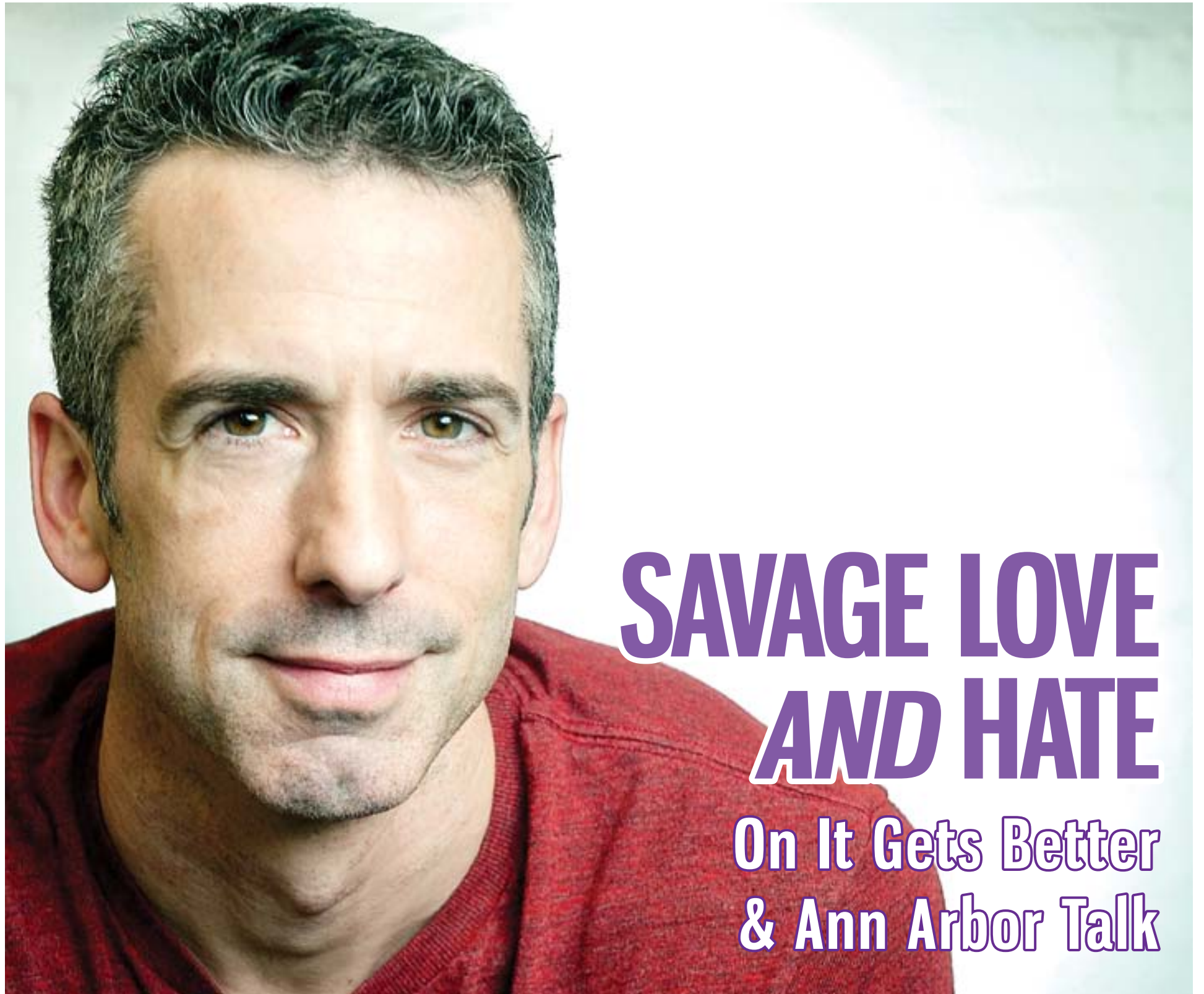


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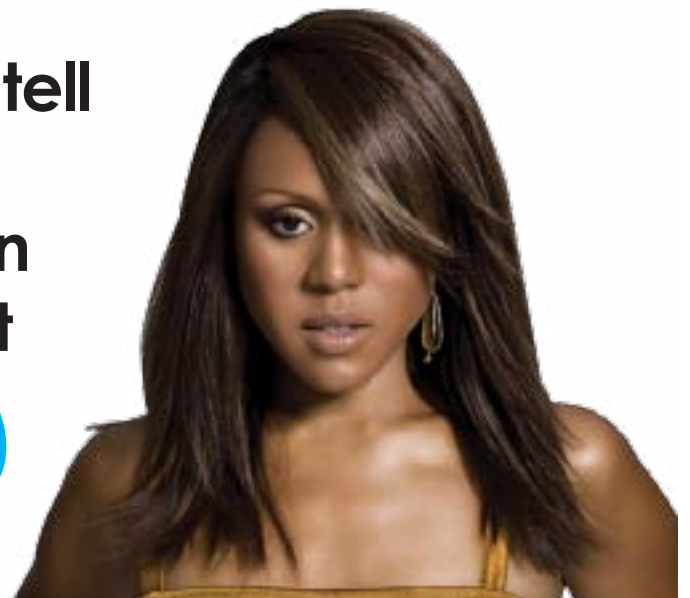
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21 Savage love (and hate)
Photo: LaRae Lobdell



“LUCY has a story to tell and she represents so many of us who put on a **façade** just to get through the day.”

– Deborah Cox, pg. 33



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Alan Ball's 'Five One Acts'

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INFOGRAPHIC



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Royal Oak Moves Forward With Draft Of Human Rights Ordinance

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

With a unanimous 7-0 vote, the Royal Oak City Commission voted Monday, to have their city attorney draft “the most broad human rights ordinance,” to be voted on at a later meeting.

Commissioners Jim Rasor and Kyle DuBuc presented the proposal to the Commission and over an hour’s worth of commentary was heard on the subject. One resident complained that a new law is not needed, especially if discrimination is not a problem in Royal Oak and another said that the law should protect everyone so there is not “reverse discrimination.”

But other than those two concerns, the crowd overwhelmingly supported the idea. Tyler Marka, holding an infant in her arms said, “I’m surprised it hasn’t been approved here before. A lot of friends move here because this is a progressive town, equal rights are not special rights. From this past election it’s evident this is the way most Americans feel. Royal Oak is a great city and we should make sure we’re on the right side of history on this.”

Marka also pointed out, “Some people may come up here and suggest that this is something that should be put to a popular vote, but I believe people’s civil liberties should never be put to a popular vote,” and that “the people of Royal Oak are good people, but you can’t rely on people to always do the right thing, otherwise we wouldn’t need laws.”

Several business owners came out to support moving forward on an ordinance. Michael Chetcuti and Kyle Evans, owners of 711 on Main Street and Royal Oak residents, said they support it. John Dempster, owner of Mr. B’s said, “As a diverse business employer I support this 100 percent.”

Tom Valente, owner of Holiday Market, has over 300 employees. He urged the city to embrace all people.

David Wollack, a former assistant prosecuting attorney, explained that there is “a void in our laws,” and that passing an ordinance would give police more tools to react if there is an instance of discrimination. Currently in Michigan a person can still be fired because they are gay. A person can be denied housing or refused service if they are gay. And if someone is targeted for a crime because they are gay, there are no motive-based consequences as there are with

victims of hate crimes based on race, gender, age, disability or religion.

Ferndale Mayor Dave Coulter also spoke at public comment, addressing concerns about potential lawsuits or more resources being taken up by police enforcement. Since Ferndale passed their ordinance ten years ago, there have been zero instances of discrimination Coulter said. Ferndale is one of 21 cities across Michigan that have some form of an LGBT inclusive human rights ordinance in place including Mt. Pleasant, Ann Arbor, Flint, Detroit, Traverse City and Saginaw. Coulter explained that the ordinance serves as a welcome mat for new businesses and residents.

Commissioner Mike Fournier explained his ‘yes’ vote.

“Somebody in public comment asked ‘Where are the Christians,’ so maybe I can give some perspective as it relates to that. For the most part I keep my faith private and quiet, but as some of you are

Currently in Michigan a person can still be fired because they are gay. A person can be denied housing or refused service if they are gay.

aware I am openly Catholic and I make no apologies for my beliefs,” Fournier said.

“I feel privileged to live in a country where I can practice my faith without persecution, without discrimination, and without interference. That I can take pride in who I am and the things I accomplished. I’m not qualified to speak on behalf of all Christians. I’m probably considered a sinner in most cases, but I believe in embracing the values of love, tolerance and the acceptance of others as paramount to peace and advancing the human condition. If only embraced unconditionally, unqualified and without equivocation... As a father it pains me to think the possibility of my daughters or my son being denied justice or equality through no fault of their own simply because of who they are. How would I comfort them? What words would suffice? What action could I take? And



Commissioner Mike Fournier explained his ‘yes’ vote in a passionate speech that reflected on separation of church and state. BTL photo: Crystal Proxmire

now confronted with taking action - and yes, taking no action is an action as well - what should I do, cave to some social pressures or rely upon the values I believe in and lift up all? I will side with love, tolerance and acceptance and support this human rights ordinance. Tonight I will go home quietly, enter my children’s’ rooms, kiss them on their forehead and know that their dad did the right thing tonight.”

Jerry, a 71-year-old resident felt compelled to come to the meeting and stand up. “I’m walking down Knowles and it’s dark and I’m thinking ‘wow am I lucky. Nobody bothers me. I’m fine. I’m safe. And I’ve been thinking, you know, when I think back a couple years ago about the gay fellow who got beat to death because he was gay. I think like you know people say why should we change anything? It’s because it gives the police more power and it shows we’re not going to fool around with any brutality.”

The vote does not enact an ordinance; it simply directs the city attorney to draft one. Rasor provided council and counsel with same ordinances from other cities, and said that Ann Arbor’s is the model he would prefer. Once the attorney has drafted an ordinance, it will come again before the commission for a vote.

For more information on Human Rights ordinances being enacted across the state, check out Unity Michigan’s website at www.unitymichigan.org/members-coalition.

BRIEFS

US Court Strikes Down Affirmative Action Ban

Michigan’s ban on affirmative action in college admissions was declared unconstitutional Nov. 15 by a deeply divided federal appeals court, six years after state voters said race could not be an issue in choosing students.

In an 8-7 decision, the court said the 2006 amendment to the Michigan Constitution is illegal because it presents an extraordinary burden to opponents who would have to mount their own long, expensive campaign through the ballot box to protect affirmative action.

That burden “undermines the Equal Protection Clause’s guarantee that all citizens ought to have equal access to the tools of political change,” said Judge R. Guy Cole Jr., writing for the majority at the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

The court said having supporters and opponents debate affirmative action through the governing boards of each public university would be much fairer than cementing a ban in the constitution, which it referred to as home of “the highest level” of public policy.

The decision is limited to states in the 6th Circuit, which includes Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee. But it also raises the odds that the U.S. Supreme Court may get involved. A very similar law in California was upheld by a San Francisco-based appeals court, and the Supreme Court could choose to resolve the conflicting decisions of the 9th Circuit and the 6th Circuit on voter-approved bans.

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette, a supporter of the ban, said he will ask the nation’s highest court to take the case.

“Entrance to our great universities must be based upon merit,” he said.

George Washington, a Detroit attorney for the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, said the ruling is a “tremendous victory.” He predicted the case will move to the Supreme Court.

“What this really means is thousands of blacks and Latinos who would not have had a chance to go to our most selective universities will have the chance to become lawyers, doctors and leaders of all fields,” Washington said.

“The appellate courts of our nation have once again found in favor of equality and justice for minorities, who are too often treated as second-class citizens. Affirmative action is important to anyone in Michigan who values diversity and attempts to undo decades of oppression. While this is not the final step in our battle defending affirmative action that began in 2006, it is a significant step towards removing messages of hate and intolerance from Michigan’s Constitution,” said Emily Dievendorf, director of policy at Equality Michigan

“This ruling also presents a legal path for the removal of the ban on marriage equality placed in Michigan’s Constitution with a 2004 ballot initiative,” said Dievendorf.

- By AP Writer Ed White and BTL Staff

Perceptions’ 10th Anniversary And Holiday Gathering

Perceptions Saginaw Valley will host its 10th Anniversary Celebration and Holiday Gathering on Saturday, Dec. 1 at the Apple Mountain Resort in Freeland.

Fifty Percent of net proceeds from the event will be donated to the USO “Warrior and Family Care Program” to assist America’s wounded, ill and injured troops, their families, and caregivers.

In recognition of the nation’s first anniversary of the repeal of the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy allowing LGBT personal to serve openly and proudly, Perceptions Saginaw Valley is honored to partner with the USO in their efforts assisting all military men and women in their time of need toward becoming our nation’s healed warriors.

The Perceptions Saginaw Valley Board of Directors extends an invitation to all individuals wishing to celebrate the accomplishments of the organization, share in its history and continued presence toward honoring the equality of all individuals in our nation and world.

This gathering begins at 6 p.m. Dec. 1 at Apple Mountain Resort, 4519 River Road, Freeland. The event will begin with cocktails and a silent auction, followed by a formal dinner and program with music and dancing until midnight. Tickets are \$35 in advance, \$15 with a valid student ID at arrival or \$40 at the door. For more information and online ticket purchase, visit PerceptionsSSV.org.

Shower of Stoles Exhibit Shines Light On Price Of Religious Discrimination

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

FERNDALE – Draped throughout the Pittman-Puckett Art Gallery and Community Room of Affirmations, dozens of colorful and personalized stoles reflect just a small portion of the LGBT people who have either left the church or who continue to serve while hiding their sexual orientation.

On Nov. 15 nearly 100 people gathered to see the stoles and to hear the story of their origin. Rev. Cheryl L. Burke also came, along with her three daughters, to share her own tale of religious exile and redemption.

Kevin Hogan of the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion introduced Rev. Burke by sharing the five principles she subscribes to. “One, show up. Two, pay attention. Three, Tell the truth. Four, don’t be afraid. And five, don’t forget to breathe.”

Burke had been a student at Hope College and gotten her Master of Divinity at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. She grew up Presbyterian and served that denomination for many years, working her way up to Pastor with the hidden approval of church leaders. “They all knew, but told me not to tell anybody,” Burke said.

After a while, it just did not feel right. “I don’t think I can do this anymore God,” she said. “I don’t think I can be a minister only if I lie.”

So she took a leave of absence. “I took a year away from



“I don’t think I can be a minister only if I lie.”

- Rev. Cheryl L. Burke

ministry to pray about it and think about it. In that time there was a church called First Congressional United Church of Christ in Huntsville, West Virginia that was looking for a pastor. She took the job and on her first day she arrived at the church



Rev. Cheryl Burke shared her story Nov. 19 with attendees who came to see the collection of stoles on display at Affirmations Community Center. BTL photos: Crystal Proxmire.

to find a giant banner across the front welcoming her and her partner.

While the church was very welcoming, the neighborhood had mixed reactions. An interview with a local reporter made the front page. “There was my picture on the front page with the headline ‘When God Calls a Lesbian.’” She said that for the

next few months the “letters to the editor were a w f u l a n d condemning... and supportive,” and that it created a larger dialogue.

Someone scratched the word “heal” into the cornerstone of the church and other local ministers were preaching about what an abomination it was to have a lesbian pastor in

town. But there was also positive growth from it. People started calling the church to share their stories. “Gays and lesbians would call and say ‘I’ve never heard this from the church. Is this really true? Is it really possible?’”

Burke has been with the United Church of Christ since the early 90s, and joined the Michigan conference in 2005. She and her wife Rev. Dr. Julie Kilmer were married in Washington D.C, though their marriage is not legally recognized by the state of Michigan. They have adopted three children, though because second parent adoption is also not legal in Michigan, there are complexities in the legal relationships. Burke hopes that Michigan will continue to work towards same gender marriage and adoption rights.

Her story is an oddity in the exhibit in that she actually has two stoles. “They contacted me and said that one had been lost, so I sent another. They found the first one so now I have two,” she said.

Each stole tells a story. The come from all over the world and are from anyone involved in church leadership who has left because they did not feel welcome, or who continued their service to the church while closeting their true selves.

The Shower of Stoles began in 1995 after Martha Juillerat retired from the Presbyterian Ministry after several years of taking part in community dialogues as an “out” lesbian minister. She traveled the country holding sacred conversations, but was continuously worn out by those who were not supportive. Finally she left and she wanted to do something symbolic of others like herself, people who left religious congregations because of discrimination and non-acceptance. It is now a project of the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce.

To find out more visit www.welcomingresources.org/sosphistory.htm.

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Youth from Dedicated to Make A Change gathered Nov. 3 to raise much needed funds for New Orleans. BTL photo: Jerome Stuart Nichols. See more photos of this gathering online at www.pridesource.com

Transgender Detroit Transitions into GNA

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

The Gender-identity Network Alliance (GNA, pronounced GINA) was announced on Nov. 17 with a party at Affirmations Community Center. Formerly known as Transgender Detroit, the new identity of the transgender-serving organization is one of embracing all forms of gender variance and working on multiple gender-related issues. The new organization hopes to reach beyond the Detroit area in the coming year.

While dining on wine, cheese and other fine foods, guests of the event mingled with a diverse crowd and watched drag performances by Mr. Debonair and Lady Vanity Tajoure. They also got to meet the board of GNA, led by Board President Ami Mansell of Ferndale.

Mansell's journey into womanhood had several unique challenges and she shared her story with the group. "Four years ago when I came out of prison after serving 23 years, I didn't know where I was going to be, and I am here today," she said. "I'm here in this wonderful building surrounded by a bunch of people who I love, who are my family, my friends."

Michelle Fox-Phillips, one of Transgender Detroit's co-founders, explained the history of the organization and its roots.

"I came to Affirmations 14 years ago and I'm still around here. I was the first trans volunteer 14 years ago and they've opened their arms to us. They opened their arms when we started Transgender Rap 14 years ago, where I met my late wife Jamie. It was my late wife Jamie and I that started Transgender Detroit in August 2005. We felt it was a need in the Detroit area: Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties, to have a transgender organization," she said. "You have seen some of our work. We have done the Transgender Day of Remembrance that we just did last night. We also have Transgender Day of Empowerment that we do in the spring and we have workshops to empower the transgender community."

The group also does a speaker's bureau and takes place during other transgender related activities through the year. One of the goals of GNA is to incorporate more social events, like the drag shows and coming out party, into their work. They also hope to reach more than just the MTFs and FTMs (Male-To-Female and Female-to-Male), including others who need support with gender issues. They also hope to bring more visibility in the LGBT community and among allies in the broader community.

Laurel Popp of Trenton is GNA's communication chair. "The most important thing to think about is broadening the services to include all genders," Popp said in an interview after the show.

"Anyone who is having an issue should feel welcome. Not just transmen and women, but people who question their gender, or are gender fluid, or who don't identify as any gender. It should be a group where you feel supported no matter where your identity might be in relation to the social norm," she said.

See GNA, page 14



Michelle Fox-Phillips, founding member of Transgender Detroit, now Gender-identity Network Alliance. BTL photo: Crystal Proxmire

The Power of Dedication Queer Teens Raise Money, Bring Hope

BY JEROME STUART NICHOLS

Dedicated to Make a Change is an organization that empowers teens to be the change they want to see in the world. With their Hope and Change fundraiser, they proved just how powerful a bunch of truly dedicated teens could be. Helping to raise funds for their 2013 volunteer trips to New Orleans' Lower 9th Ward, Hope and Change brought the teens together with community members and parents for a night of fun and conversation.

The event, which took place Nov. 3 in Ypsilanti's MIX Marketplace, featured a silent auction, an open Q-and-A with New Orleans community activist Mac McClendon and live music performed by the members of DTMAC. While the final amount raised is still being worked out, they've raised a minimum of \$1250. The amount will become weightier when matched – up to \$2000 – by Ypsilanti-based home care agency Care One Inc.

The first of these teen-organized "FUNdraisers," Hope and Change was tasked with bringing awareness to the struggles still faced by residents living in New Orleans. With his personal stories and insight, McClendon painted a bleak yet promising picture. He hoped that by sharing his story he could inspire and empower guests to help.

"I wanted them to feel like they are not

“Most think New Orleans is fixed, most. But these young people have been down there and they know it's not.”

– Mac McClendon

helpless, they can actually make a difference," he said. "They can find simple ways to put they drop in the bucket. I think understanding that we still have a problem and how we can embrace the problem is the key..."

"Most think New Orleans is fixed, most. But these young people have been down there and they know it's not."

Often, it's the feeling of being powerless in an overwhelming situation that prevents people from helping. DTMAC has taken it upon themselves to actually do something. According to McClendon, their efforts – while small – make a big difference.

"They come that far to help, what that says is that you haven't forgot about us. That sends out a ray of hope that actually is saving lives. People know you can't solve all the problems but just the thought of you being there and thinking about them, people know... you care about them."

While McClendon came to share and educate, he also found that he learned some things too.

"I am learning a lot from them. The key to how you keep it going, instead of dying. You keep on rekindling the flame and that's what they've been able to do. I'm so impressed with them."

McClendon wasn't the only one impacted by the teen's passion. While Hope and Change was about New Orleans, many parents also got a glimpse at the positive impact their teens are making. Many parents weren't shy about how that made them feel.

"I'm ecstatically proud of my daughter," Diane Sheldon-Ku – mother of DTMAC member Cleo Ku – said.

That reaction was one of the effects DTMAC Executive Director Gail Wolkoff hoped to cause.

"I'm thinking that parents or important people to these youth heard what they're kids are doing," she said. "Because I'm not thinking that they have any clue what their kids do and the important impact. Just how insightful their kids are. ... We don't often think of our kids as being insightful, wonderful people."

While the main reasoning for the fundraiser was raising money, bringing people together was the ultimate goal. Because of that,

See Dedicated, page 14

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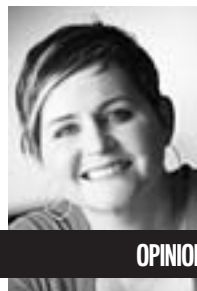
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The Best Year Yet?

Why 2012 Should Take Its Place Next to 1969 in LGBT History



Viewpoint

OPINION BY ABBY DEES

Fights and fabulousness make history; good news and policy shifts rarely do. As an example, I don't think I've seen more than two pictures from the 1969 Stonewall riots, but my mind is filled with images of those amazing '60s-era drag queens using handbags like weapons and kicking out the back of a police van with stiletto heels. Stonewall is so burned into my consciousness as The Beginning that it hardly matters that I've never really seen what it looked like.

Did you also know that four years earlier there was an organized gay rights protest in front of the White House? In 1965, brave members of the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis put on suits (the men) and dresses (the women), carried signs and politely picketed one Saturday afternoon. This was no small thing, considering that homosexuality was still listed as a mental disorder. Still, it looked more like a bunch of accountants protesting tax code changes.

I've seen a lot of pictures from that day, and I might even argue that 1965 is Year One of the modern LGBT rights movement, not 1969. Yet that protest has become not much more than an interesting footnote in our collective historical memory compared to the sheer brass of Stonewall.

I have a feeling 2012 might go down like 1965. There's hardly any photographic evidence this year of a critical mass of queers pushing down the fences and stopping traffic, and I don't remember a word being about LGBT rights in the Presidential debates, though I did nod off a few times. You could even say 2012 was boring, which would be a shame, because I believe that historians will one day look back and declare 2012 a great civil rights turning point.

Let's not say goodbye to 2012 without giving it its due:

Obama "evolved" on same-sex marriage. Right, overdue, whatever. But then he went on to become the first president elected on a platform of full LGBT equality. That didn't happen in 2008, and it couldn't have. For the last 12 years, LGBT rights have been used as a wedge issue to get out the conservative vote. Notice how little of that there was this time around, though there were marriage initiatives in swing states – oh, and Obama took all the states that put marriage on the ballot.

We didn't have a Prop 8. We didn't even have a loss. After 28 straight defeats for marriage equality at the state-level, by popular vote, since 1998, we won four marriage referenda in one shot, three of which were ballot measures legalizing same-sex marriage. We've never been able to vote down a marriage ban and suddenly people are all for it in places as un-swishy as Maine.

Emboldened by the passage of North Carolina's draconian Amendment One in May, The National Organization for Marriage decided to bet the house on the overwhelming opposition to marriage equality among racial minorities. Then NOM lost. Nov. 6 exit polls show that both African-American and Latino voters support marriage equality by a large margin. (Can we finally put that myth to rest, everyone?)

Tammy Baldwin, from Wisconsin, became the first openly gay member of the U.S. Senate,

and she was just one of the 152 openly LGBT candidates up for election on Nov. 6. Seventy-seven percent of them won in such notoriously pink bastions as North Dakota and West Virginia.

Stacie Laughton of New Hampshire became the first openly trans person elected to state office,

and self-described pansexual Mary Gonzales of El Paso became a Texas state representative.

2012 also set the stage for what could be our biggest legal victory yet: Three different circuit courts (the 1st, 2nd and 9th) ruled for marriage equality. The odds favor at least one of these cases making it to the Supreme Court next year, which has implications for LGBT rights far beyond marriage. While the Court could rule against us, good money says it won't, especially if it chooses to hear the DOMA cases instead of the Prop 8 case. Either way, the outcome will send us out in the streets, in celebration or fury. And watch: that will be the day we remember.

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"WHEN WE COME BACK, THE LATEST TWIST IN THE PETRAEUS SCANDAL: WERE THE FBI INVESTIGATOR AND TWO TARGET PRACTICE DUMMIES INVOLVED IN GAY THREE-WAY INTERNET PORN?"

Ouch! Handel With Care



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

A musical staple of many a yuletide season is George Frederick Handel's "The Messiah," an oratorio performed with varying success by both amateur and professional musicians.

Handel (1685-1759) was in his day the foremost composer in England, where he relocated from his native Germany. He was lionized by royalty and was the darling of those who attended the opera for whatever reason of love of music, social conviviality, or foppish mingling.

Handel never married, nor did he show any observed amorous interest in women, apart from the vocal divas of his oratorios and operas, upon whom he lavished exquisite music of extraordinary beauty and breathtaking melismatic passages.

Little wonder then that some gay historians have sought to recruit him as homosexual (although the term itself wasn't coined until 1868). To do so, some speculators have gone to convoluted lengths to label Handel as a "warmer bruder," to use the current German slang.

One such historian, by a stretch of imagination, suggests that the monumental statue of Handel in Westminster Abby by 18-century French sculptor Louis-Francois Roubilac makes, by its positioning of Handel's robe, a sly commentary on perhaps the composer's sex life.

A historian who blogs The Teh-Drinking Musicologist observes, "Handel's scholarly gown is garishly pulled to one side, granting the viewer a full gaze of Handel's nether regions. Of course, this is purely suggestive, as Handel is safely fully garbed beneath his robe; however, the viewer is left with a sense of curiosity as to what invisible force might be tugging (disrobing) the figure of Handel."

It's all speculation, somewhat silly to be sure, much along the lines that because Ring Cycle composer Richard Wagner had a passion for wearing silk dressing gowns and writing gushing letters to his patron "Mad King" Ludwig II of Bavaria (who was gay), that Wagner was himself gay or bisexual. He was neither.

The recent Michigan Opera Theater's production of "Julius Caesar" however certainly has its gay production moments. Three of the soloists are countertenors (male contraltos) and the mid-opera debut of soprano Cleopatra is high camp, Busby Berkley staging, with vamping Cleo looking every bit like Jean Harlow at her Hollywood, 1930s platinum blond seductive best.

The role of Julius Caesar is sung heroically -- if not always even vocally -- by David Daniels, who is gay and identified himself as such in a recent BTL interview.

In Handel's day countertenor roles were sung by castratos. These were vocalists who were castrated in the interest of preserving their prepubescent soprano voices. The practice was common for talented boys in Roman Catholic choirs, the last such castrato, Alesandro Moreschi dying about 1922.

The boy candidate for such musical honor, as it was once deemed to be, was given liquor to drink, submerged in a hot tub to numb his balls, cut to the quick, and -- adding incense to injury -- prayed over for good measure. Many castrati achieved fame and fortune.

In passing: the MOT's 11th anniversary production of "Too Hot to Handel." December 1st, is first rate. A mixture of classical and jazz improv idioms, it's gloriously cutting edge. (Musically speaking.)

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LAGOS, NIGERIA

Nigeria Poised To Pass Anti-Gay Bill

(AP) - A top U.S. human rights official says he has not discussed with Nigerian lawmakers an anti-gay bill poised to pass Parliament

Michael H. Posner, the Assistant of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, declined to comment directly on the pending legislation during a press conference at the U.S. consulate in Lagos on Friday.

But, he says human rights issues must be addressed within societies and "it is very difficult, if not impossible, for (foreign) governments to force that change."

The Parliament of Africa's most populous nation is expected to formally pass the bill criminalizing gay marriage, gay advocacy groups and same-sex public displays. It must then be signed the president, though it was not clear when that might happen.

PARIS, FRANCE

Pro- And Anti-Gay Protesters Clash In Paris

(AP) -The controversial Ukrainian group Femen, whose topless members stage pranks to support gay rights, have taunted a march in Paris by Catholics who oppose France's draft law to legalize gay marriage.

The Catholic group Civitas organized Sunday's march by several thousand people carrying pro-family banners.

Several Femen activists turned up topless, chanted "in gay we trust" and sprayed white powder from bottles.

That prompted several anti-gay marriage protesters to hit the Femen members and push them to the ground.

On Saturday several thousand people took to the streets in cities across France to protest the draft law, which could see marriage and adoption legalized for homosexual couples early next year.

PORT ANGELES, WASH.

Teacher's Political Button Spurs Parent Protest

(AP) - A lesbian mother has started an online petition drive urging the Port Angeles School District to prohibit politicking by teachers after an instructor wore a "No on 74" button in her daughter's eighth-grade classroom.

Superintendent Jane Pryne told The Peninsula Daily News (<http://is.gd/MnNPfQ>) the district already has a policy regarding politics in the classroom and the issue has been addressed.

Port Angeles parent Cynthia Deford, whose daughter attends Steven Middle School, says she wants more to be done. She wants an apology and sensitivity training for teachers.

Neither Pryne nor Deford would identify the teacher, who Deford identified online as being a man who teaches math.

NEW YORK

MTV Special Profiles Young People With HIV

(AP) - MTV is airing a special next week with profiles of three young people who have the HIV infection, amid worries that some people are taking the condition too casually.

The special, "I'm Positive," is scheduled to air Dec. 1. Drew Pinsky, who is one of the show's producers, said that if it does well, he hopes it can become a regular series.

In three decades, infection with the virus that causes AIDS has gone from a virtual death sentence to a chronic condition that can be controlled with early detection and a drug regimen. But even if it doesn't develop into full-blown AIDS, there's still some doubt about the long-term health implications of living with HIV and the drugs designed to keep control of it, Pinsky said.

"People are taking it too casually ... and forgetting about it," Pinsky said. A generational divide is evident in the profiles on "I'm Positive." California girl Kelly, one of the three subjects, feels in control of the situation despite her infection. The mother of Stephanie, a single Southern girl infected, is distraught and thinks her daughter is about to die.

As proven by its programming on teenage pregnancy, MTV finds that this documentary-style programming is a good way to reach its young viewers with a message.

Wedding Trade Expects Boost From Gay-Marriage Laws

BY CLARKE CANFIELD

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) - In the two weeks since Maine voters approved a law allowing same-sex marriage, Clay Hill Farm has been getting phone calls and emails from gay couples inquiring about open dates and wedding packages at the restaurant and wildlife sanctuary, a popular wedding spot in York.

The law won't go into effect for more than six weeks, but already couples from in and out of state have called, said Jennifer Lewis-McShera, who heads the wedding department there.

Clay Hill Farm puts on dozens of wedding ceremonies a year, as well as receptions and rehearsal dinners, and provides catering services to wedding parties at other locations. Legalizing same-sex marriage can only help, Lewis-McShera said.

"It will increase business in this area because we'll attract more couples from Boston and the New York metropolitan area who now can have the wedding of their dreams in Maine," she said. "This puts Maine on the map."

Add the coast of Maine, the banks of the Chesapeake Bay and the shores of Lake Washington to gay wedding destinations. Next month and in January, laws go into effect in Maine, Maryland and Washington that allow same-sex marriage. They're the first states where voters approved such laws, rather than legislators or courts.

Nearly 18,000 same-sex couples in those states will exchange vows in the first three years after the new laws are in effect, estimated The Williams Institute, a national think tank at the UCLA School of Law, and the laws should generate at least \$166 million in wedding spending in the three states over the next three years from in-state couples alone, boosting tax revenues and creating new jobs.

Wedding-related spending for in-state

couples is projected be about \$16 million in Maine, \$63 million in Maryland and \$89 million in Washington.

The numbers go up when figuring in out-of-staters who travel to those states to be wed. In Maine, for instance, the new law could boost the state economy by \$25 million and create up to 250 new jobs in the coming three years, said Lee Badgett, research director at the Williams Institute and an economics professor at the University of Massachusetts.

So many people have ties to Maine through vacations, summer camps while growing up or seasonal homes, said Portland wedding planner Diane York. A lot are attracted to Maine for weddings and receptions because of its beaches, old New England churches and lighthouses, such as Portland Head Light in Cape Elizabeth, which went into service in 1791 and has been called one of the most-photographed lighthouses in the country.

"Now Maine will be able to make its case: This is beautiful, you should come here to get married," Badgett said.

The average cost for a wedding nationally is about \$27,000, and about \$2,000 less in Maine, York said.

Other states that have legalized gay marriage have benefited economically as a result. Same-sex marriage is legal in Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont and the District of Columbia.

Vermont and Massachusetts now include sections on their state tourism websites that include information about gay marriage. Even honeymoon capital Niagara Falls has gotten a lift from same-sex weddings and honeymoons.

In Maine, Pam Remy of South Portland and her partner of 13 years, Karen Weiss, have just begun to plan for a late summer or early fall wedding. They're looking into pastoral settings in southern Maine to host

the wedding and are hoping to have up to 200 guests.

The to-do list is the same that same many couples face when planning a wedding: find a venue, print invitations, hire a photographer and arrange for food and entertainment. Remy, 44, says they have to find a place soon because venues are being booked quickly.

"I imagine this wedding will be the whole shebang," Remy said.

Cindy Sproul co-owns North Carolina-based Rainbow Wedding Network, which produces gay and lesbian wedding expos in Seattle and other cities. Just since the election, she's seen a 30 to 40 percent increase in companies wanting to advertise with the company in Washington state.

Thousands of in-state residents, as well as those from nearby states that haven't legalized gay marriage, are expected to exchange vows in Washington in the coming years.

"There are a lot of couples that will cross state lines to get married. Maybe they want to make a long weekend of it," Sproul said. "I imagine there will be couples from Oregon who will come up."

In Maine, a Portland man has launched what he's calling the first online wedding directory, www.gayweddingsinmaine.com, connecting same-sex couples with gay-friendly businesses. Sid Tripp, who owns a marketing company and is president of the DownEast Pride Alliance gay business networking group, said Maine's new law should benefit such companies as tuxedo rental shops, caterers, florists, photographers, jewelers, limousine services, musicians and DJs.

"Maine has positioned itself as a progressive, forward-looking state that is welcoming to everybody," Tripp said. "The gays will see this as a sign of solidarity with them, and they'll be coming here in droves wanting to get married."

Seattle City Hall To Host Same-Sex Weddings Dec. 9

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) - Seattle City Hall will open for several hours for wedding ceremonies on the Sunday after Washington state's new law allowing gay marriage takes effect.

Aaron Pickus, a spokesman for Mayor Mike McGinn, said Friday that eight municipal judges are donating their time to marry couples between noon and 5 p.m. on Dec. 9, three days after Referendum 74 takes effect.

Couples will be able to pick up their marriage licenses and certificates on Dec. 6, because Washington has a three-day waiting period, but the earliest time that a certificate

could be signed - which makes the marriage valid - is that following Sunday.

The Seattle weekly newspaper The Stranger reported Thursday that it is donating \$2,000 to help pay for materials, and that staff members will volunteer their time to help organize the event.

R-74 had asked voters to approve or reject a state law legalizing same-sex marriage that legislators passed earlier this year. That law was signed by Gov. Chris Gregoire in February, but was put on hold pending last week's election.

With 53 percent of voters' approval, Washington joined Maine and Maryland

as the first three states to approve gay marriage with a popular vote. The laws in Maryland and Maine will not take effect until January.

Six other states - New York, Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont - and the District of Columbia already allow gay marriage, but their laws were enacted either by lawmakers or court rulings.

Couples in King County will be able to pick up their marriage certificates and licenses on Dec. 6. King County Executive Dow Constantine said he'll sign the first license.

Transgender Woman 1st To Win Office In Cuba

BY ANDREA RODRIGUEZ

HAVANA (AP) - Adela Hernandez, a biologically male Cuban who has lived as a female since childhood, served two years in prison in the 1980s for "dangerousness" after her own family denounced her sexuality.

This month she made history by becoming the first known transgender person to hold public office in Cuba, winning election as a delegate to the municipal government of Caibarien in the central province of Villa Clara.

In a country where gays were persecuted for decades and sent to grueling work camps in the countryside, Hernandez, 48, hailed her election as yet another milestone in a gradual shift away from macho attitudes in the years since Fidel Castro himself expressed regret over the treatment of people perceived to be different.

"As time evolves, homophobic people - although they will always exist - are the minority," Hernandez said by phone from her hometown.

Becoming a delegate "is a great triumph," she added.

Because she has not undergone sex-change surgery, Hernandez is legally still a man in the eyes of the Cuban state: Jose Agustin Hernandez, according to the civil registry. Hernandez, who switched back and forth between feminine and masculine pronouns when referring to herself during an interview, said she hasn't made a decision to seek an operation but doesn't rule it out either.

“As time evolves, homophobic people - although they will always exist - are the minority,”

- Adela Hernandez

Hernandez won office in early November by taking a runoff vote 280-170. Her position is the equivalent of a city councilor, and her election makes her eligible to be selected as a representative to Parliament in early 2013.

For years after the 1959 Cuban Revolution, authorities hounded people of differing sexual orientation and others considered threatening, such as priests, long-haired youths and rock 'n' roll enthusiasts. But there have been notable changes in attitudes toward sexuality.

"I would like to think that discrimination against homosexuals is a problem that is being overcome," Fidel Castro told an interviewer some years ago.

Since 2007 the island has been covering sex-change surgery under its free health care system. Last year a gay man and a transsexual woman whose operation was paid for by the state garnered headlines for their first-of-its-kind wedding.

The country's most prominent gay rights activist is Mariela Castro, Fidel's niece and current President Raul Castro's daughter.

As director of Cuba's National Center

for Sex Education, Mariela Castro has instituted awareness campaigns, trained police on relations with the lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender community and lobbied parliament to legalize same-sex unions.

Born in a sugar town in central Cuba, Hernandez was disowned by her family and said it was her own father who reported her to authorities, leading to her imprisonment. She had to change towns and defend herself physically from attacks.

Over the decades she found work as a hospital janitor, then as a nurse and most recently as an electrocardiogram technician. She also established herself in the community and as a longtime member of her neighborhood watch committee, which helped her win acceptance and laid the groundwork for her election.

"My neighbors know me as Adela, the nurse," Hernandez said. "Sexual preference does not determine whether you are a revolutionary or not. That comes from within."

As an elected official she promised to advocate for her constituents' interests, but said she also wants to be a voice for gay rights.

"I represent a community but I will always keep in mind the defense of gays," Hernandez said.

Sentencing Set In Vt. Same-Sex Custody Dispute

BY WILSON RING

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) - A Mennonite pastor is scheduled to be sentenced in March for his conviction on a charge he helped a Virginia woman and her daughter flee the country three years ago rather than allow the girl to have regular visits with the woman's former lesbian partner.

Kenneth Miller of Stuarts Draft, Va., faces up to three years in prison when he is sentenced in federal court in Burlington on March 4.

His attorney, Brooks McArthur of Burlington, wouldn't say last week what sentence he would seek for Miller. He plans to file a sentencing memo ahead of the hearing.

Kenneth Miller was convicted last summer for helping Lisa Miller and her daughter Isabella flee the country in 2009, several days before the girl was scheduled for a weekend visit with Lisa Miller's former partner, Janet Jenkins of Fair Haven. It was also two months ahead of an anticipated order from a Vermont judge transferring custody of the girl from Lisa Miller to Jenkins. The Millers are not related.

A civil lawsuit by Jenkins at the

conclusion of Kenneth Miller's criminal trial is also pending. A number of the defendants, including Kenneth Miller, Liberty University and the Thomas Road Baptist Church, both in Lynchburg, Va., filed documents in court late Friday asking a judge to dismiss the civil case filed by Jenkins. They argued, in part, that the case should not have been brought in Vermont.

And Miller's attorneys continued to fight a subpoena from federal prosecutors that he testify before a grand jury, presumably about other people involved in helping the Lisa Miller and her daughter travel from Virginia to Canada and then on to Nicaragua where they are still believed to be living.

Kenneth Miller had been scheduled to testify last week before the grand jury, but a federal appeals court in New York pushed that back.

"We do not want to put him in the position where if he testifies in front of the grand jury, he may make a statement that may be adverse to him at his sentencing," said McArthur. "We're looking forward to litigating the issue down in New York before the 2nd circuit."

Prosecutors have guaranteed Miller immunity for his grand jury testimony, court documents showed. The U.S.

attorney's office refuses to discuss the grand jury proceedings.

Jenkins and Lisa Miller were joined in a Vermont civil union in 2000 and Isabella was born to Lisa in 2002. The couple split in 2003. A Vermont family court awarded custody of Isabella to Lisa Miller but gave Jenkins regular visitation.

Lisa Miller returned to Virginia, became a conservative Christian, renounced homosexuality and sought full custody of the girl. The two fought a yearslong legal battle that reached the supreme courts of Vermont and Virginia. The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

Ultimately, the courts agreed the case should be treated the same as any custody dispute between heterosexual parents.

During Kenneth Miller's August trial, prosecutors used cellphone records and sometimes-reluctant witnesses to lay out a broad network he oversaw that helped Lisa Miller and Isabella travel first to Canada and then Nicaragua.

At Jenkins' lawsuit, she maintains Miller and the others conspired to kidnap Isabella, thwarting the family court orders that Isabella spend time with Jenkins and, after the change of custody was ordered, that Jenkins was to become the legal parent.

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Eat The Rainbow: KICK Health Expo Looks To Heal Detroit From Within

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

DETROIT – Hannan House in Detroit was full of healthy ideas for the Healing Detroit from within Health and Wellness Expo presented by KICK. The free community-wide health fair focused on issues of importance to the black LGBT community last Saturday.

Various groups lined the hallways with information about services such as family planning, cancer screening and treatment, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS prevention and support and more.

Dr. Akua Woolbright of Whole Foods was among the presenters. In the morning she taught attendees how to better read food labels, and in the afternoon she discussed the concept of using food as medicine.

About 45 attendees listened as she explained some nutrition basics that should be fairly easy for people to remember. “Eat the rainbow” resonated with the crowd, meaning that if people strive to eat fruits and vegetables of all different colors they will get the variety of nutrients that their bodies need.

“The intention of food is to fuel you through your day,” Woolbright said. “Americans are over-fed but under-nourished... We feed our bellies but we didn’t think to feed our whole selves.”

Before being recruited by Whole Foods, Woolbright worked in HIV treatment in Washington DC. “I would tell people ‘this is your second medicine.’ And I’d get them eating healthy, making smoothies in the mornings and they could feel themselves being more healthy, having more energy.”

Woolbright was one of three nutrition experts tasked with creating a health program for Whole Foods. She and other doctors were all renowned experts, but each took a different approach. One believed that the key to good health was “everything in moderation.” One believed only in a strict raw, vegan diet. And Woolbright strived for a systematic approach, calculating not only calories by searching for a numeric balance of vitamin and nutrient intake.

“We spent a lot of time going back and forth about our approaches,” she said. “But the CEO finally came to us and said ‘Don’t you guys agree on anything?’ And one of the other doctors said ‘yes.’ We all agreed that people need to eat more real foods and less manufactured foods. And that is the basic starting point. Start eating foods that are less processed, that have ingredients you recognize. Once you master that then move on to the more complicated stuff.”

A particularly uplifting tip was that people of color especially tend to suffer due to Vitamin D deficiency in the wintertime. Vitamin D comes mainly from sunshine, which



KICK’s Lawrence Pennymon shares info with Tony Johnson, Toyea Fleming and Jamiaya Fleming. Below Dr Akua Woolbright of Whole Foods discusses healthy food choices. BTL photos: Crystal Proxmire.

can be in short supply when it’s cold out. To counter the wintertime blues, Woolbright recommends serotonin-stimulating foods like spinach, bananas, walnuts sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds.

Nutrition is just one part of a person’s overall health. Matt Sweet of AIDS Partnership Michigan spoke about mental health issues facing LGBT people of color. Rev. Jeffrey Seals of Whosoever Ministries spoke about mind, body and spirit. And Ricky Thomas talked about substance abuse.

On the physical side, Stephanie Carr taught a belly dancing class and Terrell Thomas taught Q. Chong.

Specific diseases were also addressed. There was testing for HIV/AIDS and syphilis, plus breast and cervical cancer screenings.

Yolanda Murillo of the Karmanos Institute shared some surprising news – that Karmanos can connect those who are uninsured or underinsured aged 40-64 with free mammograms and pap smears, and that if

cancer is discovered, treatment is also covered.

Another service people may not be familiar with is Wayne County SAFE (Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners). WC SAFE provides 24/7 sexual assault response throughout Wayne County. They serve men and women age 12 and up who seek help within 96 hours of sexual

assault – providing both forensic services, i.e. rape kits, and medication for the pregnancy and STDs. Other victims’ services include referrals and helping clients make court appearances and file personal protection orders.

Amy Dowd, who is part of the WC SAFE nurses’ program, said the organization helped over 700 victims last year. “I feel personally purposed to do this work,” Dowd said. “I believe in what the program does. The most important thing is that intervention that is supportive and safe has an impact on healing.”

WC SAFE has recently joined in a coalition to help process back-logged rape kits in Wayne County, and they have specific training and literature about sexual assault in the LGBT community.

KICK is the agency for LGBT African Americans, focusing primarily on the Detroit Area. Find out more at <http://e-kick.org>.

► Dedicated

Continued from p. 9

parents got a chance to beam with pride because of their children’s accomplishments. But it also allowed people to ask questions and talk, both beneficial in the eyes of Wolkoff.

“Seeing the faces, hearing the questions people were asking Mac,” she said. “...Each time there was not the microphone going it took more time to get attention... which meant people were talking. People were interacting. There was community being made... I appreciated that.”

That sentiment was echoed by many others in the group, including DTMAC assistant Chloe Gruin-Sands.

“I really liked when people were asking Mac questions and that whole interaction of a conversation,” she said. “I think that it just shows that they were really paying attention and engaging with the material and actually trying to understand it.”

For the members of DTMAC, the quality of the night’s interaction was a point of pride. For McClendon, it was a ray of hope.

“It really don’t matter how many people come but it’s the type of people. You had the young people, the older people. You had almost every nationality in the room. That’s the key. If you can get that kind of magic going, you can’t do nothing but go up.”

► GNA

Continued from p. 9

Popp added that building a “grassroots foundation and a close knit support system” are also important. “We need to do education and work with other support groups and community groups, find out where the gaps are. From an education standpoint we need to reach teachers, clergy, business people and political people and educate them about gender.”

Popp is a counseling intern who is working on her Masters of Science specializing in Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression. “To me it’s humanistic in a sense, helping people find their genuine self. Also finding ways to express that outside of therapy.”

Treasurer Michelle Wavra was thrilled with the event. “It’s all about pulling people together,” she said. “What better way than with wine and cheese? Everybody here is really fabulous.”

Wavra is active with a group called Transitions in Utica, where she’s been impressed with not only the support fellow transwomen have given her in her journey, but with the energy of the youth who come to get involved. “The young people are very intelligent, very energetic. They don’t have the same hang ups my generation had. They’re going to be the ones who really change it for us.”

GNA welcomed new board members, Ami Mansell, Board Chair; Katie Fitzner, Secretary; Michell Wavra, Treasurer; Spencer Fitzner, Director of Youth Services; Damell Jones, Director of Health & Wellness; Anna Oesterle, Member; Laurel Popp, Director of Public Relations; Mykell Price, Member; John Slebodnik, Director of Fundraising and Ray Weisserman, Member.

For more information on GNA, go to [Facebook.com/GenderNetworkAlliance/info](https://www.facebook.com/GenderNetworkAlliance/info).

BTL's Ultimate Guide To Gay Gift Giving

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BY MIKEY ROX

Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and blogger who lives in New York City with his husband and their two dogs. Follow him on Twitter @mikeyrox.

GrubKit

Veteran chefs and kitchen newbies alike will enjoy GrubKit, gourmet food kits that contain the precise amount of premeasured ingredients and an accompanying recipe to create not-so-common culinary delights any night of the week. Most of the current kits have an Asian flair (Mongolian Beef and Cashew Chicken, for instance) and you'll need to provide a few fresh items (eggs don't fare so well in the mail, it seems). There are also sweet kits for your friends who like to save room for dessert, which include a healthy banana muffin kit and a holiday cookie box with recipes for confections from around the world. (\$19-\$29; grubkit.com)

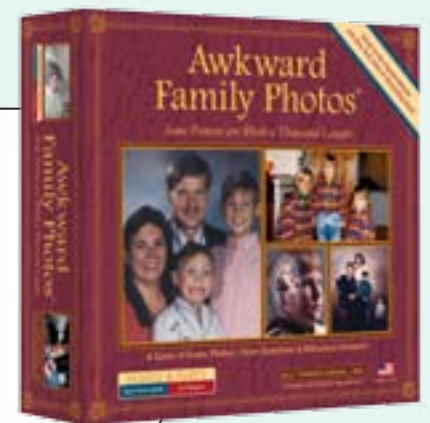


Mango Passport

For those on your list planning a big trip abroad or who simply want to expand their horizons at home, Mango Passport makes it easy to learn a foreign language on multiple platforms, including a computer, MP3 player and smartphone. Available in 16 languages and 12 ESLs, each Mango lesson incorporates interactive tools and rich imagery that eliminates boredom and keeps users engaged. Building a solid foundation on more than monotonous vocabulary memorization, Mango Passport – which includes three 'Journeys' for each language – teaches practical speaking skills and cultural insights while gradually instilling the confidence to start great conversations. Like with the pool boy. (\$176; mangolanguages.com)

Awkward Family Photos

Based on the cringe-worthy-but-totally-relatable website of the same name, the Awkward Family Photos board game combines classic and never-before-seen photos with probing, make-you-squirm questions for a game night full of laughter and creative discussion. Definitely a better alternative than mom passing around those embarrassing, bare-ass baby pictures during dessert. (\$24.99; familyandpartygames.com)



Continued on page 16



Gillette Fusion ProGlide Styler

Transform your moisturized mug into a well-groomed work of art with the Gillette Fusion ProGlide Styler, a three-in-one tool designed for men with a penchant for stylish facial hair. Whether you prefer a thin chinstrap, bushy muttons or a simple goatee, the ProGlide Styler helps scruffy men master their put-together look with effortless maneuverability in and out of the shower. This gift-ready set includes the Power Trimmer fitted with Fusion ProGlide Power Blades, charging base, Microcomb and a Precision Edging Blade. It's perfectly safe for staying svelte below the belt, too. (\$19.99; www.gillette.com)

Cuisinart Smart Stick

Preserve precious countertop real estate with the Cuisinart Smart Stick, the versatile hand blender that goes from pot to pitcher, bowl to beaker with ease. A powerful 200-watt motor spins into action with a simple one-touch control so home cooks can blend drinks, emulsify dressings, puree soups and froth up festive hot chocolate without dirtying up many-piece bigger blenders that require more work than their worth. (\$40; buydig.com)



Snuza Trio

As more and more of our LGBT friends bring babies home, we're left scrambling to find the perfect present for the adorable new parents. Bear in mind that the practical route is always the way to go in these situations – they do not need another fruit basket – which makes the Snuza Trio mobile baby monitor system the ideal gift for gay moms and dads. Snuza Trio includes the cordless Snuza Hero Mobile Baby Movement Monitor that clips directly to baby's diaper and activates an alarm if anything goes awry in the middle of the night; a night-vision camera that can be aimed into the crib and

a built-in microphone to record sounds; and a lightweight, portable audio-video monitor with a 2.4-inch LCD screen that functions to a range of 450 feet from the camera and crib. The system also includes three lullaby tunes to help everyone in the family catch a few Zs before the 3 a.m. screaming begins... again. (\$299; snuza.info)

Brookstone HDMI Pocket Projector

Turn any blank wall into an impromptu movie screening with the HDMI Pocket Projector from Brookstone. With more than two hours of battery life and built-in audio, mobile cinephiles can transform their Apple, Android and Windows smartphones and tablets into a crisp, high-definition viewing experience that rivals that of your local multiplex. This micro Pocket Projector includes a three-foot HDMI cable, a Micro HDMI adapter and a Mini HDMI adapter, and projects an image with a 16:9 aspect ratio – which will make that annual viewing of "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" bigger and better than ever before. (\$299; brookstone.com)

Continued on page 20



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Hear Me Out BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Christina Aguilera Finds Her Voice Again



Christina Aguilera, 'Lotus'

Christina Aguilera opens her seventh album by calling this a “rebirth” despite her “broken pieces” – or, in other words, a really bad few years (last album, tabloids and “Burlesque”). After spending much of her career doing what she’s so good at – using her voice like it’s the moon rocket – the pop singer, who got a profile-boost from “The Voice,” was sick of sitting in Lady Gaga’s shadow: Xtina wanted something different, something “Bionic.” The album, released two years ago, was a massive sound-bomb, not just commercially but creatively – who’s the dummy that thought Auto-Tuning one of the best voices ever was a good idea? Lesson learned: Aguilera rips through these songs with all the superpower of a tsunami, sweeping up everything in its path – even Mother Monster. She slays “Your Body,” the sexy first single, as hard as she does the guys in its cartoonish video; “Army of Me” has her in “Kill Bill” mode, referencing herself as the “Fighter” she was in 2003, at the height of her career; and “Let There Be Love” is a glorious club smash that could be about world peace – except it’s mostly about makeup sex. Along with the Sia-written “Blank Page” – a decent tune made exponentially better by Christina’s heartfelt, powerhouse performance – those are the highlights on an album that never finds the same cohesive groove of her best work, “Back to Basics” and “Stripped,” but

thankfully never gets as out-of-character as “Bionic.” Let Gaga be weird. You just sing, girl. *Grade: B-*



Kelly Clarkson, 'Greatest Hits: Chapter One'

It’s telling that Kelly Clarkson tacks her very first single at the end of her “Greatest Hits” like a footnote: “A Moment Like This” shot the singer into superstardom after it became her winning “American Idol” anthem. You can still hear the joy in the Texan sweetheart’s voice – and you can practically see the tears coming out of those clichés. Now that she’s been singing infinitely better songs, she’s not looking back at that ditty with the same joyful regard (even Clarkson’s knocked the cheese ball herself). But, for better or worse, it made her a household name, even if it never defined her as an artist. Clarkson was too feisty – too good – for a song like that. “Breakaway,” setting the stage for her power-pop makeover, would become her first major hit – and boy, did she ever. Between then and now she’d record the coveted 2004 kiss-off “Since U Been Gone,” and its doppelgängers, “My Life Would Suck Without You” and “Stronger (What Doesn’t Kill You)” – all included

among the 17 tracks, with only one from “My December” (whew!). Though her biggest hits are sound giants, this collection, which includes two of her best ballads, gives a fuller perspective of the talented pop star. The new songs represent an artist capable of almost anything: She goes country for “Don’t Rush” and does the juggernaut “People Like Us,” where she leads an army of underdogs – “the lost and forgotten” – into a fierce battle cry. Of all the things she’s accomplished in 10 years, it’s about time we got a gay anthem. *Grade: B+*

Also Out



Iris DeMent, 'Sing the Delta'

On her first album of new material since 1996, beloved Americana trailblazer Iris DeMent goes back to the Deep South for a twangy set of stories about the good ol’ days and God. The title track is an affecting love letter to her hometown, igniting all five senses – because not only is her songwriting vivid, she’s also a nuanced storyteller with a voice that takes you there. The family tragedy that has her questioning faith on “The Night I Learned How Not to Pray” is particularly lucid. But even though DeMent’s stories are self-specific, the perseverance, sadness and determination she expresses aren’t just hers; they’re everybody’s.



Bat for Lashes, 'The Haunted Man'

A naked Natasha Khan – aka Bat for Lashes – on the Mapplethorpe-like cover of her third release isn’t just a showpiece for a nicely toned body. This is her rawest album yet. “The Haunted Man” is captivating, ambitious and ethereal. It’s a dream you can’t escape from. There is, however, no forgetting it: Written with Lana Del Rey collaborator Justin Park, “Laura” is beautifully bleak-sounding even if it’s meant to be encouraging; “Marilyn,” however, builds a dreamy-pop sound that merges Annie Lennox and Björk. The rich orchestration and theatricality also bring to mind Tori Amos and Kate Bush – name-drops that are only deserved when you can sound as good as them.

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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Sony Action Cam

Anyone who's ever ruined a smartphone trying to document their extreme adventures will covet the Sony Action Cam, a tiny, lightweight video camera to capture all those freefalls, high climbs and daring underwater dives. The Action Cam features Sony's signature SteadyShot image stabilization technology, Exmor R CMOS image sensor and an ultra-wide angle Carl Zeiss Tessar lens. The AS15 model (about \$70 more than the base AS10 model) even offers Wi-Fi connectivity so you can upload and share your videos on the Web – right after you catch your breath. (\$199; store.sony.com)



Keelan Rouge

Treat your beau to handcrafted accessories from Keelan Rouge – the eponymous label of an up-and-coming 26-year-old gay designer from Chicago – which features upcycled men's and women's wallets, cardholders and flasks decked out with whimsical fabrics from vintage neckties, scarves, skirts and other dapper designs. (\$26-\$58; keelanrouge.com)



Continued on page 22

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Boozy Brunch: The Quintessential Guide to Daytime Drinking

Invite the oohs and aahs of your overnight guests as you test your culinary skills with more than one hundred drink recipes and 25 food pairings in Peter Joseph's "Boozy Brunch: The Quintessential Guide to Daytime Drinking." This picture-heavy entertaining guide features a slew of mouthwatering brunch-inspired alternatives and jazzy variations to champagne-based, coffee-based, or fruit or vegetable juice-based cocktails. (\$16.95; rowman.com)

Tequila Partida

Make your rendition of "Feliz Navidad" more authentic with Tequila Partida, the 100 percent blue agave spirit better for sipping than shots. Available in four marques - Blanco, Reposado, Añejo, and Elegante - Partida's hand-harvested, clean taste is recognized the world over. (\$50-\$350; partidatequila.com)

Absolut Tune

Add a splash of panache to your holiday breakfast with Absolut Tune, Absolut Vodka's newest fusion of sparkling



white wine and premium vodka. Wrapped in festive packaging and corked for added sophistication, Absolut Tune works just as well washing down pumpkin French toast as it does as a host/hostess gift with a kick. (\$31.99; absolut.com)

Rabbit Wine Chilling Carafe

Big, bulky chillers are no match for the ingenious and space-friendly Rabbit Wine Chilling Carafe, an aesthetically pleasing glass bottle that holds an entire regular-size bottle of vino kept cold by a chemical-free stainless-steel ice chamber. (\$49.95; kitchencouture.com)

Mumm Napa 2007 Blanc de Blanc

This sparkling wine is made of 90 percent Chardonnay grapes and a touch of Pinot Gris hails from Napa Valley, which since the 1960s

has rivaled the viticulture regions of France, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Thanks in part to its complexity, the Mumm Napa 2007 Blanc de Blanc recently receive a 91-point rating from Wine Spectator. (\$38; mummnapa.com)

Patron XO Café Dark Cocoa

Trade your Irish coffee in for a Mexican version with Patrón XO Café Dark Cocoa, a combination of Patrón Silver tequila and light essences of fresh-roasted java and premium chocolate. Decidedly dry – not sweet like many other coffee liqueurs – Patrón XO Café Dark



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Savage Love (and Hate)



Photo: LaRae Lobdell

Polarizing Media Pundit Talks Sex, It Gets Better & His Own Bullies

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

In his two-decade career as a sex-advice columnist, and more recently as creator of the It Gets Better Project, Dan Savage has entertained readers with his frankness and inspired queer kids with his encouragement – even when some people would rather he just go away. Those same people – critics who have called him racist, transphobic, the devil and even The Gay Fred Phelps – are the ones he takes on in our recent interview before he brings his Savage Love Live Tour to the Michigan Theater at 3 p.m. Dec. 2.

How does it feel going from cheeky columnist to a leader in the LGBT movement after launching the It Gets Better Project?

(Laughs) I don't know! I never describe myself as a spokesman or having any sort of role in the movement – because it pisses off people who probably should be pissed off, or probably just want to be pissed off. I'm just a writer. Usually when people start talking about a gay writer in relation to their role in the movement, what comes next is they want you to shut up.

It's true. There are a lot of conservatives who wish you'd shut your mouth.

There are a lot of lefties out there who are trying to get me to shut up! There are lefty queers who think that I'm the devil.

The people who hate you, especially in the gay community, say that although you created the It Gets Better Project to curb bullying, you are a bully yourself – that you bully the obese, Republicans and Christians. How do you respond to people who call you hypocritical?

Well, usually they're lying or they're full of it, or they're confused about what bullying is. Bullying is a power relationship; it's about the powerful picking on the weak and the vulnerable and the persecuted. That I have an opinion about the obesity epidemic that you disagree with doesn't make me a bully. That I write a column where people are allowed to use the language that they actually use when they talk about their sex lives, and that I use the word "fag" in my column, doesn't make me a bully.

Rick Santorum says I've bullied him – because he is somehow the moral equivalent of a vulnerable and isolated closeted gay 13-year-old growing up in Texas who has no support and nowhere to turn? That's Rick Santorum? This is dumbing bullying down to mean absolutely everything.

People who claim that they've been bullied by me or my column are full of shit. (Laughs) Now they'll claim that *that* is bullying because I'm supposed to go, "Oh, golly gosh, you just threw the word 'bullying' on the table and it's kryptonite and I must melt in the face of it." Somebody disagreeing with you – that ain't fucking bullying.

How about telling Republicans to kill themselves? What's that?

(Laughs) I actually haven't ever told a Republican that they should kill themselves, and the one time on "Bill Maher" I said under my breath, "I wish they were all dead," I immediately apologized before anybody barked at me about it. It was

the wrong thing to say, and I apologized before anybody yelled at me. I didn't wait for there to be a scandal to apologize. You know, when you run your mouth for a living, sometimes you run yourself into a ditch. It's important at those moments to man-up and say, "Hey, that was wrong."

People try to claim that I'm a bully – and it's bullshit. It's actually a form of bullying, you know, when queers show up and somebody throws a jar at your face and dumps glitter on you and says that you're an anti-trans bigot. To accuse somebody in the hothouse environment of queer activism of being an anti-queer bigot is bullying, especially when you've got nothing to back it up.

Where does this hatred come from? How did you become this "bully" within the gay community?

What that comes from is that some fucking queer people are crazy. That's where that comes from! (Laughs) I'm for trans-inclusion. I keep pointing out that the Don't Ask, Don't Tell repeal is not finished because trans people are banned from serving in the military, and I raised \$5,000 for a trans woman's funeral on my blog in 2004. Buck Angel and Kate Bornstein have been guest sexperts. Find me a sex-advice columnist who was seeking out the opinions of high-profile trans people 15 years ago and lending them their platform. If that amounts to anti-trans bigotry, if I'm the enemy in the trans community, then the trans community could use more enemies like me.

The It Gets Better Project wasn't the Suck My Dick, I'm Dan Savage Project. (My partner) Terry (Miller) and I got it rolling and then stepped out of the way. And a lot of trans people made videos. Some of the first videos that came in were from trans people and upped the visibility of trans people. I'm the executive producer of the two It Gets Better specials that we did for MTV, which reached millions and millions of people. One of the six stories we told was Aydian's – who's trans! What's funny is that anything I do that is vaguely in-line with stuff that I've always done that's pro-trans is now, "He's just covering up for his transphobia by being pro-trans."

What do trans people point to? Why do some of them think you hate them?

That I've used the word "tranny" and the word "she-male" in my column. I stopped using them after people raised objections, but people still cite columns I wrote 10 years ago. I think we all know more about trans issues than we did 20 years ago. I have trans friends who actually think we should use the term "she-male" when we're referring to a type of trans woman who does escorting or a particular porn genre, because what other term is there? What are you supposed to say when you mean she-male porn?

You also use "fag," so that must make you anti-gay.

And I use "breeder," so I'm anti-straight. We could pick this apart. I'm a rape apologist. I'm racist. It's kind of hilarious. (Laughs)

The It Gets Better Project has become a

INFO

Dan Savage

3 p.m. Dec. 2
Michigan Theater
603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor
www.michtheater.org

worldwide movement. Did you anticipate it taking off like it has?

No, absolutely not. When I announced it, I thought it would be this cool project for my readers. We hoped that we would get about 100 videos, because I felt like if we got 100 videos, we'd get some of everybody. Terry and I were both aware when we released that first video that not all queer people look like us, have penises like the both of us happen to, want the same things out of life – and it would only be meaningful if there was a lot of everybody, a lot of different kinds of queer people.

We got 100 videos in probably 12 hours or 24 hours, and it kind of blew us away. That just this week It Gets Better launched in Portugal and Italy, and there are It Gets Better Projects in Latin America, Australia, the United Kingdom and Sweden – it's kind of amazing. There's probably 80,000 videos, and millions of people have taken part in the projects.

It became part of a sensation, and then celebrities and politicians started jumping in; we did not solicit videos from celebrities and politicians. The ones that are really valuable to everyday ordinary queer kids are the everyday ordinary queer people who you haven't heard of. We don't want to say that to be happy and loved you have to be Ellen, because not everybody gets to be Ellen.

Some of your critics thought that It Gets Better was too passive, that we should tell kids to fight back. Scott Thompson of "The Kids in the Hall" told me his advice to kids would be to "grow a pair."

(Laughs) You know what, that's what some people said in the videos. One of our favorite videos was from Gabrielle Rivera, this Latina lesbian poet in the Bronx who made this video that some people thought we would hate. In her video she's like, "I'm here to tell you that it doesn't get better. These white people and their money, and they can sit in their nice apartments." But she was like, "Fuck that and these people. I'm here to tell you it does not get better; I'm here to tell you, you get stronger." That's grow a pair – or you will have a pair grown for you. (Laughs)

Most of the misconceptions people have of what's in the videos can be cured if they spend five minutes watching them. If you watch them, what you see are people talking about how they made it better themselves, what they did, how they demanded better of their families and their communities. It didn't just happen to them – the sun didn't just come up and it was better one day. So there's nothing passive about the project.

Who told you it gets better when you were a kid?

People have asked me, "Would you have liked there to be an It Gets Better Project for you?"


See Dan Savage, page 39

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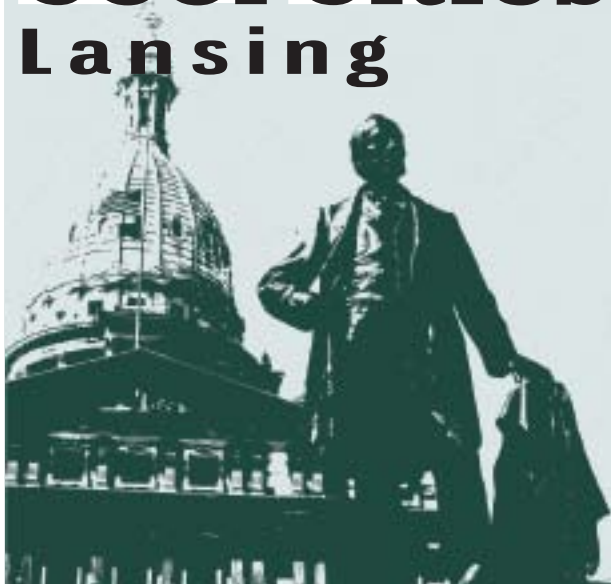


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Go Comedy! tackles the holidays this season with its fourth original holiday revue, "North By North Pole," featuring Chris DiAngelo, Christa Coulter, Bryan Lark, Jen Hansen, Michelle Giorlando and Billy Crawford. Photo: Tommy LeRoy

A Very Real Christmas At Go Comedy!

BY DANA CASADEI

One of the first scenes of Go Comedy! Improv Theater's "North by North Pole" has Jen Hansen as a Meijer greeter, saying "Merry Christmas" to the customers. As anyone who has worked in retail knows, the debate of "Merry Christmas" vs. "Happy Holidays" can be a bitter battle with customers and bosses, one the audience gets to witness from the backlash Hansen receives no matter what she says. This scene, which is about as long as an "SNL" sketch, is one of the many, and I do mean many, moments that tell true stories of the holidays. No magic, no sparkles, just the crazy.

The cast of six and directors P.J. Jacokes and Tommy LeRoy have written one of the most honest things I've ever seen. OK, there are a few scenes that we as humans can't relate to, such as when they play some very eager Christmas trees in a lot, but the rest are very real.

Each scene depicts one of the many aspects of the holidays, ranging from some friendly neighborhood decorating competition to Black Friday shopping, to one of my favorite moments of the night: a group of co-workers planning the holiday Christmas party. It helps that each scene is absolutely hilarious, leaving me with aching sides.

Scene length ranges from very short,

REVIEW

North by North Pole

Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 East Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday through Dec. 22. 90 minutes; no intermission. \$15.

www.gocomedy.net

about 30 seconds, to a few minutes, and there are a lot of scenes in the 90 minutes; it helps that there isn't an intermission.

The group of six works really well off each other, mixing it up with almost every combination possible, and they all work, even though the ones that have all six were my favorite.

One scene that sticks out is the live nativity scene. For starters, there's Michelle Giorlando as a goat who desires a back-story and talks about how her "character" would probably be jealous of Baby Jesus. Then there's slutty Mary (Christa Coulter, a standout throughout the evening); the creepiest Joseph (Chris DiAngelo) you'll ever meet; a lone wise man (Hansen); Baby Jesus (Bryan Lark), whose outfit I won't spoil; and an Angel (Billy Crawford, another notable standout), who isn't the brightest blub in the bunch. This is possibly the most messed up nativity scene you will ever see, and it is fabulous.

As far as costumes go, the women all

wear black dresses while the men wear black pants, button-up shirts and ties, making it easy to add layers for the next scene. The stage is black, with chairs coming and going, and there are no props, making you use – say it with me – your imagination. This is where LeRoy must be mentioned again. As the technical director, the sounds he adds, when say a glass breaks, make it seem as if the items are actually there, adding another layer to the production.

In the last scene of "North By North Pole," Coulter and Crawford play a couple going through the motions of Christmas, all done with only facial expressions and background music, displaying the haphazardness that is this time of year. This scene ties together many of the elements from previous moments throughout, which is something done nicely, and at times surprisingly, throughout the show. But the most important part of this last scene is the very end, when both are home about to fall asleep and Coulter says "Merry Christmas" to Crawford, after going all day without saying it. It's a simple moment, but an important one, showing how sometimes we get so caught up in the season that we forget to say it to the most important people in our lives.

So savor the quiet moments this year with those you love; the crazy will be back next year.

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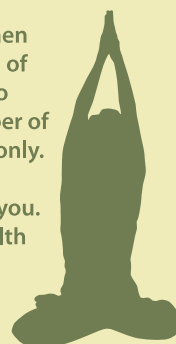
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Deborah Cox Returns To The Stage

Diva Takes On Role In 'Jekyll & Hyde'

BY JEROME STUART NICHOLS

Deborah Cox has had a career in the entertainment industry that most would envy. She's been able to cross back and forth between R&B, jazz, pop and dance in her music career, racking 11 No. 1 hits and a huge gay following in the process. She's also taken her booming dramatic mezzo-soprano voice and acting chops to the stage, making her Broadway debut in the Elton John-Tim Rice musical "Aida" in 2004. Throughout her 17-year career, she's been able to accomplish all of this by doing things her way.

Right now, Cox's way has taken her back to center stage. She's currently co-starring in the touring revival of Frank Wildhorn and Leslie Bricusse's "Jekyll & Hyde" with "American Idol" alum Constantine Maroulis. The macabre musical will march onto the Fisher Theater stage Nov. 27-Dec. 2.

Cox's career began after being discovered by Clive Davis while singing back-up for fellow Canadian diva Celine Dion. The road to becoming a chart-topping singer, Broadway star, mother and catnip for the gays is hardly straight. But it's the passion for the work that keeps her ever-creative wheels turning.

"I've always wanted to be the type of artist that embodies diversity, not just in music but with everything that I do," Cox said in an email interview. "I make an effort to do the things that I am passionate about. Doing jazz is something I have always wanted to do – musical theater, as well."

"When I came into the business, there were so many assumptions as to the type of artist that I was going to be. But in the end, no one really knows. I am still evolving and continue to be a work in progress. I also believe things happen when they are supposed to happen and I am fortunate to be here right now. The lesson that I've learned is to try and live the life you love and do not allow yourself to be defined by others."

She's also not allowing anyone to define her character, Lucy Harris, in "Jekyll & Hyde." She's the first actress to bring the character to life in this reworking of this show. To many, this would be intimidating. But she's using it as an opportunity to really make an impression.

"'Aida' was already up and running. So, I

INFO

Jekyll & Hyde

Nov. 27-Dec. 2
Fisher Theatre

3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit
www.broadwayindetroit.com

was adding my nuances to an already defined template," she said. "This show had to be redeveloped and it's a lot more intense when you are creating a new look for an already-known character.

"We've been on the road doing the show and tweaking as we go. This is a dream come true for me. I am so honored to be doing this role and laying the new foundation for Lucy. This character is a survivor, much like Aida, but more of a sensual character because of her circumstance."

Just because this role is a dream doesn't mean it's easy. Cox is known for her effortless beauty and laid-back style; Lucy is a woman of the night in 19th-century London. It's a far cry from Cox's demure persona, but she has found a way to make it work.

"I have to come completely outside of my skin for this one and not think about it," she said. "I just do it! Lucy has a story to tell and she represents so many of us who put on a façade just to get through the day. She sees through it all but she is also guilty of it."

For an entertainer who clearly sees her rather large gay following, one might think she she's guilty of making an awkward choice with "Jekyll." But she thinks it'll hit all the right notes with friends of Deborah.

"Gays love drama! I know they'll love the tragic storyline and enjoy the talent of the amazing individuals that makes up the cast," she said. "'Jekyll & Hyde' deals with the duality of man. So, on a human level, I think that everyone will leave asking him or herself if they are – more or less – Jekyll or Hyde."

Regardless of that decisive philosophical query, Cox will definitely be back to serving diva realness for the children in 2013. New albums – that's right: more than one – are due next year.



Constantine Maroulis and Deborah Cox in "Jekyll & Hyde," playing at the Fisher Nov. 27-Dec. 2. Photo: Smallz & Raskind

Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Nov. 22

Euchre Tournament - Benefit for Out Loud Chorus 7 p.m. Entry: \$10. Cash prizes awarded. No partner necessary, all levels of ability welcome. Food and beverage service available. Out Loud Chorus, 1950 S. Industrial Hwy, **Ann Arbor**. 734-652-0801. OutLoudChorus@gmail.com Olconline.org

Gender Non-Conformists 7 p.m. A social and discussion group for transgender, genderqueer, gender-neutral and gender-exploring individuals. Space also available to significant others. Meets every Thursday. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Resource Center Health Group 7 p.m. LGBTQ and allied teens 13-18. E-mail for more info. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., **Kalamazoo**. 259-381-2437. Kglrc.org

Speak Out 7 p.m. Offers a welcoming environment for LGBT people to improve their public speaking and leadership skills. Meets the first and fourth Thursday of every month. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. Crystalr@jimtoycenter.org

Friday, Nov. 23

Youth Only HIV Testing 6 p.m. Free anonymous testing. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Battle Creek Pride Free Thanksgiving Dinner 6:30 p.m. BC Pride hosts a free Thanksgiving dinner the day after Thanksgiving. RSVP via e-mail or phone. Donations or offers of assistance. Battle Creek Pride, 910 North Ave., **Battle Creek**. 269-924-9035. DeanaSpencer23@aol.com

50 and Better Friday Group 7 p.m. Designed for those 50 and better looking for an excuse to get out of the house. Goes out every other week or so for miniature golf, a movie, or other activity, per vote. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. PhoenixChurch.org

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Middle Sexes: Redefining He and She; Interviews with transgender, intersexual and bisexual men and women - as well as scientific and academic experts - shed light on the difficulties of people whose gender may fall somewhere in between male and female. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Nov. 24

LezRead 4 p.m. Ann Arbors book group for Lesbians. Meets the last Saturday of every month. LezReads, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. LezRead.com

Sunday, Nov. 25

TransCend 4:30 p.m. Open to persons 18 and older. Younger are welcome with parent or guardian permission. Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

Conversation Station 5 p.m. LGBTQI (and allies) 25 and over: join GOAL each week for discussion, food and a new topic each week. Topic: Where is your sanctuary? Where do you go to re-energize? Get Out And Live!, 714 S. Washington St., Royal Oak. 248-981-4227. MarcilWilliams@yahoo.com GetOutAndLive.me

Monday, Nov. 26

"Half the Sky" with Panel 5 p.m. Documentary Screening: "A landmark movement - inspired by Kristof and WuDunn's work and also entitled Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide - is working to amplify the book's impact. Ignited by a high-profile national television event and fueled by innovative multi-platform initiatives, Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide is galvanizing even more people to join the burgeoning movement for change." World AIDS Week UM, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Laura.thomas4@gmail.com SpectrumCenter.umich.edu

Bad Blood: A Cautionary Tale 10:45 p.m. Suggested donation of \$5. Light refreshments served with discussion to follow. World AIDS Day Detroit, Beaumont Hospital, **Royal Oak**. Amanda.Lynn.Marshall@gmail.com WorldAIDSDayDetroit.com

Tuesday, Nov. 27

HIV Testing at UHS 2 p.m. Offering anonymous or confidential testing free to students and \$20 to all else. UM University Health Service, 207 Fletcher St., **Ann Arbor**. Uhs.umich.edu/hivtesting

HIV On The Ground: Professional's Perspectives On Community Based Efforts 5 p.m. Panel of people working in the field on HIV prevention SexLab, HARC, ACCESS, and APM staff. Spectrum Center, University of Michigan, **Ann Arbor**. SpectrumCenter.umich.edu

Physicians for Human Rights Film Screening 6 p.m. Physicians for Human Rights screening of the film "Philadelphia" for World AIDS Day. Physicians for Human Rights, University of Michigan, **Ann Arbor**. SpectrumCenter.umich.edu

Transgender Life Support 7 p.m. Offering support, education, resources and a social structure for Transgender individuals. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Transgenderlifesupport.org

Wednesday, Nov. 28

World AIDS Day Youth Conference 8 a.m. Each year, the conference seeks to educate youth about how to reduce the risk of HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). Register online. AIDS Committee of Windsor, 511 Pelissier St., **Windsor**. 519-973-0222. Facebook.com/AIDSWindsor

Senior Koffee Klatch 1 p.m. A lively, discussion and social group for LGBT adults over 45. Group covers topics pertaining to aging and outside speakers. Potluck dinners at members homes, lunches out and holiday parties. Meets ever Wednesday on the upper level of the Affirmations building. Senior Koffee Klatch, 290 W. Road Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 586-573-9932. Goaffirmations.org

Newly Single Support Group 6:30 p.m. Group for all dealing with the end of a relationship and want to talk - or listen - to others who share similar experiences. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Goodie 2 Shoes 7 p.m. A new social group dedicated to reaching out to the community and helping others. Meets every other Wednesday at MCC Detroit. Goodie 2 Shoes, 2441 Pincrest St., **Ferndale**. 299-399-7741. AnnCox@Pridesource.com

Sexperteam & Safer Sex Shop Open House 7 p.m. Including testing, safe sex item demos, games and stands. More info available online. Safer Sex Shop, 1209 South University, **Ann Arbor**. SpectrumCenter.umich.edu

The Laramie Project 7:30 p.m. By Moises Kaufman and the Members of the Tectonic Theater Project. Tickets \$10, \$5 for MCC Students. Muskegon Community College, 221 S. Quarterline, **Muskegon**. 231-672-3201. MuskegonCC.edu

Friday, Nov. 30

Getting To Zero 10 a.m. Zero infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. Activities include free/confidential testing, STD and syphilis screenings, diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol tests, displays from HIV/AIDS awareness organizations, workshops on STD prevention and a panel discussion on existing stigmas. Michigan Department of Community Health, 801 Fort St., **Detroit**. Michigan.gov

Coping with Disabilities Group 1 p.m. Ongoing discussion group for adults with disabilities. Discussions about LGBT friendly doctors, counseling, health benefits, and activities. Handicapped accessible. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Structural Vulnerabilities And Opportunities in HIV/AIDS 1 p.m. Dr. Jose Bauermeister from the School of Public Health talks about the structural vulnerabilities and opportunities in HIV/AIDS among Black and Latino young men who have sex with men. Free event. UM's School of Public Health I, University of Michigan, **Ann Arbor**. SpectrumCenter.umich.edu

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Stray Dogs; Darla Carter lives in the rural south with her handsome, roguish husband, Myers. Myers can't hold a job, drinks too much and has a violent streak, so Darla decides to confront Myers with his misdeeds and asks her sister-in-law, Jolene. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

The Real L Word (Ladies Night @ Liquid) 9 p.m. Every Friday, it's Ladies night at Club Liquid Detroit with DJ Lena. MC Lyrik Drag King Teddy, \$5 cover. DJ Lena, 3537 E. Seven mile Road, **Detroit**. 313-826-1192. Djsirlena@gmail.com Facebook.com/liquiddetroit

Saturday, Dec. 1

AIDS Memorial Quilt 9 a.m. A viewing of AIDS memorial quilt panels at Baker College. Baker College, 1903 Marquette Ave., **Muskegon**. 231-672-3201.

World AIDS Day Shabbat Observance 10 a.m. The morning service will incorporate a display of The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, the Misheberach healing prayer, and a Remembrance of Names when the congregation may lift in prayer the names of those they wish to remember. Congregation T'chayah, 15000 W. 10 Mile Road, **Oak Park**. Tchayah.org

Film Screening and Discussion 12 p.m. A film screening and discussion of the film "And The Band Played On." Part of Oakland's World AIDS Day 2012 event series. Gender & Sexuality Center, Oakland University, **Rochester**. Oakland.edu/GSC

HIV 101 2:30 p.m. Graham Health Center presentation on HIV/AIDS. Part of Oakland's World AIDS Day 2012 event series. Gender & Sexuality Center, Oakland University, **Rochester**. Oakland.edu/GSC

How To Survive A Plague 4 p.m. A documentary viewing and reception at 1st Congressional Church in Muskegon. Muskegon's Coalition for HIV Awareness and Prevention, 1201 Jefferson, **Muskegon**. 231-672-3201.

ONE Campaign and FaceAIDS Vigil 5 p.m. ONE Campaign and FaceAIDS is holding a Vigil to remember those lost to AIDS related illnesses. ONE Campaign and FaceAIDS, University of Michigan, **Ann Arbor**. SpectrumCenter.umich.edu

World AIDS Observance in Battle Creek 5 p.m. Third annual observance to be held locally with an outstanding program of speakers, presenters, art, and musicians marking the efforts to eradicate HIV/AIDS from the planet. First United Methodist Church, 111 E. Michigan Ave., **Battle Creek**. 269-963-5567. Firstumcbc.org/index.php

10th Anniversary Celebration & Holiday Gathering 6 p.m. All proceeds will be donated to the USO Warrior and Family Care Program. Cocktails, silent auction, dinner, live auction, music and dancing. Tickets are \$15-40. Perceptions Saginaw Valley, 4519 River Road, **Freeland**. PerceptionsSV.org

Lesbian Euchre 6 p.m. No partner needed. For beginners to experienced. Come join the fun and meet new friends. Affirmations, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 586-303-5977. lsbandanii@aol.com

World AIDS Day: Todd Heywood 6 p.m. Guest speaker Todd Heywood presents "Viral Apartheid: The Rise of HIV Exceptionalism." Part of Oakland's World AIDS Day 2012 event series. Gender & Sexuality Center, Oakland University, **Rochester**. Oakland.edu/GSC

World AIDS Day 6:30 p.m. Reflecting with Grand Rapids vocalist Edye Evans Hyde, GVSU Momenum Dance Co. In Harmony and an all-inclusive community choir. Fountain Street Church, 24 NE Fountain St., **Grand Rapids**. 616-988-8617.

The 12 Drags of Christmas 7 p.m. September Murphy, Deja Van Vartier, Natalia Cole, Hershah Chocolatae, Leah Halston, Sir Wait, Michael Cole and Aurora Sexton. A benefit performance for Ruth Ellis Center and Mittens for Detroit. Tickets available online. Five15 Media, 515 S Washington, **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. Five15.net

World AIDS Day: Jake Mossop 7 p.m. A discussion on the status of HIV featuring Jake Mossop of television's "1 Girl 5 Gays." A free event. A limited number of reserved front-row seats for a suggested donation. Grand Rapids Red Project, 1130 Wealthy St. SE, **Grand Rapids**. 616-456-9063. Redprojectgr.org

World AIDS Day: Take A Stand 7 p.m. Open to the public with a \$2 donation or a canned good. Sponsored by AIDS Committee of Windsor and AIDS Support Chatham-Kent. AIDS Committee of Windsor, 401 Riverside Dr. West, **Windsor**. 519-973-0222. AIDSWindsor.org

MUSIC & MORE

CLASSICAL

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Rachmaninioff & Tchaikovsky" Khachaturian's Suite from Masquerade, Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 2 "Little Russian". Tickets: \$15+. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. Nov. 29 - Nov. 30. 313-576-5111. DSO.org

Fort Street Chorale "Handel's Messiah" The Fort Street Chorale and Chamber Orchestra present their 34th annual performances of G. F. Handels Messiah. Under the musical direction of founder Edward Kingins, the Fort Street Chorale has grown from a handful of volunteers in 1971 to a musically proficient ensemble of some 90 voices. Fort Street Presbyterian Church, 631 W. Fort St., **Detroit**. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 1. 313-865-6306. Fortstreet.org

Kerrytown Concert House "Mad About Chamber Music" Free event. Students from the chamber music program at U-M perform a variety of works. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N Fourth Ave., **Ann Arbor**. 8 p.m. Nov. 28. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

CONCERTS

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "The Music of Queen" In a decade of "super groups" - and four decades beyond - Queen still reigns supreme. The Detroit Symphony presents "The Music of Queen." A "Bohemian Rhapsody" of hit after chart-smashing Queen hit. Brody Dolyniuk sings the solid platinum hits of Freddie Mercury, with the Detroit Symphony. Tickets: \$19+. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. Nov. 24 - Nov. 25. 313-576-5111. DSO.org

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Al Jarreau with the DSO" The only artist ever to win Grammys in three categories. All of your silky Al Jarreau favorites, from Mornin to Moonlighting, plus holiday favorites! Tickets: \$35. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 8 p.m. Dec. 1. 313-576-5111. DSO.org

Kerrytown Concert House "Annual Croissant Concert" Enjoy fresh baked croissants and hot coffee while listening to rich festive sounds of traditional brass quintet music. Tickets: \$10-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N Fourth Ave., **Ann Arbor**. 11 a.m. Dec. 1. 734-769-2999. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Olympia Entertainment "Old Ideas World Tour 2012" Legendary singer/songwriter/poet Leonard Cohen returns to Detroit's Fox Theatre. Tickets: \$50-253. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 8 p.m. Nov. 26. 313-471-6611. Olympiaentertainment.com

Olympia Entertainment Chris Isaak; Grammy nominated singer-songwriter, musician and actor, Chris Isaak, will bring his "Beyond the Sun Tour" to the Fox Theatre. Tickets: \$30-70. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 7:30 p.m. Nov. 23. 313-471-6611. Olympiaentertainment.com

Olympia Entertainment "Channel 955 Jingle Ball 2012" Hosted by The on-air staff of Channel 955, special performances will include Flo Rida, The Wanted, Austin Mahone, Meagan & Liz, Sammy Adams, Bridget Mandler and DJ Beatbox. Tickets: \$29.50-75. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. Nov. 24. 313-471-6611. Olympiaentertainment.com

The Acorn Theater "Something to Live For: The Strayhorn & Ellington Collaboration" Jazz vocalist Elaine Dame in concert, featuring virtuosic guitarist Andy Brown. Tickets: \$20. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Nov. 23. 269-756-3879. AcornTheater.com

The Ark Claudia Schmidt; Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main, **Ann Arbor**. 7:30 p.m. Nov. 25. 734-761-1800. TheArk.org

The Palace Carrie Underwood; With special guest Hunter Hayes. Tickets: \$46-66. Palace of Auburn Hills, 5 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills. 7:30 p.m. Nov. 25. 248-377-0100. ThePalace.net

THEATER

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

Christmas Belles \$11-12. The Twin City Players, 600 W. Glenlord Road, St. Joseph. Nov. 30 - Dec. 23. 269-429-0400. www.TwinCityPlayers.org

Four Scenes: A Hungarian Trilogy \$6-10. Fancy Pants Theater at Studio 246, N. Kalamazoo Mall, Kalamazoo. Nov. 30 - Dec. 9. 269-599-6437. www.FancyPantsTheater.webs.com

Nuncrackers \$19. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Nov. 23 - Dec. 9. 269-343-1313. www.KazooCivic.com

The 1940's Radio Hour \$16-18. Farmington Players, 32332 W. Twelve Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Nov. 30 - Dec. 22. 248-553-2955. www.FarmingtonPlayers.org

The No Hole Holiday \$5-7. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Nov. 23 - Dec. 2. 517-482-5700. www.Riverwalktheatre.com

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY THEATER

Broke-o-logy \$10-12. WSU Studio Theatre, 4743 Cass Avenue, **Detroit**. Through Nov. 24. 313-577-2972. www.wsustudio.com

Late Night Broadway \$5-20. Western Michigan University Department of Theatre at Gilmore Theatre Complex, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. Nov. 29 - Dec. 1. 269-387-3227. www.WMUTheatre.com



Editor's Pick

Considered to be one of the best Christmas concerts in the state, Detroit Opera House's "Too Hot To Handel" is the perfect blend of classical, blues, jazz and gospel. This exciting concert reimagines Handel's holiday favorite with a new and unique twist each year.

Conducted by Suzanne Mallare Acton, this year's "Jazz-Gospel Messiah" will feature riveting soloists such as Alfrda Burke and Karen Marie Richardson, the Too Hot Orchestra and the Rackham Symphony Choir. This is the 10th anniversary production of "Too Hot To Handel" at the Detroit Opera House.

Don't miss this hand-clapping, soul-stirring holiday celebration.

"Too Hot To Handel" begins 7:30 p.m. Dec. 1 at the Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit, 48226. Tickets are \$18-85. For more information, go to www.Michiganopera.org.



Editor's Pick

"The 1940's Radio Hour," a musical comedy by Walton Jones (based on an idea he hatched with Carol Lees,) takes you on a trip to Christmas season, 1942. Members of the "Mutual Manhattan Variety Cavalcade" are preparing a final holiday broadcast for the troops fighting World War II. It's getting close to airtime, and the zany group is coping with backstage drama that threatens to botch their broadcast. Will they be ready in time?

Rachael Rose directs this exciting musical comedy. "It truly is an ensemble show in that every part is important and almost everyone is involved in the

action almost all of the time," says Rose. "From the moment the actors set foot on stage, the action and conversations never stop."

The show runs Nov. 30-Dec. 22 at the Farmington Players Barn in Farmington Hills. Tickets are available now by calling the box office at 248-553-2955.

The Snow Queen \$12-15. Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 30 - Dec. 9. 313-577-2960. www.Bonstelle.com

White As Snow, Red As Blood: The Story of Snow White \$7-15. Eastern Michigan University Theatre, Quirk Theatre, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti. Nov. 30 - Dec. 9. 734-487-2282. www.Emich.edu/emutheatre

PROFESSIONAL

A Christmas Carol \$17-\$40. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Through Dec. 23. 248-377-3300. www.mbttheatre.com

A Little Night Music Previews Nov. 21 (\$27-\$37). \$30-\$46. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron, Ann Arbor. Through Dec. 30. 734-663-0681. www.performance-network.org

A Paradise of Fools \$17 in advance, \$20 at the door. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through Dec. 23. 313-868-1347. www.detroitreptheatre.com

Adult Education: Storytelling After Hours \$10. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. Through Dec. 27. 269-756-3879. www.acorntheater.com

Antigone in New York \$25. The Elizabeth Theatre, Park Bar, 2040 Park Ave., Detroit. Through Jan. 12. 313-444-2294. www.ParkBarDetroit.com

Bringing Up Baby New Year \$10. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. Nov. 23 - Dec. 15. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

Cancer! The Musical \$25. Planet Ant Theatre at Boll Family YMCA Theatre, 1401 Broadway St., Detroit. Through Dec. 15. 313-365-4948. www.brownpapertickets.com

Christmas Belles \$15-18. Broadway Onstage, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Nov. 30 - Dec. 22. 586-771-6333. www.broadwayonstage.com

Christmas with the Rat Pack - Live at The Sands \$25-75. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 27 - Dec. 2. 313-471-6611. www.Olympiaentertainment.com

Cirque Chinois \$30-50. Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, 350 Madison, Detroit. Nov. 24 - 25. 313-887-8500. www.MusicHall.org

Dreamtigers \$10 adult, \$5 children. PuppetART at Detroit Puppet Theatre, 25 E. Grand River, Detroit. Through Nov. 24. 313-961-7777. www.puppetart.org

Ebenezer Previews Nov. 23 (\$15). \$20-25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. Through Dec. 23. 517-655-7469. www.WilliamstonTheatre.org

Five One Acts by Alan Ball \$18. Detroit Ensemble Theatre at Michigan Actors Studio Theatre, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. Through Dec. 2. 877-636-3320. www.DetroitEnsembleTheatre.org

Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet) \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Feb. 9. 313-577-2972. www.Hilberry.com

Greetings! Previews Nov. 21 (\$10). \$15-18. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes & Noble Booksellers Theatre, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Nov. 21 - Dec. 16. 248-850-9919. www.TwoMusesTheatre.org

Jekyll & Hyde \$39-79. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Nov. 27 - Dec. 2. 313-872-1000. www.BroadwayinDetroit.com

Magician Sean Masterson and The Village Puppeteers \$15 adult, \$10 ages 12 and under. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 2 p.m. Nov. 24. 269-756-3879. www.acorntheatre.com

My Way: A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra \$33-35. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Nov. 30 - Dec. 23. 269-343-2727. www.FarmersAlleyTheatre.com

Othello \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Jan. 17. 313-577-2972. www.Hilberry.com

Plaid Tidings Previews Nov. 23 & 24 (at 3 p.m.) (\$18). \$26-\$32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Nov. 23 - Dec. 23. 734-268-6200. www.theencoretheatre.org

Shakespeare's Will \$48. Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing. Nov. 29 - Dec. 1. 517-432-2000. www.WhartonCenter.com

Superior Donuts \$18.50-42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Dec. 15. 734-433-7673. www.purplerosetheatre.org

The Homosexuals \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Dec. 10. www.TheRingwald.com

The Marvelous Wonderettes \$20-\$22. The Box Theater, 90 Macomb Place, Mount Clemens. Through Dec. 8. 586-954-2677. www.theboxtheater.com

The Snow Queen \$10 adult, \$5 child. PuppetART at Detroit Puppet Theatre, 25 E. Grand River Ave., Detroit. Dec. 1 - Jan. 26. 313-961-7777. www.PuppetArt.org

Wolf Cry Wolf Previews Nov. 25-26 (pay what you can). \$10-15. The New Theatre Project at Mix Studio Theatre, 130 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti. Nov. 25 - Dec. 16. 734-961-8704. www.TheNewTheatreProject.org

ART 'N' AROUND

Ann Arbor Art Center "Ann Arbor Art Center Instructor Exhibition" 117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Nov. 1 - Nov. 25. 734-995-8004. AnnArborartcenter.org

Charles H. Wright Museum "Visions of Our 44th President" 315 E. Warren, Detroit. Nov. 1 - April 30. 313-494-5853. Thewright.org

Cranbrook Art Museum "Soo Sunny Park: Vapor Slide" 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 17 - March 17. 877-462-7262. CranbrookArtMuseum.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Worth a Thousand Words: American Political Cartoons" Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley, Flint. Nov. 3 - Jan. 6. Flintarts.org

Grand Rapids Art Museum "Real/Surreal" 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. Nov. 1 - Jan. 13. 616-831-2904. ArtMuseumGr.org

Grand Rapids Art Museum "Salvador Dali's Twelve Tribes of Israel" 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. Nov. 1 - Jan. 13. 616-831-2904. ArtMuseumGr.org

Grand Rapids Art Museum "Robert McCann: New History Paintings" 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. Nov. 1 - Jan. 13. 616-831-2904. ArtMuseumGr.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Treasures from Kalamazoo Collections" 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. Nov. 17 - Feb. 17. 269-349-7775. KIArts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Great Lakes Pastel Society National Show 2012" 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. Nov. 1 - Jan. 8. 269-349-7775. KIArts.org

Michigan State University Museum "Echoes of Silent Spring: 50 Years of Environmental Awareness" 409 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing. June 1 - Nov. 30. Museum.msu.edu/?q=node/527

Michigan State University Museum "Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway" 409 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing. Oct. 6 - Dec. 30. Museum.msu.edu

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit "Anri Sala" 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sep. 7 - Dec. 30. 313-832-6622. MocaDetroit.org

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit "Voice of the City" 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 2 - March 31. 313-832-6622. MOCADetroit.org

The Detroit Institute of Arts "Faberge: The Rise & Fall" 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 1 - Jan. 21. 313-833-7900. DIA.org

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Benjamin West: General Wolfe and the Art of the Empire" 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Sep. 22 - Jan. 13. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

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Classifieds

101-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AA MEETINGS

Ann Arbor-Friday
7:30 pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church Gay AA, 306 N. Division St. Closed/Discussion.
Bloomfield Hills-Thursday
7:00 pm, Sobriety in The Hills Gay AA, Kirk in The Hills Church, 1340 W. Long Lake Rd. Closed/Discussion.
Detroit-Tuesday / Friday
8:00 pm, Downtown Gay AA, Fort Street Presbyterian Church, 631 West Fort St. Closed/Discussion (Open 1st Friday of every month).
Farmington Hills-Monday
8:00 pm, Suburban West Gay AA, Universalist Unitarian Church, 25301 Halstead (Between 10 & 11 Mile Roads) Closed / Discussion.
Ferndale-Monday / Wednesday / Friday
11:30 a.m., Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.

Ferndale-Wednesday
8 p.m., Diversity Wednesday Gay AA, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 540 W. Lewiston @ Livernois. Closed/Discussion.
Ferndale-Saturday
1 p.m. Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.
8 p.m. Go After Your Sobriety Gay AA, Drayton Ave Presbyterian Church, 2441 Pinecrest. Closed/Discussion.
Livonia-Friday
8 p.m., West Side Story's Gay AA, Providence Medical Center, 7 Mile & Newburgh. Closed/Discussion.
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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Diversity Wednesday Al-Anon Family Group
Wednesday 8pm St. Luke's Parrish Hall (in basement) Lewiston & Livernois, Ferndale MI Closed Meeting

Go After Your Serenity (G.A.Y.S.) Al-Anon Family Group

Saturday's 8pm
Drayton Ave. Presbyterian Church
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Pinecrest & Drayton, Ferndale
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See Classifieds, page 40

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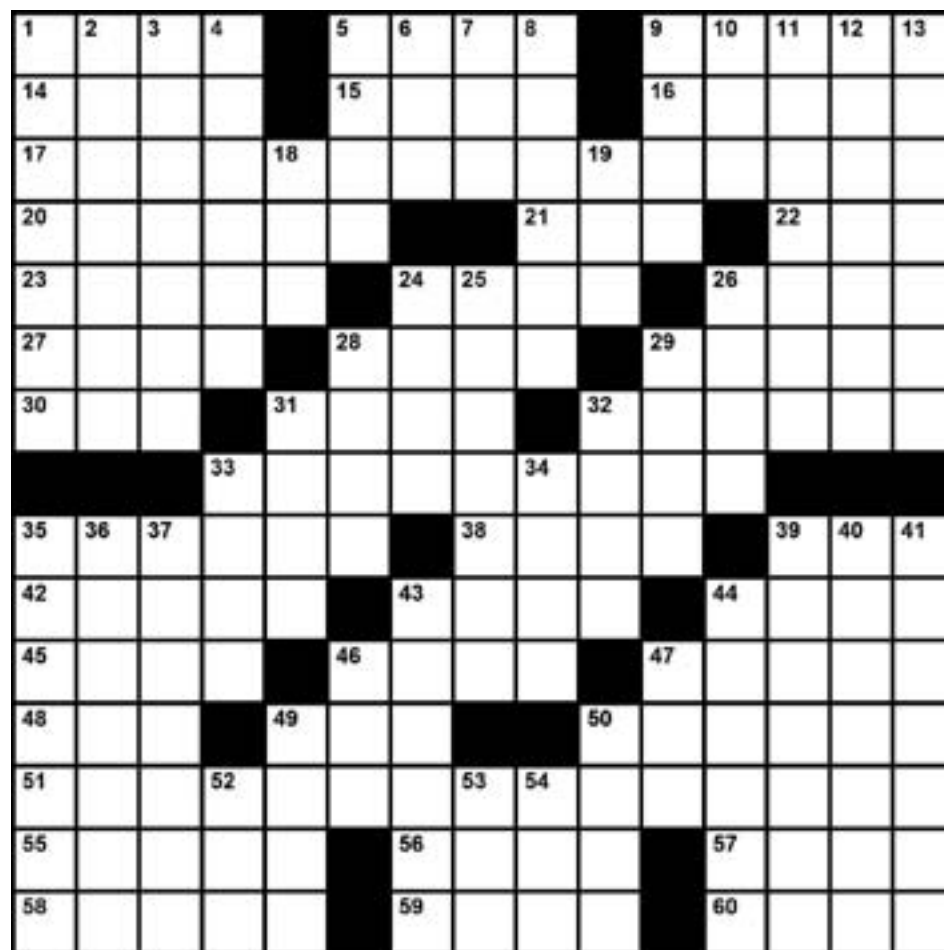
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Across

- 1 Force in "Milk," for short
- 5 Ward of the state Mississippi
- 9 Office aides
- 14 Chalky white
- 15 Visitor at gay.com
- 16 One in a red suit
- 17 With 33-Across, Broadway debut of 51-Across
- 20 Made a profit of, in Mauresmo's sport?
- 21 Scenery chewer
- 22 Quit, with "out"
- 23 Playful aquatic critter
- 24 Blackball
- 26 Brisk pace
- 27 Oats for a stallion, e.g.
- 28 Contrary response to "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina"
- 29 Remove a slip?
- 30 Fireside chat prez
- 31 George Michael's band
- 32 Trial balloon
- 33 See 17-Across
- 35 More like O'Donnell?
- 38 They cover your public hair
- 39 Syndicate
- 42 It's just over a foot
- 43 Baby goats
- 44 Word after fish?

45 Eurythmics' "Would ___ to You?"

- 46 Sub sinker
- 47 Michigan native
- 48 R. Mapplethorpe supporter
- 49 Muscle Mary's pride
- 50 Wisconsin city
- 51 She made her Broadway debut when she was 19 years old
- 55 In-your-face
- 56 Lesbian couple with children
- 57 Estimate beginning
- 58 Fagged out
- 59 Right on a map
- 60 Southern negative

Down

- 1 "Maude," to "All in the Family"
- 2 Cut, like precious stones
- 3 Record, in Johnny Mathis' day
- 4 Dinged up
- 5 Took to court
- 6 P-town clock setting
- 7 Non-Judy garland
- 8 Laurents, who directed the musical of this puzzle
- 9 McAn of footwear
- 10 Racket extension
- 11 Like Harvey Milk to Castro Street?

- 12 Get on one knee, maybe
- 13 Type of step
- 18 Lang. of the von Trapps
- 19 Blower
- 24 Elite Navy diver
- 25 Where the Pied Piper blew it
- 26 It can bear fruit
- 28 Norse bolt maker
- 29 Slippery swimmers
- 31 Roller coaster cry
- 32 Passing fancies
- 33 Trick
- 34 "West ___ Story"
- 35 Pride flag design
- 36 Enjoying a furlough
- 37 Many a place near Aspen
- 39 ___ Islands (Guam and others)
- 40 Bunker player
- 41 In need of some Astroglide?
- 43 Broadway request for Kate
- 44 Arizona city
- 46 Some degree of control
- 47 "Bali ___"
- 49 Too-too
- 50 Silence for Copland
- 52 Cold response
- 53 Vidal's "Visit ___ Small Planet"
- 54 Apt. divisions

Solution on pg. 40

“ People who claim that they’ve been bullied by me or my column are full of shit. ”

–Dan Savage

► **Dan Savage**

Continued from p. 25

and I’ve always said that there was. When I was 13 years old in 1977, growing up in Chicago, I remember very distinctly being out at the movies with my mother, siblings and dad – and there were two gay guys in line holding hands in front of us. My parents were kind of unhappy and freaked out, and I just remember looking at the couple and going, “I always knew I was different. Now I know how.” I just looked at them and thought, “They look happy; I’ll be OK.” And they were telling a story, which is what the project is about.

Fifty years ago, you used to think you were the only queer person in the world. You didn’t think there was another boy like you. Queer kids don’t grow up with that kind of isolation anymore. But there are bullied queer kids out there who know there are happy queer adults in the world, but they don’t know how you get to be one. But so many of us suffered, and then we got past it.

With this project, we were able to share those stories. And there have been other suicides since that have been earth-shattering, particularly Jamey Rodemeyer’s suicide. We’ve heard from thousands of kids – and some parents, even. And nobody writes about the kids who didn’t kill themselves. It’s not a news story when a gay kid doesn’t kill him- or herself.

What can we expect from your talk?

It depends on what people want to talk about. I’ve been writing a question-and-answer column and an advice column for so long that Q&A is my format – that’s what I do. We will talk about whatever people ask me questions about. That’s the deal. Savage Love Live is questions from the house and me running my mouth.

When you speak in more rural places that wouldn’t seem to be open to talking about sex and gay people, what’s that like? Is that a different vibe?

You know, it’s not. Sometimes I worry about it in advance, but there are liberals in those places, and there are queer people in those places, and they turn up. They’re just so happy to look around the room and see other people who agree with them for a change. (Laughs) It’s kind of like when I show up in a college town in Oklahoma or Kansas; you’d think the Bible thumpers would come, but they don’t. I’m always surprised that they don’t. You’d think they would. They read me, but I don’t come across as someone they can make cry.

Who do you go to for advice?

I used to go to my mom, but my mom passed

away, so I go to my brother Billy. He gives great advice. He’s a smart dude.

Does Terry give you good advice?

(Laughs) Well ... Terry and I are spouses; we talk about everything. Terry is a very smart person, but usually when I need advice it’s about Terry, so I can’t really go to Terry.

What are some trends in gay sex? Have dental dams caught on yet?

No – dental dams for anilingus and cunnilingus didn’t catch on during the worst of the AIDS epidemic; they’re certainly not catching on now. Trends in sex: Well, kink has gone completely mainstream. I’d like to think that my column sort of opened the discussion of kink and helped make it more mainstream. Look at “Fifty Shades of Grey” now. Back when, people who had the audacity to hang Robert Mapplethorpe pictures in museums were put on trial; newspapers and courts talked about S&M as if it were the most depraved and disgusting thing that a human being could possibly do next to gay sex. And if you did it *in addition* to gay sex or at the same time, oh my god – you were Satan. Now it’s pretty mainstream. But that’s human sexuality.

Gay sex always had at its heart that sex is about pleasure and intimacy and not about reproduction – and it’s not about reproduction for straight people either, but they like to pretend that it is. Straight people have a lot more sex than they have babies.

For someone who gives advice on sex, you must have a pretty fulfilling, or a least entertaining, sex life. How much of the advice you give is based on your own sex life?

Gay people tend to know more about sex and be better at it than straight people, because sex is what makes us not straight people so we think about it more. So everything I write about – not everything; I haven’t salined my balls. Not yet, anyway. The night is young. Who knows what could happen. But I take a healthy interest in variance and difference. I’m always kind of curious about what people are up to. We have, I think, a pretty awesome sex life, and it’s adventurous and we’ve been together a long time and everything is still pretty ... great. (Laughs)

There were about four other adjectives in there.

There were! Some people are shocked when they come over to our house and they expect that there will be a sling over the dining room table, and there isn’t. It’s very Ozzie and Harriet around here. We kind of have a grandma house. It’s very boring. Not that we don’t have a sling; we do – it’s just not hanging over the dining room table.

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Classifieds

Continued from p. 36

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Solution to puzzle from page 38

S	F	P	D	S	E	L	A	T	E	M	P	S
P	A	L	E	U	S	E	R	H	E	A	R	T
I	C	A	N	G	E	T	I	T	F	O	R	Y
N	E	T	T	E	D	H	A	M	O	P	T	
O	T	T	E	R	S	H	U	N	T	R	O	T
F	E	E	D	T	E	A	R	F	E	R	A	S
F	D	R	W	H	A	M	F	E	E	L	E	R
				W	H	O	L	E	S	A	L	E
R	O	S	I	E	R	L	I	D	S	M	O	B
A	N	K	L	E	K	I	D	S	T	A	C	O
I	L	I	E	M	I	N	E	H	U	R	O	N
N	E	A	A	B	S	R	A	C	I	N	E	
B	A	R	B	R	A	S	T	R	E	I	S	A
O	V	E	R	T	M	O	M	S	O	N	O	R
W	E	A	R	Y	E	A	S	T	N	A	R	Y



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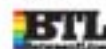


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