating."

True Body is an inviting, low-key space for strength training, endurance drills and lunges without the looks. And, to really create that living-room atmosphere, there's even a dog: Batman, a Chihuahua who showed up six months ago at Frederiksen's studio, homeless and hungry. Frederiksen calls him the True Body mascot. And how about his exercise routine?

"Batman doesn't do pushups, but he can spring and jump... and fly."

See Kimo, page 34

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Brian Lane increases vision impairment awareness while living 30 days in the dark

30 days in dark for '52 for Mom' founder

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

ROYAL OAK – Brian Lane has been taking steps to increase awareness about vision impairments ever since injury caused his mother to lose much of her sight. Not only is he taking steps, he is running at the problem head on, with a nonprofit organization in his mother's honor where his goal is to run 52 marathons nationwide to raise money and awareness. So far he has run 15.

To further help the cause, Lane is in the midst of living 30 days in the dark. Wearing blindfolds and a special pair of blinding goggles, Lane is experiencing vision impairment at increasing levels over the course of the month of March.

"I want to finally get an idea of just how my mom sees the world," Lane said. "So for 30 days in March, I will be living life as a blind person. I will go through this in three stages to get an idea of the varying degrees of blindness. The first 10 days I will have a mask that takes away all my peripheral vision, leaving me with tunnel vision. The right eye of the mask is also covered with plastic wrap to blur the vision out of that eye. The second 10 days I will have a mask that gives me no central vision, and a lack of peripheral vision. This will give me an idea of what people with LHON and several other conditions see the world like.

"The final mask will leave me completely in the dark. It is rare that a person loses total vision, many total blind people still see even some light or shadows, but this will give me an understanding of what those without any vision experience."

Lane is wearing special masks from The Foundation Fighting Blindness that mimic the varying degrees of blindness.

He further explained, "So as to not damage my own eyes during this I will be using those two masks for the first two-three weeks and the final week I will be completely in the dark. There will be times during the day on days I work that I cannot be blindfolded because of my job, but I would say that for at least 20 hours a day I will be. I will do all of my daily activities blindfolded,

so showering, brushing my teeth, shaving, getting dressed, eating, going out, working out, etc."

Lane is the promotions and marketing manager for Bingo Pet Salon in Downtown Royal Oak. "I will be attending some meetings and working in the salon with the mask to see how it is to adjust to work as a blind person. The most difficult will be the week I'm completely blind," Lane said.

Early experiments with the blindfolds did not go perfectly. "I did walk into a wall, almost brushed my teeth with Neosporin, and made a PB&J with only a dab of peanut butter and half the bottle of jelly. It was the squeeze bottle and I guess I squeezed too hard," he said.

He's also had to remove the blindfold for some tasks at work, and to do his banking because security would not allow it. There have been more positive experiences than negative though. The Rock on Third, a restaurant in Downtown Royal Oak, donated a \$30 gift card so Lane and some friends could enjoy a night out, and on March 10, he ran the Corktown 5K Run wearing the blinding mask.

In addition to the mask, Lane is wearing a bright orange T-shirt that says "Ask Me Why?" to help spark conversation, and hopefully encourage people to donate. "Our goal is to raise \$25,000 in the month for research into vision loss," he said.

So far people have been empathetic, but there have been some problems. "A bouncer wanted to throw me out of a club. He said I was dangerous and that I could bump into people," Lane said. "Some people walk by and say 'I'm not going to ask,' and I say that's fine. I think a lot of people are afraid to ask too. I hear things a lot more now. I can hear people talk about me, saying things like 'that's the guy on TV, or if people are talking about whether to ask me or not. Overall people are supportive."

"One thing I really want people to recognize is that there are different types of blindness. Total darkness is rare, and there are a lot of ways a person's vision can be impaired and we may not realize it or understand. Like in my mom's case,



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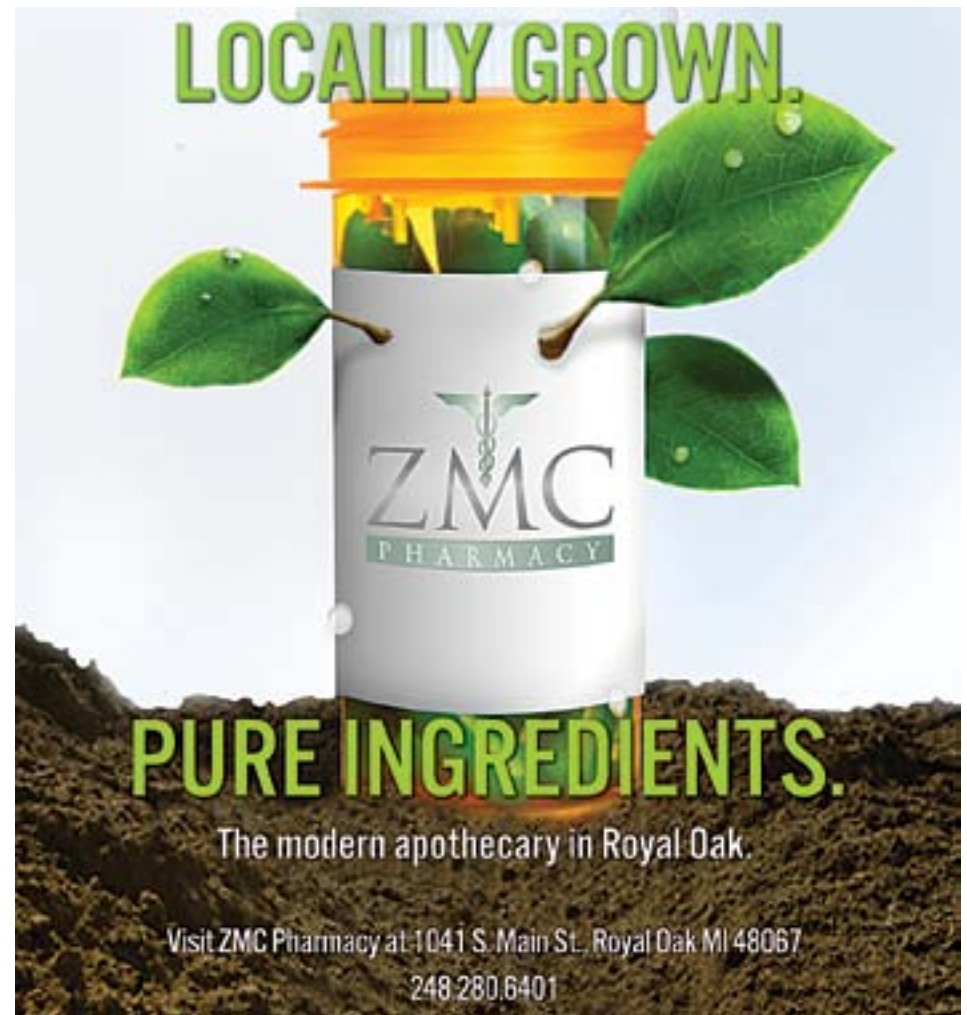
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Event promotes eating local

BY CAITLIN JOSEPH

ANN ARBOR – You’ve heard it all before: buying local supports the local economy, creates jobs, helps the environment and saves energy. But have you thought about the impact that buying and eating locally produced food can have on your health? Eating a locally focused diet has the potential to increase your physical, emotional, and social well-being.

If you are concentrating on eating food grown or produced within a few hundred miles of your home, it is less likely that you will be consuming high amounts of processed food, which often contain high amounts of refined carbohydrates, sugar, fat and artificial flavors and preservatives. You are more likely to consume higher amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables, which will be higher in minerals and micronutrients than their conventional counterparts from thousands of miles away, especially if they are also grown organically. While it’s true that there is no assurance that foods are healthier just because they are grown locally, all of these factors make it more likely that a diet intentionally made up of local foods will be better for you.

Michigan is the second most agriculturally diverse state, with California being first, and once you start trying to eat local, you may be surprised at the plethora of fruits and vegetables available in our food shed. With many local farms producing heirloom and rare varieties, and local markets bringing these as well as wild and foraged foods to their shelves, eating fresh local food doesn’t feel like a chore, but rather a joy!

“Foods grown by industrial farming methods are no healthier just because they

are grown by local farmers,” said John Ikerd, professor emeritus, University of Missouri, Columbia. “However, we have an opportunity to know how our foods are grown when we buy food from local farmers.”

It can be a lot to think about to



Joel Salatin, organic farmer and author of “Folks, This Ain’t Normal,” about the importance of eating good, natural foods, will appear at 8 p.m. April 24 at the Michigan Theater. The event is presented by People’s Food Co-op of Ann Arbor.

intentionally buy local, but Joel Salatin, a farmer and influential voice of the sustainable food movement today asks us, “Don’t you find it odd that people will put more work into choosing their mechanic or house contractor than they will into choosing

the person who grows their food?”

It’s true that we often eat without thinking, and mindful shopping can mean mindful and more healthful eating. Ikerd also said that, “(Due to) the nature of the industrial food system, the only way to get food we can trust is to buy food from farmers we trust. As such the only dependable source of healthy food is local food.”

Knowing the person who produced the product you are buying provides a sense of trust, of kinship and contribution, all of which are basic human needs that we each strive for in our relationships and interactions. When possible, purchasing products produced locally can improve not only your physical health, but your sense of connection to those around you, therefore improving your outlook and emotional state.

“This magical, marvelous food on our plate, this sustenance we absorb, has a story to tell. It has a journey. It leaves a footprint. It leaves a legacy. To eat with reckless abandon, without conscience, without knowledge; folks, this ain’t normal,” said Salatin. But with awareness of the impact sustainable local food systems can have on our health and well-being, a local food reality could become the new normal.

The People’s Food Co-op of Ann Arbor will present a talk by Joel Salatin entitled “Local Food to the Rescue” at 8 p.m. April 24 at the Michigan Theater. Get tickets at www.peoplesfood.coop to find out how Joel’s farm serves as a model for local food that’s healthy for people and the planet.

Caitlin Joseph is the education and outreach coordinator at People’s Food Co-op of Ann Arbor, a local market where Michigan produced foods and organic options are the norm – not the exception.

stumbled and hit her head; because of short-term memory loss, it took a while before doctors figured out what caused her to lose vision. She’s had very limited tunnel vision for over ten years. “She used to be a patient care attendant, but she can’t do that now. You can’t draw blood with this type of vision... It’s depressing to think that my mom’s world is this small.”

Lane is accepting donations from the people he talks to, and online. He’s also posting nightly reports that he types blindfolded, on the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/fiftytwo4mom, along with pictures of his activities.

There are a few ways people can donate. They can use the general donation page at www.fiftytwo4mom.org, they can

donate on the special 30 days in the dark page at www.30days.stayclassy.org, or they can mail donations using the contact info on the website.

FiftyTwo4Mom is a 501(c)3 organization set up to increase awareness of optic nerve disorders; raise money for the funding of research into causes, treatments, and cures; and to help fund programs to assist individuals who suffer from such disorders. All donations raised by FiftyTwo4Mom benefit the International Foundation for Optic Nerve Disease (IFOND) and the Foundation for Fighting Blindness (FFB) to fund research done in the United States and to fund programs to help people who suffer from Optic Nerve and other eye conditions.

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For more information about It’s Not Over contact Anthony Jenkins at ajenkins@hivaidresource.org or Leon Golson at lgolson@hivaidresource.org OR call and ask for them at 734-572-9355



► 52 for Mom

Continued from p. 28

she has tunnel vision. Most people assume it’s like looking down a tunnel with bright light at the end. But it’s really a very small tunnel and a limited amount of vision they have. Imagine having to turn your entire head to look around. You can’t drive like that, and moving at all takes a lot of work. People don’t get it. Just because somebody doesn’t have a cane doesn’t mean they don’t deserve patience or empathy.”

Lane’s mother worked as a nurse before her vision failed. She had slipped at work and broken her leg. While recovering, she

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Saved by the Bell

Affirmations' Health and Wellness manager talks community services

BY BENJAMIN JENKINS

Between LGBT-friendly health-care referrals, free HIV testing, the Transgender Health Fair and the upcoming Project Healthy Living Health Fair, there is no question: for Affirmations, health is top priority.

London Bell serves as the Health and Wellness Manager at Affirmations. She, a straight ally, is an attorney with a professional doctorate from DePaul University College of Law.

Raised by a lesbian, Bell grew up immersed in the inequalities that face the LGBT community every day. Nine years ago, London suffered from a rare form of pneumonia that became Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder. While seeking medical care, she was disrespected, misunderstood and marginalized.

For these reasons, Bell has become very passionate about her work to ensure that the LGBT community receives access to a higher standard of culturally sensitive and safe medical care.

Can you tell us about the new weekly/monthly programming at Affirmations such as Tai Chi and Coping with Disabilities?

While our Director of Programs Johnny Jenkins handles this, we're all very happy that these groups have come aboard as community partners. We are deepening our partnerships with many community organizations, so I'm hoping in the coming months we're able to offer additional programming as well.

Volunteers who have completed our Volunteer Training, Diversity and Inclusion Training and Facilitator Training lead many of the programs. Our volunteers are a very important part of our Affirmations family – vital to helping us achieve our mission and maintaining a safe space for all.

Which health-oriented service are you most proud of?

I am very proud of the Transgender Health Fair. I took the lead in organizing this event, in partnership with Transgender

Michigan. In 2010, we had an LGBT Health Fair and I noticed that there were not as many members of the transgender community there. I met with Rachel Crandall of Transgender Michigan about the disparity, and we had a dialogue about the specific needs of the transgender community. Organizing Transgender Health Fair was a great way to help meet these needs. I also personally wanted to be of greater service to the transgender community in general.

My goal was to create a safe space for our transgender community members, their families and friends to come out and learn about health issues that specifically impact the transgender community. I envision this health fair to continue growing every year. It's not only the first Transgender Health Fair in Michigan but also the first in the Midwest.

What kind of programming do you feel the community center still needs?

I would love to see more programming that is specifically focused on healthy eating, exercise and issues of obesity. I know that Affirmations is committed to the Health and Wellness Program that addresses the mind and body dynamic of health and we are looking into having future programs that address these issues.

What's a service that Affirmations offers that you feel not enough members of the community take advantage of?

I think that our tobacco education and prevention program could be utilized more. We are grant funded through the Michigan Department of Community Health (Tobacco Division) to help eliminate tobacco-related health disparities in the LGBT community. We have information in the building about tobacco and the impact on the LGBT



London Bell

community; we've held film viewings and discussion sessions as well as posted information on our website about the Michigan Tobacco Quitline. I am hoping that as we continue to reach the community we are able to educate more people about tobacco related health issues.

Can you tell us about the "Health and Wellness Fair" on May 12?

Beginning with Run 4 a Reason at 10 a.m., there will be a 5K/10K walk/run beginning at Affirmations. Get Out and Live is coordinating this and the proceeds raised will benefit Affirmations and Ruth Ellis Center.

From 1 to 5 p.m., Affirmations will serve as a site for Project Healthy Living. It will be a great opportunity for LGBT folks and allies to get low-cost screenings such as blood panel tests, iron test, Hepatitis B, Vitamin D, blood glucose and herpes. There will also be community organizations and businesses with display tables to connect with the community and provide Ferndale residents information about their programs and services. We'll also be partnering with AIDS Partnership Michigan to offer HIV/AIDS testing and ACCESS to offer additional STD testing.

For more information on Run 4 a Reason, go to GetOutAndLive.me or call 248-943-2411. For more information on Project Healthy Living, visit ProjectHealthyLiving.web.officelive.com.



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True Body's Fitness Challenge

To meet weight-loss goals, four local business owners – Canine to Five owner Liz Blondy; Hugh owner and Supergaydetroit blogger Joe Posch; City Living Detroit owner Austin Black; and Regina Fortushniak, development officer at Detroit Public Schools Foundation – will compete in True Body Fitness' second fitness challenge.

"I decided to compete because my boyfriend has been training with Kimo for about nine months, and it was getting embarrassing for me to be with him," Posch says. "Also, I gained some weight a couple years ago and was having a hard time losing it, and I didn't want to end up in a situation where I just settled into middle-aged beardom."

The competition launches today, March 15, and runs for 12

weeks, during which time the foursome will earn points for working out, blogging nutritional factoids and completing homework assignments (like walking across Belle Isle). "The whole point of that," says Kimo Frederiksen, owner of True Body Fitness, "is to make them more active and more health-conscious rather than focusing on the weight coming off."

Says Posch: "I really like what Kimo is working toward downtown, building a community that makes better health a consideration. I wanted to do whatever I could to support that."

Here's where the rest of the community comes in: Take a photo of yourself exercising and tag True Body Fitness on Facebook. Also, earn points by reposting articles and summarizing, tagging TBF and, of course, working out at the studio. Points will be tracked, and the community member who scores the most will get six months unlimited classes at the studio.



Photo: Andrew Potter

► Kimo

Continued from p. 27

More than fitness

Detroit was the first place Frederiksen wanted to go with his out-of-home studio, but he didn't have the funds or resources – no one to help him, shabby workout equipment – necessary for opening up his own business. The landlord, however, knew he was onto something and cut him a deal.

"I was shocked to even get that space," says Frederiksen, who had a friend assist him with a painting of a cityscape mural and then, eight months later, had all of his machines upgraded. "It's taken a lot of steps to get to where it is right now."

He's obviously proud when he speaks about how far the business has come, but that's not all he feels good about: \$1 from each person who attends the group fitness classes, held in an adjoining room where he trains clients, is donated to local charities (close to \$450 went to the Ruth Ellis Center recently).

"When I moved here, I wanted to be part of more of a community, so I felt really foolish saying that I wanted to be part of a community and then not doing anything for it," he says. "And I want people to come here" – those who do are usually gay or female – "and feel like they're contributing to more than just a small business."

When Frederiksen first opened True Body Fitness in Corktown, the community reacted with open arms and helping hands – something he hadn't necessarily experienced in Howell. "Here, everyone recognizes that for the city to prosper, we all have to succeed. Not just one business," he says. "All of us."

That need to succeed extends to his mission statement at the studio, where it's understood that success is measured individually. "My big thing is just respect your body and that everyone's different," he says. "Something that might work for me might not work for you, and that's why it's good to work with a professional who's willing to analyze your body, comfort level and goals. My philosophy is: Look at every individual and listen to what they need and what works for them."

Part of it too, he says, is in the mind. "I've realized, having gone through weight loss, that no matter how much you lose or work out, the way you visualize yourself depends on you. You could lose all your weight, but if you see yourself as an overweight, lazy asshole, that's going to be how you picture yourself."

"Here, I try to encourage a very open environment all about building the ego. If people picture themselves in a higher light, then their body will follow."

Hey, if Batman can...

For more information on True Body Fitness, visit www.truebodydetroit.com.

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Ask Lambda Legal

The Affordable Care Act and HIV

BY SCOTT SCHOETTES

Q. I recently tested positive for HIV, and a friend told me that I might have a hard time keeping health insurance if I changed jobs. What kind of insurance is available for me?

A. In 2012, a positive HIV test result is the beginning of a new health regimen – from regular check-ups, to better nutrition, to daily medications – and these new health habits often become a substantial financial adjustment. For many people living with HIV, obtaining quality, affordable health care is of great concern.

In March of 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly referred to as the ACA, was signed into law. The law reforms aspects of the private health insurance industry and expands access to health insurance for millions of Americans. The ACA's interconnected reforms include expanded Medicaid coverage, elimination of pre-existing condition exclusions, and a minimum coverage requirement (or "individual mandate"). These reforms are essential to expanding care and prevention strategies in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court likely will decide the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act. Lambda Legal united national HIV advocates in support of the ACA when we filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case *Dept of HHS V. Florida*. (Read about our brief here: lambdalegal.org/in-court/cases/dept-of-hhs-v-florida)

When the ACA was enacted, only 17 percent of Americans with HIV had private health insurance. In the individual insurance market, people living with HIV are generally considered "uninsurable" and are routinely rejected when they apply for coverage because they have a pre-existing condition. Even when these individuals find an insurance company to cover them, most states have no rating limits, allowing insurers to charge prohibitively expensive premiums.

Currently, Medicaid provides health insurance programs for the very poor and people with disabilities, but in most states, a disability determination based on HIV requires an AIDS diagnosis. This has created a catch-22: only once a person's HIV progresses to AIDS does s/he become eligible for the medications that would have prevented AIDS from developing. While the federal government provides funding for some HIV-related services through the Ryan White program, this overburdened system is increasingly unable to provide necessary care to people living with HIV.

The ACA is designed to address this problem by eliminating pre-existing condition exclusions and requiring that everyone acquire health insurance. We've already seen the benefits of a minimum coverage requirement for people living with HIV. In 2006, Massachusetts enacted health care reform legislation similar to the ACA, and between 2005 and 2008, Massachusetts had a 37 percent decrease in HIV infections while the nation had an 8 percent increase.

All of us care about and need affordable health care – especially those who have pre-existing conditions and often fall through the cracks of our current broken system – like people with HIV. It is for that reason all eyes are on the nation's high court as it reviews this historic piece of legislation this term.

Scott Schoettes is the HIV Project Director for Lambda Legal. If you are living with HIV, and are looking for resources in your state, call Lambda Legal's Help Desk at 1-866-542-8336, or visit <http://lambdalegal.org/help>.

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Hear Me Out

Estelle returns with decent 'All of Me' Plus: The Ting Tings' identity crisis



BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Estelle, 'All of Me'

When West London soul sista Estelle blew up over the success of "American Boy," she seemed destined for the big time. But then she slipped off our radar, letting four years pass before dropping her third album, "All of Me," a confident-but-underwhelming follow-up that gets a lift from swaggering back-to-back grooves – "The Life," a celebratory party anthem, and cameo-stuffed "International (Serious)" with Chris Brown – before backing down on her promise: "Ain't slowing down, I only know speed." Not for long, though, as she decelerates into mid-tempo that mellow out the get-this-party-started vibe. Of them, "Break My Heart" exposes Rick Ross' romantic soft side (who knew?), while "Thank You" and "Wonderful Life" are charmingly optimistic, even if none of them achieve the greatness of the artists she's going for (Lauryn Hill and Amy Winehouse, both of their landmark albums referenced). And those tedious group-therapy dialogues about relationships, acceptance and the ethics of cheating? They're old-trick and only superfluous to the music, which does just fine covering all the bases of love's ups and downs, whether Estelle's loving herself – and rapping about it – on "Speak Ya Mind" or loving up on someone else on the sexy '80s R&B flashback "Cold Crush." Two things really shine here: "Back to Love," a bittersweet song set to a disco shimmer, and a collaboration with Janelle Monae on the sassy girl-group update "Do My Thing." On "All of Me," those things are almost worth the long wait. *Grade: B-*



The Ting Tings, 'Sounds from Nowheresville'

At least the scrappy pop-incarnation known as The Ting Tings are in on the joke: "Sounds from Nowheresville" is exactly that. Songs without a point and the hookability of breakout single "That's Not My Name" – and ones that go, well, nowhere: This is a major come-down from the buzz they created with 2008's listenable-if-novelty romp "We Started Nothing." They started something, but the English alt-rock duo of Katie White and Jules de Martino, in an act of stubborn defiance, pretend none of that ever happened, going for dirty '90s grunge-pop – and doing it with amateurish aptitude – rather than tapping into the retro awesomeness of their claim to fame. And this was no accident: They scrapped the original version of this album because it sounded too radio. "This could have been perfection, but we had a little sense," sings White on "Give it Back." "So we started all again." So, despite label's thumbs up, they rebelled with... this? Not much of this frustratingly bad offering sounds mainstream – it's too demo-like, garage-band sounding for that – and, also, not much of it's any good. Their sound salad starts with the decent lead-in "Silence," part Portishead, before heading into nine other songs, most of them half-baked, that last a mere 33 minutes. Thank god. "Sounds from Nowheresville" is a cobbled mess of screaming rants ("Guggenheim"), awful '80s knock-offs ("One by One") and Avril Lavigne soft-rockers ("Help") – a persistent WTF dangling over every one of these poorly mastered and performed songs. Oh, what could've been. *Grade: D*

Also Out



Andrew Bird, 'Break It Yourself'

Get past that awful indie Instagram cover art and the folkster's not nearly as bad as

first impressions let on. The follow-up to his last proper album, 2009's "Noble Beast," the singer-songwriter veteran's 12th full-length is stretched in multiple directions: traditional folk (easy-sounding "Lazy Projector"), chamber pop and tango-tinged spirituality. And there is, of course, the whistling. Several tracks feature Bird's requisite dog call, and they're also often beautifully strewn with strings, marimbas and, on the pretty coda, wind chimes. But halfway through, right as the brief interlude "Behind the Barn" creeps in on violin, the laid-back vibe becomes – pretty as it is – background music that can't quite push through to the end.



K'naan, 'More Beautiful than Silence'

Few rappers would go as tender-hearted with an album title as this Somali-born one does, but that's part of what sets K'naan off from other fathers of flow: he's hip-hop. "Better" is a decent chin-up mantra for the ages, effectively working in a Coldplay sample; "Is Anybody Out There?" could easily fit the It Gets Better campaign, and no wonder it's the first single from this five-song EP – it's that good. Nelly Furtado lays down empathic vocals for the call-out chorus, punctuating sensitive stories of struggle about an insecure girl and a drug-addicted boy who are "crying for your love tonight." More beautiful than silence? Sure. But we prefer he speak up.

Chris Azzopardi is the editor of Q Syndicate, the international LGBT wire service. Reach him via his website at www.chris-azzopardi.com.

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Coming up at Wharton Center

Sharon Isbin performs March 18

Acclaimed for her extraordinary lyricism, technique and versatility, multiple Grammy Award-winner Sharon Isbin has been hailed as “the pre-eminent guitarist of our time.” On Sunday, March 18, Isbin arrives at Wharton Center’s Pasant Theatre for a night of guitar magic.

Sharon Isbin has been celebrated for expanding the guitar repertoire with some of the finest new works of the century. She has commissioned and premiered more concerti than any other guitarist, as well as numerous solo and chamber works. Her eight best-selling titles for EMI/Virgin Classics include J.S. Bach Complete Lute Suites, and concerti by Joaquin Rodrigo which the composer praised as “magnificent.”

Born in Minneapolis, Isbin began her guitar studies at age 9 in Italy. She has toured Europe annually since she was 17, along with

many other parts of the world that include New Zealand, South America and Israel. Isbin received a B.A. cum laude from Yale University and a Master of Music from the Yale School of Music. She is the author of the “Classical Guitar Answer Book,” and is director of guitar departments at the Aspen Music Festival and The Julliard School (which she created in 1989 becoming the first and only guitar instructor in the institution’s 100-year history).

Sharon Isbin’s concert is part of the Farm Bureau Insurance Classics at Wharton Center Series. Tickets are \$35 and are available online at whartoncenter.com, the Auto Owner’s Box Office or by calling 1-800-WHARTON.



‘Wicked’ returns, tickets on sale April 27

After breaking box-office records and selling out in record time in 2007 and 2008, “Wicked,” Broadway’s biggest blockbuster, will return to the Cobb Great Hall June 27 through July 8 as part of the MSU Federal Credit Union Broadway at Wharton Center Season.

With music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz (“Godspell,” “Pippin,” Academy Award-winner for “Pocahontas” and “The Prince of Egypt”) and book by Winnie

Holzman (“My So Called Life,” “Once And Again” and “thirtysomething”), “Wicked, the untold story of the witches of Oz,” is directed by two-time Tony-Award winner Joe Mantello (“Take Me Out,” “Love! Valour! Compassion!,” “The Vagina Monologues”) and features musical staging by Tony-Award winner Wayne Cilento (“Aida,” “The Who’s Tommy,” “How To Succeed...”).

Based on the best-selling 1995 novel by Gregory Maguire, “Wicked,” winner of 35 major awards, including a Grammy and three Tony Awards, is the untold story of the witches of Oz. It is produced by Marc Platt, Universal Pictures, The Araca Group, Jon B. Platt and David Stone.

“We get asked all the time, ‘When is ‘Wicked’ returning?’” I’m pleased to say it’s one of our most requested shows to return,” said Wharton Center Executive Director Mike Brand. “In my opinion, it’s because the show is absolutely stellar and top-notch quality theater. The producers of ‘Wicked’ should be complimented for sending out such a high-quality show.”

Tickets for the return engagement, from \$38, go on sale at 10 a.m. Friday, April 27 and will be available online at whartoncenter.com, the Auto-Owners Ticket Office, or by calling 1-800-WHARTON (1-800-942-7866). Group orders of 15 or more may be placed by calling 1-800-WHARTON.

For more information on these and other events at Wharton Center, visit www.whartoncenter.com.

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Check out this Lansing advertiser on page 11

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A dog-gone good time at Go Comedy!

BY DONALD V. CALAMIA

Back when The Second City was the 800-pound gorilla in Detroit's improv community, many of the area's up-and-coming improvisers studied their craft at its renowned training center. As part of their education, the students would create and perform an original show that was usually presented in front of friends and invited guests. The end result, of course, reflected the experience and talent levels of the participants. In other words, some shows were better than others.

With the demise of The Second City Detroit several years back, Go Comedy! Improv Theater has become Metro Detroit's five-night-a-week venue for improv. But also like its predecessor, the Ferndale hotspot also offers Go U! The Improv Academy, an ever-expanding training center for those wishing to study this popular form of entertainment. And what better way is there to test the mettle of your students than by giving them a slot on the Thursday night schedule and watching them sink or swim?

Such a concept is a great way to give young performers real-life, on-stage experience in front of a public (and paying) audience that wants only to be entertained. So for the very first time, the Advanced 5 class at Go U! was tasked with creating its

REVIEW Apocalypse Pending

Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. Every Thursday at 9 p.m. through March 29. \$5. 248-327-0575.
www.gocomedy.net

own original sketch comedy, and the result, "Apocalypse Pending," premiered March 8 in the 9 p.m. slot.

Given the show's pedigree – I was unfamiliar with everyone involved in the production except for its director, Jen Hansen – I attended with little or no expectations. After all, these were rookies, right? Just how good could this show really be?

Pretty damn good, actually!

The show's first three blackouts are typical sketch comedy fare and mask the sharp writing that's the hallmark of this production. (I knew the punch line of the second from almost the very beginning; it's a head-shaking groaner!)

But the nine or so sketches that follow – and the handful of additional blackouts – are well conceived and written, so much so that I left the performance surprised that it was created by novices rather than well-honed professionals.



"Apocalypse Pending" is the 9 p.m. comedy every Thursday through March 29 at Go Comedy! Improv Theater in Ferndale. Photo: Go Comedy!

Among the most unique and delightful is a meeting of a doggy support group that sheds light on what our pets really think about us. Another is a progressive mom who wouldn't mind her teenage daughter smoking pot and having sex – but eating beef jerky? That calls for drastic action!

America's political correctness is further skewered when PBS asks Cookie Monster to help fight child obesity. And a farmer milking his cow has a chat about girls with his teenage son. "You can learn a lot from a cow," the dad says. What that is, though, you'll have to find out for yourself.

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

'Bernhardt' on tour: What she did for love

BY JOHN QUINN

Once again I am struck by the flexibility of the English language. It's a given that "character" is a fundamental concept in theater. It's also no secret that theater is full of "characters." Actor and playwright Carol Dunitz, Ph.D., introduces us to a one-of-a-kind character in "Bernhardt on Broadway," her one-woman musical inspired by fin de siecle actress and bon vivant Sarah Bernhardt. In the grand tradition of touring theater, Dunitz is performing this spring in venues throughout southeast Michigan.

"Bernhardt on Broadway" is a tough sell. Although a legendary icon of the theater, "The Divine Sarah" is not known to the average American. Yet over a century before performers like Madonna and Lady Gaga, Bernhardt was breaking new ground in self-promotion – as well as breaking the rules of "polite" society.

An actor's art is ephemeral. Unlike authors and poets like Mark Twain and Emily Dickenson, both subjects of solo rebirths on stage, there are only a couple of silent film appearances to document Bernhardt's work. We must rely on her biography to know the actress, a difficult prospect considering how carefully crafted her public persona was. Dunitz's careful, loving research helps winnow fact from fiction.

It's Paris, it's the 1890s, and we've been invited to a "salon" at the residence of

REVIEW Bernhardt on Broadway

Performed at multiple venues throughout Southeast Michigan and elsewhere through June. For group sales call 734-864-3244.
www.BrownPaperTickets.com

Sarah Bernhardt, arguably the most famous woman in the world. In anecdote and song, she recounts her rise from humble beginnings to international success. She is driven by an addiction stronger than opium – the need for attention. Adopting as her motto, "quand meme" ("against all odds," she succeeds in her goal to become the greatest actress in the world. But if that's not enough to hold public attention, then one can live a lifestyle that keeps one in the headlines. Bernhardt seems to have been an early practitioner of the marketing principle, "the medium is the message." Thus she took numerous lovers but only one husband. She carefully crafted out rumors to be later denied – "Mme. Bernhardt does NOT play croquet with human skulls!" She was the first celebrity to make product endorsements – make-up and perfume and soaps and Vaseline and more. But above all, she lived an extravagant life that cost her several fortunes. She was quite a character, indeed.

"Bernhardt on Broadway" is an interesting work, but there are some puzzles about it. We can accept the convention in



Creator and star Carol Dunitz in "Bernhardt on Broadway."

musical theater that, when the emotions are too powerful to act out, we break into song; when singing isn't enough, we dance. Any of you who have attended a cast party know thespians will break into song at the drop of a straw hat. One would have expected Mme. Bernhardt, though, might be moved to recite a line or two of her famous roles – even though she only performed in French. While the engaging score and lyrics illustrate the book, they don't necessarily rise from the emotional content of the scene.

Mark Twain categorized actresses as "bad, fair, good, great – and then there is Sarah Bernhardt." Her achievements are undeniable. After two hours in the presence of the Divine One we know much "about" Bernhardt but we don't "know" Sarah. So ingenious was her character study she remains a riddle, wrapped in a mystery.

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Editor's Picks

Outings

Perceptions will hold its next general meeting with special guest Jay Kaplan at The Alderton in Saginaw. Kaplan serves as staff attorney for the ACLU of Michigan's LGBT Project. He will be discussing the current state of LGBT rights in Michigan and opportunities to become involved.

Perceptions is a non-profit community organization offering educational, social and networking opportunities to the LGBT community in the Tri-Cities (Midland, Bay City and Saginaw) and surrounding areas.

Perceptions' general meeting is 7 p.m. March 15 at The Alderton, 301 Cass St., in Saginaw. All are invited to attend. Contact info@perceptionsSV.org for more information. For more Tri-Cities area events and community news, check out the PrideSource.com Cool City pages.

Music & More



Cellists Stefan Koch and David Peshlakai provide an opportunity for audiences to hear a collection of rare cello music, including the U.S. premiere of two works by 20th-century Austrian composer Richard Stohr, at the Kerrytown Concert House on March 21.

Koch received his musical training at Temple University in Philadelphia and has performed with the Kalamazoo, West Michigan, Toledo, Green Bay, and Grand Rapids symphonies. Today, he is a member of the Adrian and Lansing Symphony. Peshlakai has received his Master of Music

from University of Michigan and is currently Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra's Principal Cello Chair. Accompanying the two on piano is Ying-jhu Emily Lai, a talented pianist with a Master of Music from Tung-hai University in Taiwan.

Tickets for the performance are \$10-25. The show begins at 8 p.m. March 21 at the Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., in Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-769-2999 or go to KerrytownConcertHouse.com

Theater

Jeff Daniels has a knack for telling great stories about Michigan – and St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild has a knack for presenting top-notch productions of his plays. This time, the Soady Deer Camp returns to the St. Dunstan's stage with "Escanaba in Love."

This hilarious comedy is the prequel to "Escanaba in Da Moonlight," which St. Dunstan's produced in 2010. The play takes place during World War II where we are introduced to 18-year-old Albert Soady Jr. who is celebrating his final hunting season before joining the U.S. Army when he falls head-over-heels for the legendary Big Betty Balou. The question is, does she have what it takes to become part of Escanaba's "royal" family?

Performances are 8 p.m. March 16-17, 23-24, 30-31 and 2 p.m. March 25. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$18 each for students and seniors. Call 1-888-71-TICKETS.

St. Dunstan's is located at 400 Lone Pine Road in Bloomfield Hills.



OUTINGS

Thursday, March 15

Legal Referral Services 4 p.m. Weekly advocacy program and referral services provided by AJ Skillman. AJ Skillman P.C., 290 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

State of LGBT Rights by Jay Kaplan 7 p.m. Jay Kaplan, attorney with the ACLU of Michigan's LGBT Project, will discuss the State of LGBT Rights, both nationally and in the State of Michigan. Perceptions, 301 Cass St., Saginaw. 989-891-1429. info@perceptionsSV.org PerceptionsSV.org

Men's Film Group 7 p.m. Social group to view and discuss films of interest to men. Film: Lan Yu, 2001. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Friday, March 16

Shabbat Potluck Dinner 6:45 p.m. JGN is having a GLBT only Shabbat Potluck Dinner. Please bring a friend and a Dairy/Parve dish to pass. Hosted by JGN president, Michael Phillips. Jewish Gay Network, RSVP to receive address, Southfield. 248-432-5661. Jgnmi.org

Bisexual Peer Group 7 p.m. Meets monthly on the third Friday of each month. Discuss relating to bisexuality, pansexuality, and/or omnisexuality. Allies are encouraged and welcomed to attend. Meeting usually followed by dinner at Aut/ Bar, two doors down. Bisexual Peer Group, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-678-2478. Biprideannarbor@gmail.com

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Flight Plan; Still reeling from her husband's unexpected death, Kyle Pratt is on a plane heading from Berlin to New York when her daughter vanishes. But the captain and the air marshal begin to doubt that the child was ever on board. 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, March 17

The Detroit Pistoffs vs. The Devils Night Dames 2 p.m. Tickets: \$15, children attend free with adult (limited to two children per adult). Detroit Derby Girls, 500 Temple St., Detroit. 313-832-7100. Events@detroitderbygirls.com Brownpapertickets.com/event/221142

Sunday, March 18

Detroit's Halfway to Michfest Party 3 a.m. Lena DJs and legendary Mimi Gonzalez performs at this Womyn only event. \$5 covers. 18+ welcome. DJ Lena, 15301 W. Warren Ave., Dearborn. 313-282-4396. Djsirlena@gmail.com lenathedj.com/halfwaytomichfest

Anti-Bullying Initiative Building Community Coalitions 2 p.m. Guest Speaker: Charissa Urbano, longtime PFLAG supporter and Delta biology professor, will discuss the Anti-Bullying Initiative Building Community Coalitions. PFLAG Tri-Cities, 2525 Hemmeter at Weiss, Saginaw. 989-941-1458. Pflag@pflag-mbs.org Pflag-mbs.org

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

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

Pflaglenawee@gmail.com sites.google.com/site/pflaglenawee

Conversation Station 5 p.m. Meets every Sunday for good discussions and good food. For any LGBTIQ or ally over 25 yrs. old. This week's topic: What makes you angry? Get Out And Live! 714 S. Washington St., Royal Oak. 248-981-4227. MarciWilliams@yahoo.com GetOutAndLive.me

Monday, March 19

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous 7 p.m. A weekly anonymous 12-step group for those who are facing sexually compulsive behaviors. Affirmations, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. GoAffirmations.org

Tuesday, March 20

PFLAG Family Reunion Meeting 6:30 p.m. Third Tuesday of every month at the Fellowship Chapel. All LGBTQA and parents of LGBTQA invited to attend and share support. PFLAG Family Reunion, 7707 W. Outer Dr., Detroit. 313-286-8572.

A2 TNG (Next Generation of Kinkster)

7:45 p.m. A kink and fetish oriented group for younger kinksters. The group focuses on support, the sharing of information in the form of demonstrations or discussion groups and socializing. Open to all. A2 TNG, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-678-2478. Jimtyocenter.org

Wednesday, March 21

Wild Wednesday 5 p.m. A supportive LGBT youth group that meets every Wednesday. All youth are welcome. Dedicated to Make a Change, L3C, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-657-1792. Gailwolkoff@gmail.com Dedicatedtomakeachange.com

Chen Style Tai Chi (QiDong) 6 p.m. Provided by Shaolin Master Mesan Williams through April. Shaolin Master Mesan Williams, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Network Men's Group 7 p.m. Single or partnered are invited to join the group. Weekly discussion topics and issues. The Network, 345 Atlas Ave., Grand Rapids. 616-458-3511. Grlglt.org

Second Euchre Tournament & Red Solo Cup Party 7 p.m. Join Kalamazoo Pride for our second Euchre Tournament & Red Solo Cup Party. Euchre: \$10, Red Solo Cup: \$5. Proceeds from this event will be used to support Kalamazoo Pride. Kalamazoo Pride, 411 N Westnedge Ave., Kalamazoo. Kglrc.org

Thursday, March 22

Men's Film Group 7 p.m. Social group to view and discuss films of interest to men. Film: The Dying Gaul, 2005. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Friday, March 23

LGBT AA/AI-Anon Roundup 5 p.m. Three-day conference for LGBT people recovering from substance abuse issues. Open speaker meetings, workshops, banquets and dance. \$35 conference only, \$84 includes meals. Together We Can, 200 W. Big Beaver, Troy. Twc@twcdetroit.com twcdetroit.com

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Fire. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, March 24

Transgender Faith Summit 1 p.m. A summit of individuals of all faiths to discuss what it means to be a transgender friendly faith congregation. RSVP at Facebook.com/events/135850776536383 Transgender Education Collaboration, 4010 Kalamazoo Ave. Southeast, Grand Rapids. Transgendercollab@gmail.com trans-edu.com

Jackson High's Peace Prom 2012-Black and White Ball 8 p.m. School/state ID required, open to ages 14-20. This year's theme is a black and white

ball and attire is semi-formal. Admission: \$5. Jackson High School's Gay-Straight Alliance, 801 S. Mechanic St., Jackson. Cylorfagan@live.com facebook.com/events/219167688168874

Sunday, March 25

Agape Spirit Life Ministry Service 1 p.m. Potluck style event. Every second and fourth Sunday. Agape Spirit Life Ministries, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Brunch and the Museum of Contemporary Art 1 p.m. Join the LGBT 20 Somethings for a day in Detroit. Beginning with brunch at Good Gets Go To Paris Crepes, then an afternoon at the Museum of Contemporary Art. RSVP via email. Ages 18-33. Metro Detroit LGBT 20 Somethings, 15 E. Kirby, Detroit. Det20somethings@gmail.com The20somethings.org

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

Michigan State University College of Music "Russian Gems, Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich" Trio, Op. 9 by Rachmaninoff and Piano Quintet by Shostakovich, features violinists Dmitri Berlinsky and I-Fu Wang. Tickets: \$10. Music Building, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 7:30 p.m. March 19. 517-353-9958. Music.msu.edu

Michigan State University College of Music "Bach Around the Clock" Twelve-hour marathon of Bach music beginning at noon with a featured concert at 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$10. Music Building, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 12 p.m. March 21. 517-353-9958. Music.msu.edu

Kerrytown Concert House Nancy Steltmann and Rob Conway's performance of Boccherini's Sonata in A major, Tchaikovsky's Pezzo Capriccioso and Shostakovich's Sonata in D minor. Tickets: \$10-25 general, \$5 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. 4th Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 28. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

CONCERTS

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Jarvi Returns" Emeritus Neeme Jarvi returns to lead a newly adapted suite from Wagner's exhilarating "Die Meistersinger" and the acclaimed Helene Grimaud joins him for Brahms' majestic Piano Concerto No. 1. Tickets: \$15. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 29-April 1. 313-576-5111. Dso.org

Kerrytown Concert House Stefan Koch and David Peshlakai. Tickets: \$10-25 general, \$5 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. 4th Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 21. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Chamber Series 3: Three's Not a Crowd!" Schubert's Piano Trio #1 in B-flat Major and Brahms' Clarinet Trio, Op. 114. Molly Grove Chapel, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing. 3 p.m. March 18. Lansingsymphony.org

The Ark Jeremy Kittel Band Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 15. 734-761-1818. Theark.org

The Ark Sunny War Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 16.

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

734-761-1818. Theark.org

The Ark Peppino D'Agostino Tickets: \$17.50 The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 20. 734-761-1818. Theark.org

THEATER

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

Always ... Patsy Cline \$16-22. Center Stage Theatre at Midland Center for the Arts, 1801 W. St. Andrews Road, Midland. Through March 18. 989-631-5930. www.mcfta.org

An Evening of Gratuitous Sex and Violence \$10. Flint City Theatre at the Anteroom of the Good Beans Cafe, 328 N. Grand Traverse St., Flint. March 22-31. 810-237-4663.

Lucky Stiff \$19. Village Players, 34660 Woodward Ave., Birmingham. Through March 25. 248-644-2075. www.birminghamvillageplayers.com

The Good Doctor \$12. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at A2CT's Studio Theater, 322 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor. March 16-25. 734-971-2228. www.a2ct.org

The Last Five Years \$14. Stagecrafters at Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Through March 18. 248-541-6430. www.Stagecrafters.org

PROFESSIONAL

An Evening with Scott Coulter \$35. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. March 16-18. 269-343-2727. www.FarmersAlleyTheatre.com

At Home at the Zoo \$18. Detroit Ensemble Theatre at Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. 9 Mile Rd., Ferndale. March 16-April 1. 248-270-8440. www.detroitensembletheatre.org

Bidding You A Fond I Do \$25-\$35 premium. Michigan Firehouse Museum, 110 W. Cross St., Ypsilanti. March 24. 734-547-0663. www.Michiganfirehousemuseum.org

Burying the Bones \$17-20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through March 18. 313-868-1347. www.detroitreptheatre.com

Fiddler on the Roof \$19-\$59. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. March 17. 810-237-7333. www.thewhiting.com

Frank Langella's Cyrano \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through March 20. 313-577-2972. www.hilberry.com

Mythbusters: Behind the Myths Tour \$25-55. Wharton Center, 1 Wharton Center Dr., East Lansing. 3 p.m. March 17. 517-432-2000. www.whartoncenter.com

Over the River and Through the Woods \$16. Broadway Onstage, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Through March 24. 586-771-6333. www.broadwayonstage.com

Riverdance \$30-55. Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing. March 23-24. 517-432-2000. www.whartoncenter.com

Sandy Hackett's Rat Pack Show \$42-52. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. March 17-March 17. 586-286-2222. www.MacombCenter.com

Spreading It Around Previews March 14-16 (\$24-\$30). \$24-39. Meadow Brook Theatre, 207 Wilson Hall, Rochester. March 14-April 8. 248-377-3300. www.mbttheatre.com

Summer and Smoke \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through April 21. 313-577-2972. www.hilberry.com

The Andersen Project \$24. University Musical Society at Power Center for the Performing Arts, 121 N. Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. March 15-17. 734-764-2538. www.ums.org

The Troublemakers \$8. The Elizabeth Theater, 2040 Park Ave., Detroit. March 20-22. 313-444-2294. www.parkbardetroit.com

Treasure Trove \$15-\$65. The Palace of Auburn Hills, 6 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills. March 14-18. 800-745-3000. www.palacenet.com

ART 'N' AROUND

Ann Arbor Art Center "Inherent State" Exhibit presents the work of fiber artists and their sisters in creative writing. Ann Arbor Art Center, 117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 10-March 18. 734-994-8004. Annarborartcenter.org

Ariana Gallery "Black History Month: African Art" Contemporary and traditional work by artists and artisans who are recognized locally and internationally will be on display. Ariana Gallery, 119 S. Main St., Royal Oak. Feb. 17-March 17. 248-546-8810. ArianaGallery.com

Cranbrook Art Museum "The 2012 Degree Exhibition of Cranbrook Academy of Art" One of the largest and most exciting exhibitions of art and design in the country. Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. March 21-April 13. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookartmuseum.org

Kerrytown Concert House "Sara Innes, Paintings and Takeshi Takahara, Printmaker" Exhibit of Sarah Innes and Takeshi Takahara's work. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Feb. 28-March 30. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Lawrence Street Gallery "No Going Back" An exhibit of the new figurative drawings of Linda Logan of Huntington Woods. In this exhibit, Logan challenges

herself to create personalities using a medium, which cannot be erased; "No going back, no doing over." Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave. Suite A, Ferndale. Feb. 29-March 30. 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 "Pop-Up Restaurant: Komodo Kitchen" This very special event will provide an Indonesian-inspired cultural and gastronomic experience. Limited seating, reservations required: komodokitchen.com. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 6 p.m. March 16. 313-832-6622. Mocadoetroit.org

Riverside Arts Center "The Life and Time of the Pine" Paintings and drawings for this show started with a story about the life and times of a pine. Riverside Arts Center, 76 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti. March 1-March 31. 734-483-7345. Riversidearts.org

The Detroit Institute of Arts "Detroit Revealed: Photographs 2000-2010" Contemporary artists present photographs and video inspired by Detroit, its people, diverse culture, and industries in work created from 2000-2010. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward, Detroit. Oct. 16-April 29. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Fluxus and the Essential Questions of Life" Fluxus emerged in the early 1960s as a loose, international network of artists, composers, and designers led by Lithuanian-born American artist George Maciunas. University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 25-May 20. 734-764-0395. Umma.umich.edu

Yourist Studio Gallery "Serving it Up Just Desserts!" A juried exhibition of ceramic dessert ware by Michigan potters, including a special show of vintage-style aprons. Admission: free. Yourist Studio Gallery, 1133 Broadway St., Ann Arbor. March 1-April 8. 734-665-5696. Youristpottery.com

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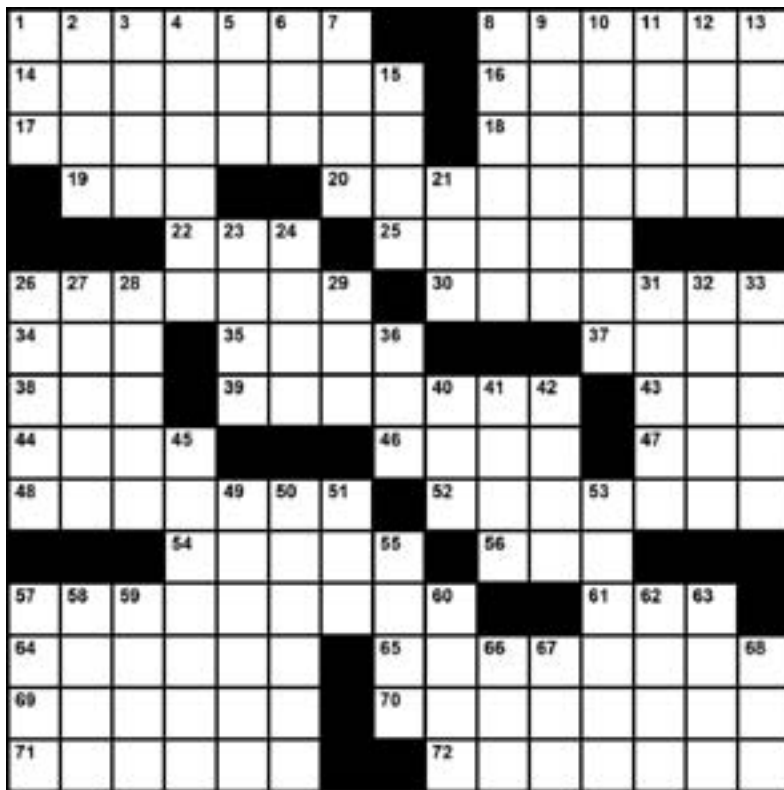


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An Old Pro Among the Beginners



Across

- 1 Start of what 72-Across said to his Oscar
- 8 Vidal essay collection
- 14 Earhart and others
- 16 Black eye
- 17 Where motorists get off
- 18 "Lions and ___ and bears ..."
- 19 Flock tender, for short
- 20 More of the quote
- 22 Brian Boitano's milieu
- 25 Cut out
- 26 ___ Plain (lesbian-popular neighborhood in Boston)
- 30 Landscape blot
- 34 Shoshonean tongue
- 35 Language of Bangkok
- 37 "___ she blows!"
- 38 Short one
- 39 More of the quote
- 43 Constellation over Rio
- 44 It serves Tel Aviv
- 46 Verlaine's mother
- 47 Image clarity, for short
- 48 Library section
- 52 Richard Chamberlain's Dr. role
- 54 Hotel staff
- 56 Giant ball-handler Manning

- 57 End of the quote
- 61 One that comes quickly, formerly
- 64 Thelma's lady friend
- 65 Has some
- 69 Art historian Raven
- 70 Not in a gay way
- 71 "Full" or "half" wrestling hold
- 72 Christopher, who won Best Actor for "Beginners"

Down

- 1 Women's patriotic org.
- 2 Spit it out, with confidence
- 3 Sophie B. Hawkins' "The Cream Will ___"
- 4 Riga's country
- 5 Señor suffix
- 6 Neither companion
- 7 What the fruits did in the orchard
- 8 Off the trail
- 9 Have sticky fingers
- 10 Like the top level
- 11 Top draft level
- 12 Griffin of game shows
- 13 Tongue of Wilde's land
- 15 Canadian comedian Mort
- 21 Wide shoe spec
- 23 Place for Maupin's tales

- 24 Radar blip
- 26 "Jesus Christ Superstar" setting
- 27 Not straight
- 28 It may be picked up in a bar
- 29 Track-and-field org.
- 31 Poet Frank
- 32 Like pinker meat
- 33 Tape over
- 36 Mac rival
- 40 Comics cry
- 41 Canal traveled by New York ferries
- 42 Title role for Jodie Foster
- 45 LGBT literary awards
- 49 Refuses
- 50 Myles of poetry
- 51 Reagan's Star Wars letters
- 53 Drop your guns
- 55 Bay Area bulls (abbr.)
- 57 "Six Feet Under" creator Ball
- 58 Folk history
- 59 Break in the action
- 60 He shot off at O.K. Corral
- 62 Take off the top
- 63 TV part
- 66 Fam. member
- 67 T, to a Greek
- 68 Neighbor of Leb.

Solution on page 44

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Horoscopes

You'll go far, Leo!

BY JACK FERTIG

Pluto in Capricorn, Mars in Virgo and Venus conjoining Jupiter in Taurus are all making a "grand trine," offering everyone vast creative power and the ability to make deep changes. Or you could just wallow in your comfort zone and indulge in wild hedonistic pleasures. With careful planning you could even do both.

ARIES (March 20 – April 19): Take a critical look at your work habits and start a process of making revisions; be helpful to others, but remember to get your own work done first. Reconsider your long-range goals. A radical shift may offer better, more lucrative opportunities

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20): If you can act free of resentment, fear and anger you can do almost anything and the big risks will pay off for you. If those three problems are in the way, challenge yourself to understand why and to let go.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20): Your brain is going on strike so rely instead on your heart. Take time out to connect with the people you love, and especially with yourself. An adult is someone who takes responsibility and has stopped blaming his or her parents.

CANCER (June 21- July 22): You can't un-say what's been said, but apologies and some critical reflection can do wonders for your relationships, personal and social. You don't need to beat yourself up. We all have room for improvement.

LEO (July 23 – August 22): Being super sexy is a distraction from more durable opportunities. Redirect your irresistible seductive charms to making important career connections. Your willingness to take on hard work and challenge is your strong suit. Work in some modesty and you'll go far!

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22): Erotic explorations may have less than thrilling results but most experiments offer the benefit of experience if not perceptible success. The next few weeks are for rethinking your relationships, but beware of making hasty changes.

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22): Easy answers to

spiritual questions shouldn't be trusted. It's too easy to fall into dogmas, especially if they reflect or react against family teachings. Keep digging to see where and how those feelings got so deeply entrenched.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21): Smoothing out arguments with friends does not mean putting them under a pavement! Be mature enough to keep principals above interpersonal tiffs and your own bruised ego... er... feelings. Being nice might be work, but it will pay off.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20): Beating the boss in a battle could cost you the war. With a little self-effacing modesty and a lot of hard work you could win him or her over and gain a powerful ally.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19): It feels like you can barely keep up with the treadmill, but you got the power! Still, what to do with it? Your best clue: Ask your 9-year-old self what you really want to be when you grow up.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18): Bureaucratic snafus can get expensive. Make sure your papers are in order! A bad case of foot-in-mouth is headed your way. Not only is quiet mediation a safe retreat, but it should offer profound, even transformative insights.

PISCES (February 19 – March 19): No relationship is perfect and it's too easy to find fault. Being or finding a partner is all about trying to be a better person. When discussing problems be gentle on yourself and your darling.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer. Visit his website at www.starjack.com, and by email at QScopes@qsyndicate.com.



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

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

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

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

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

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

Ferndale-Saturday
 1 p.m. Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.

8 p.m. Go After Your Sobriety Gay AA, Drayton Ave Presbyterian Church, 2441 Pinecrest. Closed/Discussion.

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

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

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

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Solution to puzzle from page 42

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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Yee-haw! Lily Tomlin to play Reba's mom

Perhaps no performer has moved as effortlessly between media as Lily Tomlin, who's struck comedy gold on records, in movies (she snagged an Oscar nomination for her dramatic turn in "Nashville"), on the stage (particularly in her acclaimed one-woman show "The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe"), and on TV, where she's been a mainstay of shows as far afield as "Designing Women," "Damages," "Desperate Housewives" and "The West Wing." Tomlin returns to the small screen soon with "Malibu Country," where she'll play the mother of Reba McEntire. In the proposed new sitcom from "Reba" creator Kevin Abbott, McEntire stars as a woman who divorces her ne'er-do-well rock star husband for cheating on her and burning through their money. She uproots her mom and her three kids from Nashville and moves them to the last piece of property they still own – a house in Malibu, where she will attempt to restart her own singing career and keep her kids from getting caught up in the lifestyles of the rich and famous. If all goes well, look for "Malibu Country" to pop up on ABC as a fall or mid-season series.

So, like, 'Valley Girl' is totally a musical now

Looks like "Glee" has made the world safe for cover versions of your favorite hits of yesteryear. Later this year, we'll get the movie version of the Broadway hit "Rock of Ages," featuring Tom Cruise and Julianne Hough belting out popular power ballads of the Reagan era, and now comes word of a musical reboot of "Valley Girl," the totally tubular 1980s comedy that gave Nicolas Cage one of his earliest leading roles. This new version will have the cast breaking into song and crooning New Wave standards (the original film's soundtrack gave us Modern English's "I Melt With You" and The Plimsouls' "A Million Miles Away") and will be directed by Clay Weiner, the guy behind that TV spot with Ricky Gervais and Mary-Louise Parker you've seen a million times since the Super Bowl. With Jenny Lumet ("Rachel Getting Married") reworking Amy Talkington's script, no word yet on when this hopefully non-grody-to-the-max remake will start shooting. But remember, if you're old enough to have owned a pair of checkerboard Vans the first time around, you probably shouldn't be wearing them to see this when it arrives in theaters next year.

More pilots, casts and uncertainty

It's a crapshoot pilot season. They make a lot of TV shows, they throw them against a wall, they see what sticks. And then a handful of the survivors go to series where most of them will be cancelled after three episodes. Or less. Is it any wonder that people who make TV shows seem a little crazy? But in this time of year, when casts are announced, everything feels hopeful. So be on the lookout – maybe, eventually – for "Partners" starring "Superman"'s Brandon Routh and "Ugly Betty"'s Michael Urie. Urie will play an architect and Routh his boyfriend, a former alcoholic male model, now a sober, vegan nurse. Urie's already actually gay and Routh's no stranger to the prospect of playing gay after showing up for a hilarious few moments as Justin Long's lover in Kevin Smith's "Zak and Miri Make a Porno." And taking the TV plunge again is Ryan Phillippe, starring in the untitled Nick Wootton-Greg Berlanti ("The Broken Hearts Club") drama pilot that was once known as "Golden Boy." It's another cop show, which, along with shows about doctors and lawyers, are usually a surer bet than shows about anything else. Now, will Phillippe – who got his start in TV, playing a gay teenager on "One Life to Live" – be back on a regular series after his season-long stint in "Damages" is finished? Who knows. That's what makes pilot season so exciting. Right?

Romeo San Vicente makes every season exciting, even more so if you happen to be a pilot. He can be reached at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.



Ryan Phillippe. Photo: Rogue Pictures

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