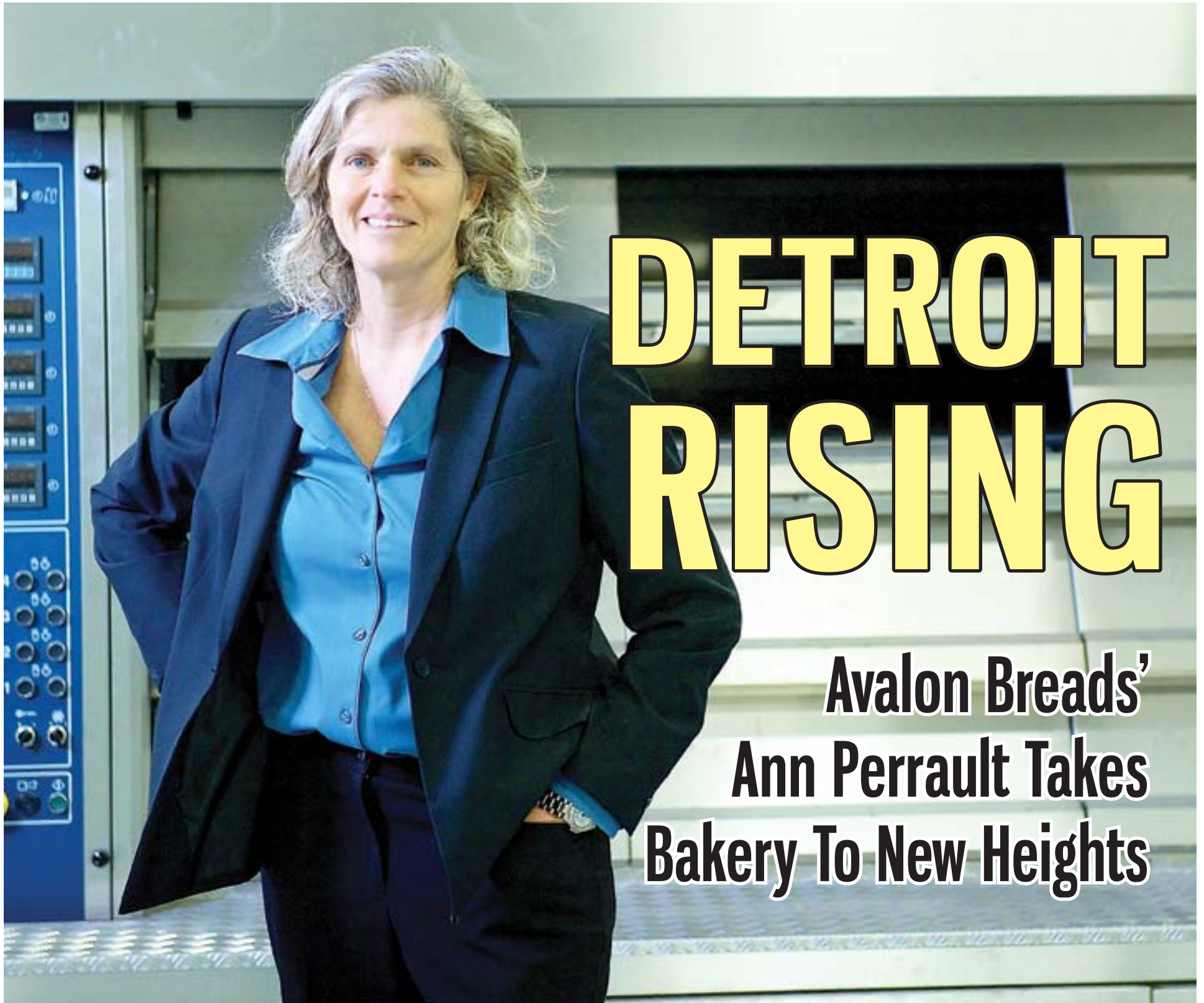


**Report: Discrimination
Bad For MI Economy**

**Hunter Valentine
Heads To Ferndale**

“It's important that
transpeople see a person who is
out and willing to be out. It makes
them say, 'I can do that too.'”

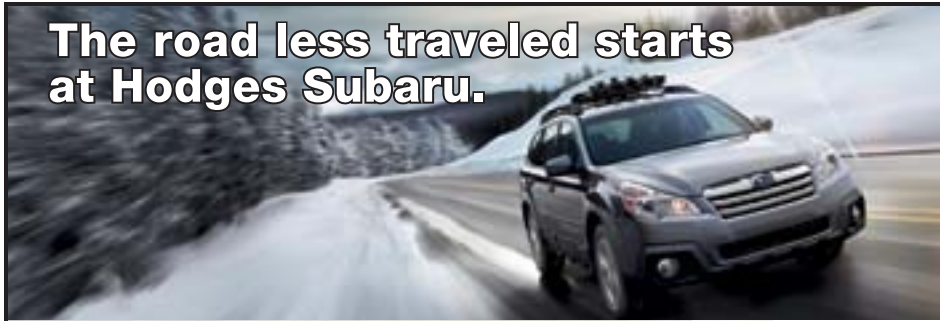
– Michigan's Amy Hunter on
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COVER STORY

12 Avalon Bread rises to new heights
BTL photo: Andrew Potter



“I’ve never tried to deny who I am.”

— Kiyomi McCloskey of Hunter Valentine, pg. 14



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'Reparative' Therapy: Reflections On Dis-Repair

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Reparative therapy is the idea that one can become straight through counseling and prayer. This practice has been recently banned for minors in California (see related story, pg. 10), and a New Jersey lawsuit filed last month is seeking damages against an organization that claims counseling can "cure" people of same-gender attraction. The California ban will have to play out in the court system, as two different judges made contradictory rulings in cases against the ban.

In Michigan, groups like Reconciliation Ministries (formerly part of Exodus), and Courage (which has eight chapters in Michigan) continue to teach that one can simply "pray away the gay" or that by suppressing their homosexual urges they will be better loved by God.

Reparative therapy can range in aggressiveness from counseling and group therapy that embraces gays as sinners and shepherds them with a loving mask towards repentance, to the hard-lined hellfire and damnation approach to conversion. There are even instances where physical behavior modification techniques are used. In his 28 years of social work, Dr. Joe Kort has seen over 300 patients who have needed counseling after being harmed by reparative therapy.

"In California they're stopping these treatments for teenagers because they're using electrical shock therapy, behavior modification like giving them injections to make them feel ill. They'll show pictures of the same gender and shock them so they'll associate their attraction with the shock. None of them do this therapy without religion...I help people understand that what they suffered is religious abuse. Just growing up gay is traumatic. They are bombarded with harmful images their whole lives. I help them see how their views have been shaped by society and their experience," Kort said.

Kort said reparative therapy movements try to attract people when they are young, and get them "hooked" by preying on them emotionally and making them feel guilt, shame and confusion. "This is not healthy for anyone. It is spiritual abuse."

"I've read this stuff and what they do is focus on words that make people feel shame and disgust. Here's what these people say: 'Don't tell us we're anti-gay. There's nothing gay about being a homosexual.' All this literature

focuses only on negative words, and even the word gay is too positive for them."

The Michigan Project for Informed Public Policy uses "sound psychological and other social science research to inform public policy." Project director Dr. Judith Kovach said that while her organization must remain neutral about specific legislation, they are able



In his 28 years of social work, Dr. Joe Kort has seen over 300 patients who have needed counseling after being harmed by reparative therapy.

to shed light on the research behind reparative therapy so that legislators and the public can be aware.

"There is a concern that, with the negative attention this type of 'therapy' has received, reparative therapists will continue their techniques under a different label. Often, reparative therapy is practiced by unlicensed individuals and religious practitioners and

clergy," Kovach said. "The ban on reparative therapy in California is a positive step in removing discrimination from the catalog of psychotherapy for youth, but this is a very difficult thing to do. Because reparative therapy is based on the anti-scientific claim that any non-heterosexual sexual orientation is problematic, we do not consider it a treatment or form of psychotherapy at all. Reparative therapy has also failed for decades to yield the outcomes that it claims to provide, and research has found that it can be harmful. Religious practitioners, who are not acting as mental health professionals, may also continue these practices without penalty from this law."

The Southern Poverty Law Center has identified 70 reparative therapists across the country who advertise conversion services. "People who have undergone conversion therapy have reported increased anxiety, depression, and in some cases, suicidal ideation. The devastating consequences of conversion therapy are why the Southern Poverty Law Center is dedicated to ending this practice and defending the rights of individuals harmed by it," the group's webpage says.

Learn more about MPIP at <http://mpipp.org/>.
Learn more about Dr. Joe Kort at <http://www.joekort.com/>.

The Journey Back: One Man's Life Hollowed Out By Shame

"Eric Smith," is an ex-ex-gay who did not want to give his name for publication because it is still hard for him to talk about how he spent a dozen years of his youth, from 21-33, suppressing his true identity.

"When people come out and say gay is a choice, I know that it is not I've tried everything not to be gay. I didn't want this," he said. Now at the age of 53 he has trouble dating and being intimate, and fears that he may always be alone.

Smith came out at 17, and even had a boyfriend for two years who was training in the seminary. His parents, who he calls "very Catholic," supported him. But at 21 he became "saved," and started going to a Pentecostal church. He hid his sexuality at first, but ended up telling a fellow parishioner.

"I confided to a woman at church and her response surprised me. She said I could change it," Smith said.

The woman told church leaders, who directed Smith to an "ex-gay" therapist, who then helped him get involved in Exodus, a nationwide organization that focuses on irradiating homosexuality by convincing gays that they can be straight.

For Smith the group brought comfort and stability to his confusion over being gay. "I didn't want to be gay. I wasn't happy. Even before Exodus I thought I was going to



hell. I didn't like being gay. It was all about partying. I didn't know anyone in a committed relationship. It wasn't what I wanted. I wanted to be loved."

He tried to bury his feelings. The therapist and fellow support group members told him that he had to be strong, and resist the devil's temptations. "Some people have a cross to carry," they would say, and shame on those who weren't strong enough to carry it.

"I was never happy. I was going to church three times a week, plus therapy. I wouldn't

The therapy was more confusing than helpful. "It put you in a state of limbo in relationships. I'm gay, but sometimes I still think I'm not really gay. That something is wrong with me. That I must have had something happen to make me this way. Even though I know I'm gay, it's hard to get rid of that limbo."

go out to the malls because there was too much temptation. I didn't drink. I quoted Bible verses. For fun my friends sat around playing cards and praying, sometimes watching TV. That's how I spent my 20s, and I regret that. I'll never get that time back," Smith said.

Despite the regimen and the support, Smith could not stay straight. "During the whole period, I would be on the downlow. Every six or seven months I would go to the bar and find someone to have sex with. I'd think 'I can't keep doing this,' and I'd feel such shame. I

would go back to the group and confess and ask for forgiveness.

"They always felt that I wasn't good enough, that I was a terrible person. I could never make the mark. I got sick of feeling bad about myself."

In his years of therapy, one relapse in particular caused him the scorn of the group. He and a fellow group member began seeing each other on the downlow, and when other members found out they kicked the ostracization up a notch. "My best friend was getting married and I was supposed to stand up in their wedding, but they told me that I wasn't even allowed to go. When the group had outings, I was not allowed to go. Like if people went out for coffee after a meeting, I had to go straight home."

The therapy, he said, was more confusing than helpful. "It put you in a state of limbo in relationships. I'm gay, but sometimes I still think I'm not really gay. That something is wrong with me. That I must have had something happen to make me this way. Even though I know I'm gay, it's hard to get rid of that limbo."

His family tried to help. "Looking back I'm embarrassed about it, but my parents would try to get me out of the closet. They were so

See Out Of Shame, page 10

Report: Anti-Gay Discrimination Bad For Economic Development

Michigan Dept. of Civil Rights Year-Long Study 'Conclusive'

BY TODD A. HEYWOOD

LANSING – In a stunning report released Monday, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights has determined that anti-gay discrimination is having a negative impact on Michigan's economic development and is driving business and people from the state.

"We do not believe that this report mandates particular conclusions must be drawn on the merits

of particular

legislation; instead we assert that the report conclusively establishes that the economic implications of LGBT inclusion/exclusion are real, they are substantial, they are predictable and they must be a part of any informed policy discussion," wrote Daniel Krichbaum, executive director of MDCR, wrote in his letter introducing the report to Commissioners.

The report is based on a year-long study by the department which included public hearings in several cities, as well as submission of online and anonymous testimony about discrimination.

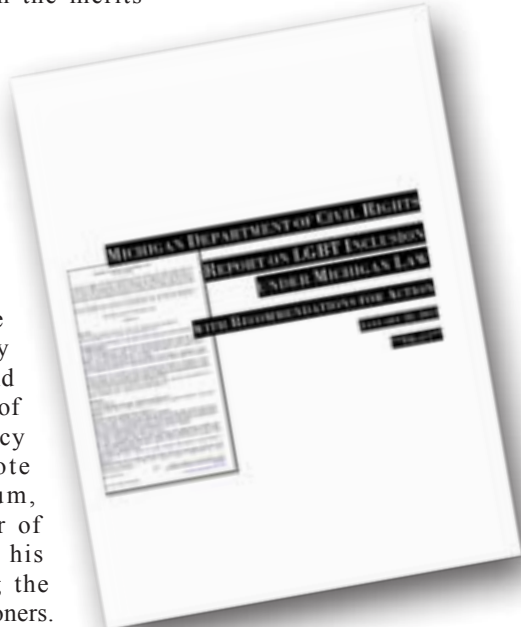
A significant portion of Michigan residents falsely believe that LGBT persons are protected from discrimination in employment, housing or public accommodations in Michigan by state and federal laws. In fact, only 21 cities and townships prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and or gender identity and expression, the report says. And those municipalities that prohibit such discrimination do so in ways which render such local laws unenforceable. The report

says many of the localities have shut down programs to investigate complaints, or that awareness of the complaint process was lacking in the municipality.

It concludes with 11 recommendations for the Civil Rights Commission. Among those recommendations are that the Commission adopt resolutions opposing measures to restrict LGBT equality,

movement "one big step closer to the realization of full equality in Michigan," Equality Michigan praised the new report in a press release late Monday night.

"It is also gratifying that the report so eloquently pointed out the broader economic impact on not just the LGBT communities, but the entire state," said Emily Dievendorf, policy director of Equality Michigan, in the press release. "The report



This report provides both analytical and anecdotal evidence that decisions like whether to expand civil rights protections to include sexual orientation has very real social and economic implications for Michigan. Additionally, the report identifies a number of steps which can be taken by public policy makers in Michigan to address these implications.

continue to encourage the legislature to amend the Elliot Larsen Civil Rights Act to include gender identity and sexual orientation, increase public information campaigns to inform people the LGBT community is not protected under current law, encourage the legislature to remove state laws which have been struck down as unconstitutional – such as Michigan's sodomy law, and the report's findings, specifically that many people are leaving Michigan because of anti-gay policies, should be shared with the Governor's policy staff.

Saying the participation of hundreds of Michigan residents was "courageous" and brought the LGBT

finds that Michigan voters not only support an end to this inequality and hinderance on our economic recovery, but believed that the measures to address this problem were already in place. Equality Michigan calls on the Michigan Civil Rights Commission to adopt this report expediently. The Legislature and Governor Snyder, who were elected on promises of focusing on economic barriers, now have a roadmap to cultivating the diverse and inclusive Michigan that has proven to result in economic growth."

The Civil Rights Commission, which is appointed by the Governor, saw the report for the first time Monday, and will take up the recommendations at a later date.



Transgender Equality: Amy Hunter's Full Time Job

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

The past few years have been a whirlwind for Amy Hunter, a transgender activist from Kalamazoo who has just been named Co-Chair of the Victory Fund Campaign Endorsement Committee. Having a top position on a committee that helps support out candidates in races across the country is a big step for the 52 year old. Hunter transitioned seven years ago, but it is only one of many exciting things she's been up to since making the big change in her life.

Hunter explained how the transition not only changed her physically, but also brought out her inner-activist. "I transitioned in '06 and I was always sort of political, but I became overtly political around that time. It started with understanding, when I was looking for resources and then realized how little there were. It made me more of an activist.

"I chucked my old career and started doing politics full time. It hasn't all been smooth sailing, but I can't imagine not being political," she said. Previously she'd worked doing lighting in the film business.

But now she herself is in the limelight. Including being onstage at the Democratic National Convention's LGBT Caucus gathering as one of 14 transgender delegates in 2012. "It was amazing. We were like rock stars," she said. "It was a really affirming experience. Finally equality is a plank in the Democratic Party platform. Pretty amazing to be part of a party that was unified along those progressive principals when we haven't always been."

Here in Michigan, Hunter has built up an impressive resume of creating change that helped bring her to DC and into a leadership role at the Victory Fund.

In 2008 and 2009 she got involved with KAFE, the Kalamazoo Alliance For Equality, serving as a liaison between KAFE and the One Kalamazoo Campaign. "I did a lot of the behind the scenes negotiating with the City Commission and the (City) Attorney. One of the things that is important is that we made a strategic choice to put me in a highly visible position. It's important that transpeople see a person who is out and willing to be out, it makes them say 'I can do that too.'"

Currently Hunter is the chair of KAFE, whose focus is now

See Amy Hunter, page 7

Equality Michigan Hires New Victim Services Director

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Yvonne Siferd is no stranger to the Equality Michigan office in Detroit. She used to be an intern back when it was still called the Triangle Foundation, and when Melissa Pope ran the victim services department. But now that the energetic young attorney has finished law school and gotten some experience under her belt working with Amnesty International and Wayne State University, she's ready to hit the ground running as the new Director of Victim Services for Equality Michigan.



Yvonne Siferd

She started last week, filling the gap left when Nusrat Ventimiglia left the organization last fall to pursue other job opportunities. Siferd is passionate about the law and the success of the organization, stating "Equality Michigan, especially our department, is all about the victims, getting the right resources to them and helping them navigate the system."

While she is still getting situated, she said there are a handful of cases on her plate already. Her internship under Pope in 2009 has given her a head start in understanding how the program works. "I learned a lot about outreach and talked to people who called in. She taught me a lot about how to listen and how to effect change."

The victims services program offers support and resources for individuals who have experienced hate crimes, discrimination, intimate partner violence, or bullying. Siferd joins Victim Services Advocate Sara Spurgeon who often connects one-on-one with victims. Together they plan to continue serving the over 700 people who contact the organization each year.

"People should know we're here for them, and that we're going to work our butts off to make sure everybody is treated with dignity and respect," Siferd said.

"Yvonne is someone with a plethora of skills, experiences, and ideas which we are confident will make a positive impact on Equality Michigan's anti-violence efforts. The work of our director of victim services is a tireless and often thankless position within the organization that plays a major role in a pivotal part of our work. We are fortunate to have someone as talented and qualified leading our efforts to serve victims of anti-LGBT bigotry in Michigan," said Emily Dievendorf, Equality Michigan's director of policy.

Equality Michigan announced Siferd's hiring after conducting a nation-wide search. Siferd is a native of Ohio who moved to Michigan in 2003 to study civil rights and sexuality related law.

To learn more about Equality Michigan and all the services they provide, check out their website at www.equalitymi.org.

Danny Windsor Dies At 87

Fixture Of Gay Night Life In 1960s Detroit And One-Time Flying Monkey

BY TIM RETZLOFF

MUSKEGON – Danny Windsor, a world-traveled entertainer and emcee at gay night spots in Detroit in the 1960s and purportedly a flying monkey in the classic 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, died Jan. 19 at Muskegon's Brookhaven Medical Care Facility, where he had lived since suffering a stroke in 2009. He was 87.

In a career that spanned decades and continents, Windsor dazzled audiences first with comedic pantomime and later by portraying some of the top female stars of the day.

Windsor was born Daniel Boone in Santa Barbara, Calif. on June 2, 1925, an only child of vaudevillians.

Brought up by his grandmother, he caught the showbiz bug himself. He worked as a stock player and dancer for MGM at the height of the studio system in the 1930s. While at MGM, Windsor was tapped to play a dancing tree in a jitterbug scene from *The Wizard of Oz* that was cut from the final version.

As Windsor would later explain, when one of the flying monkeys showed up on the set with liquor on his breath, the 14-year-old stepped in as a replacement.

In World War II, he served in Guam. During his military service, Windsor met Willis Clark and the two created a pantomime routine and began performing as Doodles and Spider, with Windsor taking the stage name Danny Young. After their discharge in 1947, they were mainstays in San Francisco for three years before hitting the road.

Doodles and Spider opened for Judy Garland at the Palace Theater in New York in October 1951 and in early 1952 – when television was still in its infancy – appeared on a live broadcast of Milton Berle's *Texaco Star Theater*.

When the act broke up, Danny Young became Danny Windsor and began his solo career. He played nightclubs from Toronto to Atlantic City to Hong Kong to Bucks County, Pa.

In the early 1960s, Windsor landed in Detroit, working for a time at the Ten Eleven on Farmer St. He later emceed wildly popular female impersonation shows at the Diplomat Lounge on Second Boulevard. "Our shows went on at nine, 11 and one," he remembered in a 2003 oral history interview. "We used to do three shows a night. We worked our asses off."

During the same interview, Windsor recounted how an old style of camp

humor – a mix of double entendre, gender bending and wit – shaped many gay bars of an earlier era. "I think camp acts, that kind of act starts to draw the gay crowds because in those days, gay wasn't openly gay," he said.

Since many bars also attracted a "tourist" trade, his act served as a bridge between gay and straight worlds. "If

with all of us as younger entertainers," Bruno shared.

Bruno also noted that Windsor as Merman or Disco Dolly often got more laughs than Bruno did in his Joan Rivers persona. "The audience adored him, as did I," Bruno said. "He was a pro, a veteran in every sense of the word. He taught me a great deal."



Danny Windsor

Windsor recounted how an old style of camp humor – a mix of double entendre, gender bending and wit – shaped many gay bars of an earlier era. "I think camp acts, that kind of act starts to draw the gay crowds because in those days, gay wasn't openly gay."



A clipping promoting Danny Windsor at the Club Ten Eleven from the Michigan-based magazine "Guest" in the early 1960s. Photo courtesy of Tim Retzloff.

something was slightly gay, people went to see it, especially the gay crowd."

By the mid-70s, Windsor began to perform predominantly in drag, impersonating such greats as Ethel Merman, Totie Fields and Judy Garland. He also created an outlandish character called Disco Dolly.

In 1977, he opened the Eagle's Nest, the first known gay bar in Muskegon. He originally had doubts about opening a gay establishment in western Michigan, but the club was a success for several years thanks to his troupe the Danny Windsor Revue.

Bobby Bruno, who has performed as the renowned Jennifer Foxx throughout the Detroit area and beyond since the mid-70s, worked with Windsor at Bally's in Atlantic City from 1988 to 1993. Contacted via Facebook, Bruno heralded Windsor's talent and professionalism. "Mr. Windsor had a strong maternal/paternal instinct

Windsor retired to Muskegon in the early 1990s, having discovered the town in the 50s when he appeared at the Northway Lanes bowling alley. Even in retirement, he loved to entertain and worked for many years as a greeter at Meijer.

Windsor last performed on stage at age 82 in a farewell extravaganza at the Frauenthal Center for the Performing Arts in Muskegon in Aug. 2007.

Windsor loved to regale audiences with stories of celebrities he had known, including Marlene Dietrich, who once borrowed a cup of sugar from him. Five years later they met again and she recognized him. "You're the one with the sugar!" she shrieked.

No memorial service is planned. According to the executor of his estate Debra Brown-Hendrickson, Windsor's body has been cremated and, per his wishes, friends will scatter his ashes near Palm Springs, Calif.

Boy Scouts of America Considering End To Policy Ban On Gay Scouts

BY TODD A. HEYWOOD

The national Boy Scouts of America is considering the elimination of its policy prohibiting gay scouts.

“Currently, the BSA is discussing potentially removing the national membership restriction regarding sexual orientation. This would mean there would no longer be any national policy regarding sexual orientation, and the chartered organizations that oversee and deliver Scouting would accept membership and select leaders consistent with each organization’s mission, principles, or religious beliefs,” said BSA Spokesperson Deron Smith.

The move comes after over a year of intense public scrutiny by scouting activists - including Zach Wahls and Jennifer Tyrrell. Wahls made headlines and become an icon for the LGBT equality movement after his moving testimony

to the Iowa legislature about being the straight son of lesbians. Tyrrell was removed from her post as an Ohio den mother because she was a lesbian.

Both joined with the online organizing group Change.org to create public pressure campaigns encouraging BSA to change its policies. Over one million people have signed onto the Change.org campaigns, the organization reports.

Activists were quick to praise the move.

“This would be an incredible step forward in the right direction,” Wahls told GLAAD for a press release. Wahls is an Eagle Scout and found of Scouts for Equality. “We look forward to working with BSA Councils and chartering organizations across the country to end the exclusion of our gay brothers in Scouting, as well as the gay and lesbian leaders who serve

See Boy Scouts, page 11

► Amy Hunter

Continued from p. 5

on political campaigns and statewide action. “We’ll probably pick a couple of candidates for 2014 and work hard for them, and support more issues like fair districting, which is becoming increasingly important,” she said. “What’s happening in Michigan, Wisconsin and Ohio is that so many of the congressional districts have been gerrymandered so it’s almost impossible for Democrats to win. This happened a lot in the last election cycle. More people voted for Democrats, but they did not get the seats...Issues like fair districting, as well as amending the state’s Civil Rights Act, those things are going to be very important.”

But that’s not all. Extending herself beyond Kalamazoo, Hunter has worked with the Equality Michigan Pride PAC, which is the statewide political agency which endorses and supports out candidates within the state.

In Feb. 2011 she took the lead at Equality PAC and says that changes are still in the works. “What I began attempting to do was shift the direction of pack, so we weren’t doing the same thing as Victory Fund. We (now) aren’t supporting strictly out candidates. None of us can advance in progressive politics in Michigan - the environmental folks, the labor folks, the fair housing folks, women’s issues - none of us can advance unless we can all advance. We made a conscious decision to start supporting progressive candidates that support equality,” Hunter said.

Overall, her mission isn’t just for LGBT equality, but for the T’s to get more recognition and support in organizations that do this type of work. She noted that while many organizations

embrace the idea of supporting everyone in the community, some lack first-hand experience with transgender volunteers, and sometimes an understanding of how transgender people’s needs are unique. Her job, she said, is to make sure that as other transgender activists come up, there is already a place for them.

The Victory Fund appointment came after a trip to Long Beach, California for a leaders’ conference. “One of the things I found disturbing was the statistics. Out of 250 people that were affiliated with Victory Fund, there were only four of us. Trainings they were running were not trans specific. One of the things I talked about was that we include the T all the time but it’s not always followed through with an LGBT organization,” Hunter said. “I’ve been urged to bring transpeople into the organization. We put a transperson on the board and that person brings trans people in, but on the front end they didn’t have anything for them. If we agree that transpeople are important, what are we going to do to let them know they have a place?”

“I told them, let’s have some discussions over the next few months. Our struggles are different. The decisions we make are often times irrevocable, especially if we choose to be out. There’s a level of support that is not understood.

“There is a big wave of transpeople coming that are getting to that age where they start embracing public service. It’s important we start now trying to find a way to welcome them and give them the resources and leadership they need,” Hunter said. “The American dream is for all of us. The promises don’t just apply to a narrow view. How can somebody like me, and somebody like you, how can we encourage and nurture everyone who gets pushed to the fringe to participate? That’s the challenge. And I ask, what contribution can I make?”

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BRIEFS

NORTH CAROLINA

Wife Of Female Army Officer Can Join Spouses Club

(AP) – A woman who is married to a female Army officer at Fort Bragg and who was recently denied membership in its officers' spouses club said late Friday that she has been invited to become a full member.

The invitation came on the same day that Broadway also learned she'd been named Fort Bragg's 2013 "Military Spouse of the Year" by Military Spouse magazine. She is married to Lt. Col. Heather Mack, who gave birth this week to the couple's second child, a baby girl.

"I'm pleased, I'm happy," Broadway said by phone Friday night. "I hate that it took so long for them to come to this conclusion. But I think things happen for a reason. I'm a very devout Christian. I've had faith in God this whole time. I think if anything it's brought up a larger issue: We have two classes of service members and how they're ... not treated equally."

See the full story online at Pridesource.com

PROVIDENCE, R.I.

Exemptions Key To RI Marriage Debate

(AP) – The fate of gay marriage legislation in Rhode Island could hinge on the exemptions it affords religious groups that oppose it, the state Senate president said Friday, a day after the House overwhelmingly passed the bill.

Teresa Paiva Weed said she remains opposed to the bill and has heard that the sticking point for many senators is on how broad of a religious exemption is included in the only New England state that doesn't allow same-sex marriage.

Paiva Weed said several senators have told her they want a more expansive religious exemption to protect religious leaders, churches, religious charities and organizations that do not support same-sex marriage. See the full story online at Pridesource.com

TORONTO

Ontario Gets First Female And Openly Gay Premier, Kathleen Wynne

(AP) – Canada's most populous province is getting its first female premier and the country's first openly gay premier after the provincial Liberals chose a new leader.

Former education minister Kathleen Wynne won the party's leadership race Saturday.

Wynne is making history as Canada's first openly gay premier, a subject she confronted head-on in a speech Saturday morning. Wynne says Ontario is ready for a gay woman as premier and says she does not believe Ontarians hold prejudice in their hearts.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper congratulated Wynne, and thanked outgoing Premier Dalton McGuinty who is stepping down after nine years in office. He won a third term last year, but his party was reduced to a minority of the seats in the legislature and must rely on the opposition to pass legislation.

Extended briefs are available online at:

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Is The Constitution Passé?

On The Precipice Of Big Change, Perhaps It's Time For A Rethink



Thinking
Out Loud

OPINION BY ABBY DEES

Despite my radical spirit, my committed feminism and deep distrust of old establishments, after I went to law school I became a fawning, dorky fan of the U.S. Constitution. It's normal for lawyers to do this. We see in the Constitution all this promise of equality and justice, even though we know all too well what a problematic document it is, and how very bloody its failings have been. We will fight for it like rabid dogs.

I was, therefore, gobsmacked to hear esteemed constitutional law professor Michael Seidman calling it "an ancient and outdated document" on CBS Sunday Morning last week. I almost threw my cereal at the TV. I refrained, and instead, continued to watch while suppressing a twitch. OK, he made some sense. His question was why are we so beholden to a bunch of dead guys?

Come to think of it, is there really a good reason for the Electoral College or a two-year term for members of the House other than, "because the it's in the Constitution"? All those provisions have done for us is Bush II and unending campaign robocalls. Even beyond its pragmatic failings, Seidman points to the gun-control debate to illustrate our misguided obsession with what people thought 200 years ago. Instead of discussing the role guns should play in our society today, we get bogged down on what the framers meant in 1790. One's opinion on the matter then becomes needlessly elevated to a litmus test about who's most patriotic, all because of the 2nd Amendment, written back when guns coughed out a lead gumball. At this point, forget rational debate.

I can't really argue with him, but I'm not willing to concede so quickly, especially since this year promises to be a turning point in LGBT rights. There's no doubt that the Constitution got many things profoundly wrong – for example, the notorious provision that counted slaves as three-fifths a person, or the

fact that only rich white men got to vote. Whoops.

I also see in it, though, a good faith attempt to be enlightened, to be better. The framers understood that it was inherently flawed and subject to the prejudices of the times. Thomas Jefferson probably embodied this contradiction as much as any of the founding fathers: he was a seeker of truth and also slave owner. I make no excuses for this, but he was at least somewhat aware of his failings. He wrote, "I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions, but laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind.... We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors."

There is nowhere else in our legal canon such a document that allows for improvement to our collective wisdom or marks so well where we've been. The 3/5ths provision still exists in the text of the constitution, but it has been superseded by the extraordinary historical moment of

the 14th Amendment (1866), recognizing the equality of all American citizens. And we've bumped along toward full equality for women, despite the failure of the ERA. The Supreme Court, as interpreter of our Constitution, has enshrined our biases, and then at other times, pushed us well out of our national comfort zone. In recent history,

we only need look at the shameful Korematsu case of 1944 in which the internment of Japanese-Americans was held to be lawful. Then, just ten years later, the Court declared segregation on the basis of race to be unlawful in *Brown v. Board of*

Education.

My point is, the Constitution isn't a crumbling piece of parchment; it is, like lawyers are fond of saying, a "living document." In that spirit, LGBT rights are poised to be the next logical step in its – and our – growth. I'm all for deleting the Electoral College text, and who cares about the "framers' intent" if it can't guide us today. But I still have faith in the Constitution's unique power to urge us forward. Absent a better alternative, I'll keep it.

The Constitution isn't a crumbling piece of parchment; it is, like lawyers are fond of saying, a "living document." In that spirit, LGBT rights are poised to be the next logical step in its – and our – growth.



Mine's Pi Square Pink!



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

In a triangle whose sides are 23,145,789 yards, 5,642,732 yards and 54,965 yards, how many cubicle 1/8ths of an inch exist? (Good cocktail question for a lull in your next invitational orgy.)

An adult named Jedediah came up with the correct 28-digit answer. It took him five hours to do the figuring. In his head! Equally mind boggling, he couldn't write his name and had only the mental age of 10.

At the end of his synaptic tour de force he asked eagerly, "Would you like the answers backwards or forwards. I can give it either way." Jedediah is a "savant."

For unexplained reasons, savants – who are included in the Autism Syndrome Spectrum (ASD) – are usually male. Their skills have questionable practicality: recitation of railroad schedules, perpetual calendars, cross-country city populations, rapid calculation of large numbers.

Among the best known of savants past was Blind Tom. A slave from birth, he played self-taught piano (sneaking to the instrument at night when everyone was sleeping), and later could play any composition he heard once, no matter how difficult.

His repertory numbered thousands of pieces. His plantation owner made a fortune by showcasing him here and in Europe. Lacking coping skills, Blind Tom died poor when left to fend for himself following the deaths of his care givers (and exploiters).

How the 3-pound universe, as our brain is often referred to, does these mental gymnastics is a mystery. That the brain is a delicate instrument is all too obvious. Stress, disease, crystal meth can unhinge it from its reality moorings. Two examples come to mind.

A guy by the case name of Henry M had a brain operation for epilepsy in 1953. His hippocampus was removed. The result: he was only able to recall information stored before that date. For the rest of his life if asked who was president would reply, Harry S Truman.

A viral encephalitis changed the life of musician and conductor Clive Wearing. After 15 seconds he's unable to form new memories. Each time he sees his wife, he welcomes her with tears, seeing her "for the first time." Oddly enough, he can play musical compositions flawlessly.

A recent, and contrasting example of exceptional brain functioning, is that of Daniel Tammet, who was born in London 34 years ago. Savant Daniel can speak a new language fluently in a week. He sees numbers as shapes, colors, textures. He can do astounding math in his head.

His autobiography, "Born on a Blue Day: A Memoir of Asperger's and an Extraordinary Mind" made the New York Times best seller list. Daniel writes, "I was born on January 31. A Wednesday. I know it was a Wednesday because the date is blue in my mind, and Wednesdays are always blue, like the number nine or the sound of loud voices arguing."

When asked to multiply 37 to the power of 4, he answered with hardly hesitation: 1,874,161. He's also gay and making tally with a partner. His second. They met during one of Daniel Tammet's much-in-demand lectures. (The trick's in the numbers, and all in his head.)

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Pastor Terry Jones

Hey are you pissed that President Obama has been all nice-nice with the gays lately? Then you should totally set him on fire. Or at least a life-size Obama doll strung up on a gallows on the front lawn of your church with an upside down American flag



flying in the background. Because that's what Jesus would have done. And that's what Pastor Terry Jones did to show everyone that

he was not pleased with all this gay lovin' the President was lavishing on the queers. You may recognize Jones' name because he's the asshole that burned the Quran to show those Muslims who's boss.

"In times of universal deceit telling the truth is a revolutionary act," says Jones in a YouTube video of the effigy burning. Jones is decked out in a black leather jacket and mirror sunglasses while standing in front of a trailer with "National Burn Effigy of Obama Day" written in red on it. Next to the trailer is a giant tombstone that reads "Obama Dead" sitting on a pile of dirt.

On Jones' website he writes, "President Hussein Obama is a disgrace to this nation. He is an illegal president, the poster child for abortion, a frontrunner of the homosexual movement, a destroyer of the U.S. Constitution, and the great friend of Islamic terrorist governments."

Did you know all of this? I did not know all of this. Jones is what you might call an information man. Always schooling. I certainly did not know Obama was the "frontrunner of the homosexual movement." I'm not even sure what that means. But if Terry Jones said it, why it's as good as God's word. If God were a hateful man with a handlebar mustache.

"On Saturday, January 19th, 2012, we burned an effigy of Obama as a public expression of our disgust for his immoral, destructive, and deceptive leadership," Jones announced

proudly on his website. "It is time for a new American revolution. Let us organize, unite, and hit the streets in order to bring this nation back to greatness."

Rah rah rah!

As you know, if it's not on YouTube it didn't happen. So thankfully there's a heavily edited video of the burning you can watch with your own eyes if you must.

"Do you know what bestiality is?" Jones asks the crowd (several people say no). "Sex with animals. He," Jones said pointing to the Obama doll, "he said it was okay." People in the crowd understandably react in disgust and anger at "learning" that Obama is totally cool with animal fucking.

"And people wonder why we're so upset," Jones says as he takes a gun out of his jeans pocket in what I suspect was supposed to be a cool move but the gun gets caught and he has to tug a separate time to free it. Setting the gun on the lectern in front of him he says, "And people wonder why we're mad." He puts the gun back in his pocket. "People wonder why we call for a revolution. Sex with animals. Our president says it's okay our senate says it's okay. And we do nothing."

Now I do not remember when the President and the Senate of the United States of America passed the pro-animal sexing act. My guess is that it's a provision buried in some kind of appropriations bill. Sneaky bastards.

An African-American man, identified in the YouTube video as, no shit, "Michael the Black Man," addresses the crowd next surrounded by seven other African-American men. "You see we have an effigy of Obama and one of Mr. Clinton. President Clinton," MBM says. "The reason why he's up there with Obama is because he deserves to be burned in hell, too."

Oh, thank you MBM for explaining that. Because I was having trouble wrapping my brain around why Clinton was being burned on National Burn Effigy of Obama Day (which, I should add, is not a federal holiday). Personally I think Clinton deserves his own day, but hey, I didn't organize this event.

California's Ban On 'Reparative' Therapy Impementation Delayed

BY LISA KEEN

California's ground-breaking law banning the use of reparative therapy on people younger than 18 did not go into effect on Jan. 1. A federal appeals panel issued an emergency order Dec. 21, 2012 delaying enactment pending the appeals court's review of a lawsuit challenging the law.

The religious right legal group Liberty Counsel sought the emergency order after federal district Judge Kimberly Mueller ruled Dec. 4, 2012 that a group of plaintiffs were "not likely to prevail on the merits" of their legal challenge to the law and refused their request.

The underlying lawsuit is *Pickup v. Brown*, pressed by four mental health professionals, the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), the American Association of Christian Counselors, and two "Jack and Jane Doe" plaintiff couples on behalf of two "John Doe" minors.

The plaintiffs' request for an emergency order argued that the John Doe minors would face "immediate and irreparable harm to their physical, emotional and mental health," and that the mental health practitioners would suffer damage to their careers, if the law is allowed to go into effect. The request also noted that another federal judge in Sacramento granted

a preliminary injunction Dec. 3 in a similar lawsuit by a different set of plaintiffs.

"The intra-district conflict," said the Liberty Counsel motion, "creates an impossible legal quandary for the thousands of Californians affected by SB 1172," the new law.

On Jan. 17, the Ninth Circuit scheduled both cases to be heard in the federal court in San Francisco on April 15. Opening briefs are due this week.

California Attorney General Kamala Harris opposed the emergency motion, as did Equality California, which has been granted status as an intervening party in the lawsuits. Represented by the National Center for Lesbian Rights, Equality California argued that many more young people will be harmed if the law is not allowed to take effect. The "balance of hardships and the public interest," it said, "strongly favor allowing California youth to benefit now from the crucial protections established by SB 1172."

The three-judge panel granting the emergency injunction did not discuss its reasons. The panel included Alfred Goodwin (an appointee of President Nixon), Edward Leavy (Reagan), and Milan Smith (George W. Bush).

California Governor Jerry Brown signed the first-ever bill to ban the use of reparative therapy on people under

the age of 18. That law, passed by the legislature in October and was set to take effect Jan. 1 when the emergency order was issued causing a delay.

Sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE), which attempt to convert people with a homosexual orientation to heterosexual, are generally referred to as "reparative therapy" or "conversion therapy." A small number of mental health care facilities promote the therapy, even though both the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association have said there is no sound evidence that it works and that there is evidence it can pose significant risks of self-destructive behavior to the client.

Liberty Counsel's lawsuit argues that the new law would violate the First Amendment free speech rights of the reparative therapists, as well as several rights of parents and rights of minors to receive information.

But Judge Mueller, in making her preliminary ruling on the case, said "nothing in (the new law) prevents a therapist from mentioning the existence of reparative therapies" and referring potential subjects of the therapy to persons, such as clergy, who are not state-licensed.

The ACLU filed a lawsuit in federal court in New Jersey, seeking to hold a reparative therapy group liable for consumer fraud.

► Out Of Shame

Continued from p. 4

loving. My mom would say 'God made you gay, why are you hiding who you are?' As a Born Again, I felt I had more of an understanding of the Bible than they did. I told my mom and dad they weren't true Christians because they hadn't been saved."

The final straw that broke his willpower for living the straight life was meeting a wonderful man and falling in love. They helped each other find themselves, although eventually the other man went back to his religious roots and ended up committing suicide ten years later.

Although it's been 20 years since he walked away from Exodus, Smith is still struggling. He finds it hard to be intimate with guys in

a loving way. "I can't find peace. Everything about the world has changed. In the past few years gay people are more accepted. People can find a partner and have stable relationships. That's what I want, but I don't know if I ever can."

Fellow group members have in general not stayed straight either. After re-discovering them on Facebook, Smith said only one that he knows of is still an ex-gay, married to an ex-lesbian. The rest have embraced their gay nature. One friend in particular used to get angry with him, and chastise him for not having enough faith. He's now living in New York and legally married to another man, Smith said.

The openness of the public in the past few years inspires Smith to keep working on his issues. He

said he has found an affirming place in a Unity Church that welcomes everybody. "Faith is important to me still. One thing that really bothers me is that I'm still living on two sides of a fence sometimes. Both sides point their finger at each other. My gay friends say 'how can you be into prayer and stuff,' and some of my religious friends wonder how I can be friends with gays. I feel like I'm in the middle, when we all can be on the same side."

As he still works on coming out and being himself, Smith has found a new source of pain: regret. "I ask God why he had me go through all of this, why I wasted so many years of my life. But the older I get the more I realize that God loves me for who I am."

Task Force To Put Energy, Focus On Immigration Issues

BY TODD A. HEYWOOD

ATLANTA – The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force declared that immigration is a top policy priority in the coming years. The announcement was made by Rea Carey, executive director of the organization, during her annual state of the movement speech at the Creating Change Conference, held this year in Atlanta, over last weekend.

“We will continue to play a leadership role in partnering with immigration rights organizations in advocating for the many areas of comprehensive immigration reform that affect our community, including security for binational same-sex couples, respectful and appropriate treatment of transgender and HIV-positive immigrants; and ensuring that families are not separated for years on end as a result of our immigration laws,” Carey told 3,000 activists. “Creating a path to citizenship is an LGBT issue.”

The announcement was welcomed by Michigan organizations and activists.

“Equality Michigan finds the crusade against immigrants by extremist legislators to be a shameful and particularly harmful form of partisan politics,” said Emily Dievendorf, policy director for Equality Michigan. “The path to citizenship is an LGBT priority. According to Immigration Equality, nearly half of the 39,000 multinational LGBT couples in the US are raising families. As a nation of immigrants, we should be helping these families realize the US American Dream. Instead we are promoting ‘self-deportation’ and showing them the exit door. With thousands of our LGBT brothers and sisters facing deportation, Equality Michigan continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with Immigration Equality, The Task Force, and our other movement partners in the efforts to end this oppression.”

“Fairness and equality for all people is what matters,” said David Garcia, executive director of Affirmations



“Fairness and equality for all people is what matters. Immigration affects us all and the gay community has a responsibility to fight both for gay immigrants and fair immigration for all Americans. As a Mexican American gay rights advocate, I have been a vocal supporter of the Dream Act and fair, just, immigration policies for all people hoping to make a better life for themselves in America.”

- David Garcia, executive director of Affirmations Community Center

Community Center in Ferndale. “Immigration affects us all and the gay community has a responsibility to fight both for gay immigrants and fair immigration for all Americans. As a Mexican American gay rights advocate, I have been a vocal supporter of the Dream Act and fair, just, immigration policies for all people hoping to make a better life for themselves in America.”

And for one youth leader in the immigration rights movement the announcement is important. Mohammad Abdollahi is an undocumented youth from Iran who has lived in the U.S. since he was a toddler. In 2008, he was one of several openly undocumented youth arrested during a protest at Sen. John McCain’s Arizona offices. The activists were protesting for passage of the DREAM Act, which would provide a path to citizenship for young adults brought to the United States as children.

Abdollahi faced deportation to Iran, a county he had never visited and which speaks a language he does not speak or understand. Iran also executes gay people for same-sex sexual activity.

“The (Task Force) announcement was good because I think this might be

the first time that many even consider undocuqueers as part of their own narrative as LGBTQ folks, and it does good in all of us recognizing that we are in the same struggle and such, so it was good in that regard,” Abdollahi told BTL in an email. “(It’s) a first step.”

On Monday, numerous national LGBT organizations issued a statement in support of immigration equality including a path to citizenship for all undocumented residents of the country.

“We are fully committed to and deeply understand the need for this nation to adopt a humane and effective comprehensive immigration policy which places a premium value on justice, dignity, respect and opportunity.

“Any legislation must include the ability of couples in same-sex relationships to sponsor their spouse or permanent-partner in the same way opposite-sex couples have long been able to under current immigration law,

We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with those striving for and dreaming of a nation that embraces all who come here seeking a better life,” signed NGLTF, HRC, NCLR, and Immigration Equality Action Fund.

loved participating in scouting and I look forward to the day when we might once again be able to take part.”

Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin also praised the announcement.

“The pulse of equality is strong in America, and today it beats a bit faster with news that the Boy Scouts may

finally put an end to its long history of discrimination,” he said in a statement. “Our nation and its leaders respect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens and its time the Boy Scouts echo those values.”

The BSA could formally adopt the new policy as early as next week at its next national board meeting.

► Boy Scouts

Continued from p. 7

the organizations so well.”

“An end to this ban will restore the dignity of countless families across the country, my included, who simply wanted to take part in all Scouting has to offer,” Tyrrell told GLAAD. “My family

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Avalon Breads Rises To New Heights

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

DETROIT - Ann Perrault, co-owner and CEO of Avalon International Breads, never dreamed she would turn a dilapidated industrial building in Detroit into a state-of-the-art bakery to be called Avalon City Ovens.

“Not in a million years,” she said when talking about the first phase of her \$2.2 million expansion project. The new 50,000-square-foot production facility is scheduled to open this month at 6555 East Forrest. “But if you think about it and think about the resources in Detroit, and the large vacant buildings, it does make sense that this is the direction we took.”

The warehouse was purchased at the 2010 Wayne County Tax Foreclosure Auction and is funded by a loan that closed in early October. “I never would have thought of doing this. It was an exciting process to actually go and do it,” said Perrault, adding that a few of her customers turned her on to the idea. “I am getting the space for a lot less than what it’s worth because the owner hasn’t paid the taxes. That’s kind of a hard situation. I got really lucky.”

Avalon now employs more than 50 people. Perrault is in the process of hiring 100 additional bakers, drivers, sales and customer service workers to continue Avalon’s growth in the heart of the city.

According to a recent press release, the project comes not long after Avalon opened its second retail location last summer known as the Eat Well, Do Good Café in the West Grand Boulevard building of Henry Ford Hospital. “The quick success of this store and growing demand for Avalon products in suburban Detroit and Ann Arbor prompted the expansion,” she said.

Detroit Growth

“The Michigan Economic Development Corporation under Mike Finney wanted to jump start economic growth and support businesses dedicated to employing people, particularly from urban communities,” said Don Snider, senior vice president, Urban Economic Development for MEDC. “Avalon is a great example of how our collaborative resources with



Ann Perrault inspecting the new equipment at the 50,000 square foot facility. BTL photo: Andrew Potter

local partners can lead to growth that benefits all of metropolitan Detroit.”

The project involves a complicated partnership with Invest Detroit, Whole Foods, the Small Business Administration and Main Street Bank. “I asked them to be a part of the business in 2008. It was formally done in 2010. It came with a lot of negotiations around how that was going to happen. This was a good way to secure the wholesale end of the business,” she said.

The new location will service the artisan bakery’s growing wholesale and retail customers. Avalon breads can be purchased at grocery stores like Whole Foods, Holiday, and Plum markets. Restaurants that offer Avalon products are Small Plates in Detroit, Frittata in Clawson, Bastone in Royal Oak and the Jolly Pumpkin in Ann Arbor, to name a few.

The original 2,000-square-foot production and retail flagship store was established in 1997 by Perrault with her partner, Jackie Victor. Located at 422 W. Willis in the Cass Corridor, Avalon became the biggest organic bread flour purchaser in Michigan, purchasing over 9,000 pounds of organic, milled grains weekly from hard-working, organic wheat farmers.



Avalon staff members above are among 50 people currently employed at the bakery. The new facilities will add an additional 100 employees. Photo courtesy/Avalon Bread

“We use 100 percent organic ingredients in everything we make. All of our flour is milled in Kansas,” said Perrault. This is part of Avalon’s Triple Bottom Line – earth, community, and employees. This Buddhist principle of “right livelihood” was introduced by Geri Larkin, Zen priest, corporate management consultant and author of Building a Business the Zen Way.

Many aspiring entrepreneurs seek advice and guidance from Perrault as a result of her success. At Avalon City

Ovens, Perrault will continue to offer her customers more of their local marketplace favorites from Garden Works in Ann Arbor, Apple Schram in Lansing, St. Laurent Bros Peanut Butter, Chartreuse Organic Herbal Tea in Trenton, and more. But she hopes to support some of the Detroit companies starting to spring up. “I’d like to help smaller, innovative companies to start up and do some things for them to boost them to the next level more quickly,” she said.

Like 25-year-old Nailah Ellis,

owner of the four-year-old beverage company Ellis Island Tea available for purchase at Avalon. The tea, which is sold in almost 20 grocery stores and restaurants throughout Southeastern Michigan, is made with a unique blend of herbs, 100 percent natural extracts, no high fructose corn syrup or yellow 5.

“Nobody wanted to be the first one to carry my product. Ann is very big on supporting local and was willing to take that risk. She gave me a shot and opened a lot of doors for me,” said Ellis, who is looking to rent space at Avalon City Ovens. “She is an angel on earth and my business mentor. She is not one of those people who keeps her experience a secret. She shares everything, she is one of her word, she is knowledgeable, and the bakery thrives the way it does because of Ann. I name drop her anytime I’m trying to get a new account or close on a deal. Her name is golden.”

Business Mentor

Perhaps it’s the advice Perrault provides. She tells them what Larkin told her. “Don’t pay a rent that will make you stay up at night. Don’t be open too much when you first start because you’ll already be overwhelmed. Never grow more than 20 percent, which I take to heart. As you get larger, you have to be really careful. At any point, one section of business can decide they don’t want to do business or want to do business with someone else,” she said.

Perrault and her staff have been growing about 20 percent since 2003. “The biggest growth margin here has been the sweet department,” she said. Her mother had a pie business when she was a kid. “I happen to have a mother who’s one of the best bakers I know. Her chocolate cake, cheesecakes, fruit cakes, Yule logs, and so many more products we bake together will be introduced soon. We’re gearing ourselves toward a 25 percent increase within the first year at the new place. As we very modestly move forward, we’re taking on the true aspects of training individuals to grow at that rate and training to keep the hands in the mixing,” she said.

The mixing involves hand-stirring the “mother” or “starter,” which is the fermenting of flour and water to

create yeast by feeding the mixture more water and flour three times a day until it doubles in volume within 24 hours. It's combined with other ingredients and baked into bread in Avalon's 10,000-pound steam-injected oven. Perrault will continue this Old World style of bread making that Avalon customers are accustomed to.

"Most bakeries that are big-time are automating everything. To keep people working, we will continue to handcraft our bakery products," she said, adding that as a recipe developer, she doesn't have the pleasure of jumping on the line like she used to. As for her partner, Victor, she is still a partner in the business, but primarily takes

focus for us is to find people who want to work and enjoy working," she said.

For 29-year-old Kyresha LeFever, working at Avalon has opened her eyes in many ways. "It's helped me form new relationships in working in my own community to helping me understand the values of composting and recycling. It's been quite an experience these past five years," said LeFever, Avalon's Human Resources Manager and a graduate of Wayne State University's Business School.

"Working with Ann has been great. She has a mind that runs a mile a minute and is very business savvy in her own way. It feels good to work for someone that has a great sense of

“ Nobody wanted to be the first one to carry my product. Ann is very big on supporting local and was willing to take that risk. She gave me a shot and opened a lot of doors for me. She is an angel on earth and my business mentor. She is not one of those people who keeps her experience a secret. She shares everything, she is one of her word, she is knowledgeable, and the bakery thrives the way it does because of Ann. ”

– Nailah Ellis, owner of Ellis Island Tea

care of their 12-year-old daughter Rafaella and their seven-year-old son Arie. "It's nice for us, for any couple, that one of the parents can be with the children," said Perrault.

Her staff is also a big part of Perrault's family. "They definitely made it happen. They're the people that create that scene that melts in your

business," she said. "And it's a breath of fresh air to work for someone that plays such a major role in the LGBT community. There is no hiding here. I am openly gay and around here that is OK. At Avalon, you can be yourself, gay or straight. The company does not want you to lose your sense of self."

Avalon has plans to further expand its Midtown presence in 2013. "We've been over capacity for quite some time, at least since 2008," said Perrault about moving the storefront from its existing space on Willis to a newer space on West Canfield Street next to the Traffic Jam & Snug. That relocation is set to move forward next spring after the Avalon City Ovens project is complete.

"We've come to the end of this location, but it's been amazing. I want to say thank you to my customers who probably dealt with more than they've wanted to deal with from a lack of space and parking to having to wait patiently as we've had to fit everything into one oven for all these years," said Perrault. "Now, they can really look to see the handcrafted artisan product turn into something special when it gets the correct weight, proof time and bake time. It's gonna' be just rockin'...those air bubbles and hard crust...it will develop into a product we can really be proud of."



Ann Perrault with business partner Jackie Victor. Photo courtesy Avalon Bread

mouth, the hard-crust bread, the chocolate chip sea salt cookies that people line up outside the door for," she said.

"We're a company that can take somebody in and train them. It would be nice if he or she lived in the city or is willing to relocate. They should be green oriented. That way they know a little bit about or have the incentive to recycle, which is near and dear to us. A culinary background and a good palate are helpful, but the number one

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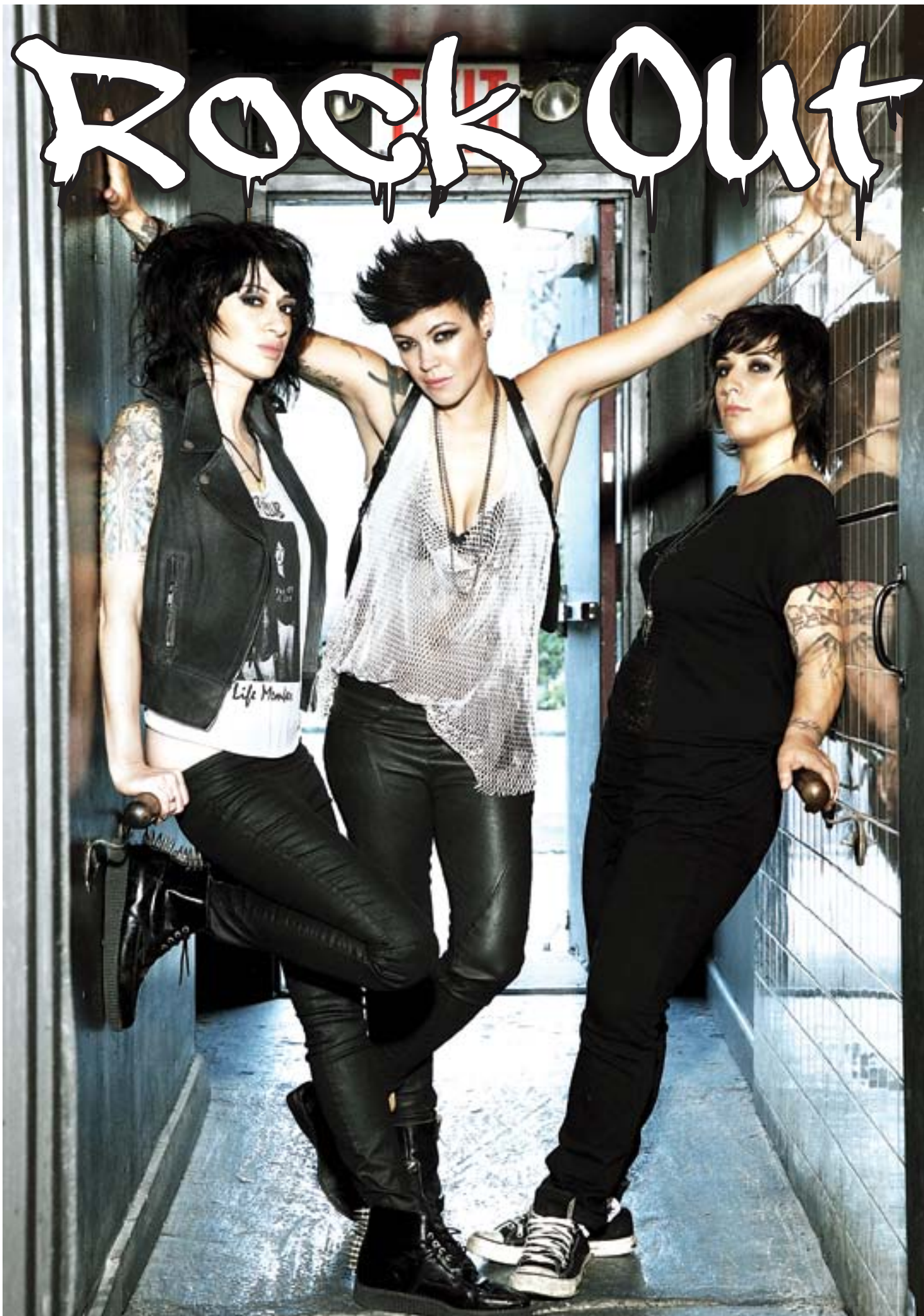
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Rock Out



Hunter Valentine Frontwoman On Big Lesbian Announcement & Reality TV

BY JEROME STUART NICHOLS

As the queer lead singer of lesbian alt-rock group Hunter Valentine, Kiyomi McCloskey is a woman made for rock music. Strongly opinionated and never afraid of a camera – despite being outed on the cover of the *Toronto Star* – she’s one fierce chick. But there’s a lot more to this rock star on the rise.

Get an up close look at Kiyomi, Laura Petracca, Veronica Sanchez and touring member Aimee Bessada when Hunter Valentine comes to Ferndale in support of their latest album, “Collide & Conquer.” With special guest My Pal Val, they headline Feb. 7 at The Loving Touch in Ferndale (doors open at 7 p.m.).

Though Hunter Valentine’s beginnings only date back to 2004, McCloskey has never found a camera she didn’t like. She’s had an even harder time finding one that didn’t like her. Unfortunately for a then-closeted 16-year-old Kiyomi, her camera-magnetism landed her on the cover of Canada’s top newspaper in a lip-lock with one of her basketball teammates.

“It was a trip, man,” McCloskey tells *Between The Lines*. “But I’m actually really happy that it went down that way. I didn’t have to do that whole thing of sitting people down and being like, ‘Listen, I’m so nervous, but I’m gay.’ I had one front cover of a newspaper and it was done, everyone knew.”

In the ensuing years, her relationship with the cameras hasn’t let up at all. With the rest of her band mates, she recently starred in the third season of Showtime reality show “The Real L Word.” She reveled in the experience.

“It’s a very unique experience to open up your entire world to, first, the camera, and then the entire world,” she says. “A lot of people sort of clam up and don’t allow themselves to truly be themselves on camera, to make themselves truly vulnerable to the whole experience. If you can do that, it’s actually

See Hunter Valentine, page 23

INFO

Hunter Valentine

7 p.m. Feb. 7
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www.huntervalentine.com

Hear Me Out BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Tegan and Sara Embrace Retro Pop



Tegan and Sara, 'Heartthrob'

Let the loyalists who like their Tegan and Sara all emo-rocky make a big fuss about the girls' complete shift into super pop, but they're missing out. Only music snobbery stands in the way of completely embracing "Heartthrob," their seventh album led by the irresistible Robyn-esque cuteness of "Closer," an uncharacteristically slight (but totally awesome) first single about the tingles and magic – and even the bedroom play – of a new crush. The feelings don't last, because, well, this is still a Tegan and Sara album. Heartbreak is inevitable, and it doesn't waste time getting there with "Goodbye, Goodbye": "I don't wanna feel the need to hear your voice ... I don't wanna feel the need to see your face." Ouch. Really wanna feel sad? Try "How Come You Don't Want Me." Disguised with stacked vocals, a shimmering sound palette of synth fuzz and a surging drum thump are feelings of futility, loneliness and alienation. Said track and the almost-Prince piano power ballad "Now I'm All Messed Up," a breakup song marked with uncertainty and indecisiveness (and some of their highest notes ever), are two of the strongest cuts in the duo's decade-plus career. Thanks to producer Greg Kurstin, "Heartthrob," at a tight 10 songs, completes the Quin sisters' circle from guitar girls to dance floor queens. *Grade: A-*



Holly Williams, 'The Highway'

Holly Williams – the granddaughter of country legend Hank Williams Sr. – has admitted that singing the last track off her third album, "Waiting on June," is hard to get through. Hearing it isn't any easier. In just under seven minutes, we have the story of not just her grandparents, but of love, yearning, heartache and loss. All of that conveyed through Williams' real-life minutia of young love and aging, the song comes to a painfully bittersweet climax when the guitar ebbs to an almost lifeless whimper, and so do her relatives. This is the kind of tender, hurts-so-good song that Holly Williams always excels at, but it's not the only one on "The Highway," her third album. "A Good Man," opening to the gentle swell of strings, is an intimate and affecting portrayal of love, cherishing what you have and knowing it might not last. It's gripping from just the first few notes. Even though she can craft a song as well as her daddy, Williams' soulfully strained voice – a distinctive instrument that effectively gets to a song's heart – is the real draw,

from the clever done-me-wrong ditty "Drinkin'," taking a more backwoods approach, to the family eulogy "Gone Away from Me." "The Highway" isn't just one of the most personal albums you'll hear this year, but likely one of the best, period. *Grade: A-*

Also Out



Lifehouse, 'Almería'

In the 13 years since "No Name Face," Lifehouse hasn't really drifted from their debut's alt-pop/rock blueprint. Until now, that is. They go for something different on "Almería," launching with "Gotta Be Tonight," a foot-stomper that sounds nothing like the aughts' Lifehouse – until it reaches a refrain that's vaguely like their career-making hit, "Hanging by a Moment." The cowboys on the cover aren't for nothing, either – with Charles Jones and Peter Frampton, "Right Back Home" twangs it up. The quartet's other collaboration – hey, Natasha Bedingfield – is a catchy piece of ethereal pop/rock. Even better is "Aftermath," a divine piano ballad. Not all of it's this good, but at least this new direction is more exciting than anything Lifehouse has done in years.



Josh Groban, 'All That Echoes'

What happens when sap-master superstar Josh Groban and the same guy known for producing Green Day get in a recording studio together? Josh Groban on speed. Now it's not exactly "Basket Case," but the lead single from his sixth album, "Brave," sweeps up a flurry of sound that's unlike anything he's ever recorded. After the low-key "Illuminations," it's a nice change of pace that has the potential to bait new fans without alienating the soccer-mom base. Rob Cavallo and Groban also create operatic greatness on the mellow guitar ditty "Happy in my Heartache" and a version of "Falling Slowly" that almost reaches a rock-out climax. Watch out, world.

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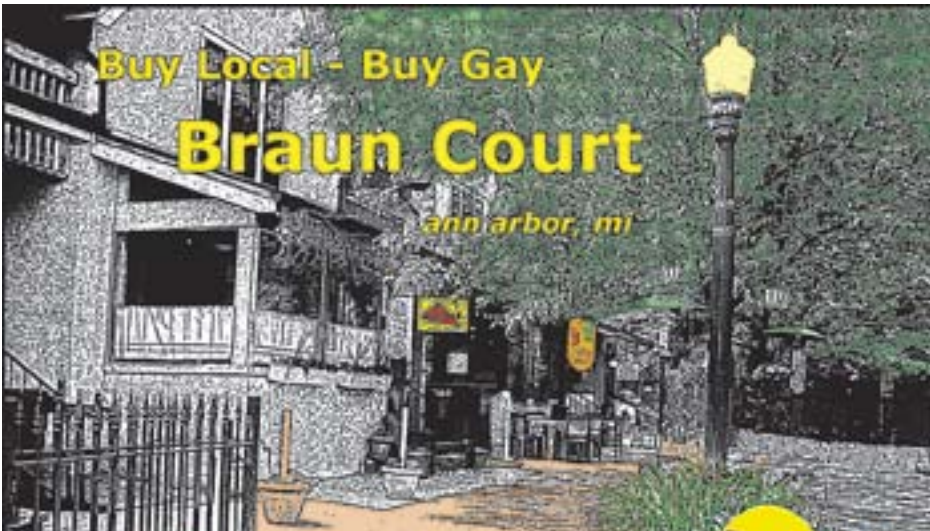
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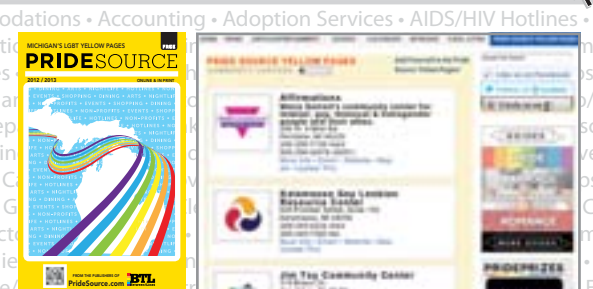


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Liz Crowe brews beer, but that's not all: She's an erotic-fiction writer. Photo: Jerome Stuart Nichols

Brewery Owner Makes A Name In Erotic Fiction

BY JEROME STUART NICHOLS

Most people hate their job, but not Liz Crowe. That might have something to do with the fact that hers consists of brewing craft lager and writing steamy – occasionally gay-themed – erotic fiction. Some people have all the luck.

Crowe's latest book "Honey Red" was released digitally at the end of 2012. In this standalone story, she explores a three-way relationship between two men and one woman. This month, she launched a new book series, "The Challenge Series"; the first book, "Healing Hearts," came out New Year's Day.

Lucky is how most people would describe Crowe's career. But luck didn't really play much of a role. Like most successful people, Crowe knows a good opportunity when she sees one.

After living abroad for seven years, Crowe and her family returned to the States, making Ann Arbor their home. Ready to get back to work, she dusted off her realtor license. Using her strong background in marketing and sales, she found a way to make a successful career in real estate from 2004-2010.

In 2010 she was approached by Trevor Thrall – her neighbor and co-founder of Wolverine State Brewing Co. – to handle their marketing as they worked toward expanding from a contract brewer to

opening their own brewery. Wisely, she said yes – but she wanted to do it as an owner. At the same time she was twirling her pen as a first-time writer and things took off from there.

"When they came to me and I agreed to do this, I began this blog called A2beerwench.com," she says. "In it, I chronicled my journey in craft beer: understanding, learning and becoming this beer wench by having beer school sessions, watching beer being brewed, doing everything I could to really understand it. Dovetailing with that, I was writing this story, this one story, which has become the Stewart Realty series."

After lots of rejection, she was able to sell a side story to a small publisher. Then, after breaking out the larger story into three parts, Crowe found a publisher who believed in her work enough to put some force behind making it a success.

"Essence of Time," the fourth book in the Stewart Realty series, is where things got kind of gay. For a married mother of three and self-proclaimed Kentucky girl, it was an exciting departure from the familiar.

"I wrote the forth book, which was my first experience writing any sort of gay romance at all," she says. "I had read a lot of it and it intrigued me. I've always been one of those people where to me love is

love, but I never really thought about the dynamics of a love story between same-sex individuals. So, it was great. I loved writing that story."

"Essence" was born from Crowe's character and plot-driven stories. While the focus of the series is on two main characters, many secondary characters begged for their stories to be told as well.

"What I've done with it is I've created an entire community of people – a cast of secondary characters that had to have their story told. The woman (Sarah) has a brother (Blake) who is bisexual. I sort of had a one-off character: Blake's business/life partner (Rob). They just spoke to me. By the time I got to the third book and I was promoting it, I was like, 'I want to tell Blake and Rob's story really badly.'"

The topic of gay sex and relationships may seem out of step for Crowe's real life, but as she likes to say, "I make shit up." For Crowe, that's what it's all about – the story.

"I get a story in my head or a couple in my head," she says. "I get caught by that and I have to get it out there, to the detriment of my children who want to eat dinner and the dogs who need walking or the house that needs cleaning. It allows me to express myself."



Anne Miranda, Dave Davies, Wayne David Parker and Sandra Birch are "Looking" at Tipping Point Theatre. Photo: Howard and Charlotte Meyer

Dating Woes Done Comic: Even Fizzle Sizzles

BY CAROLYN HAYES

Playwright Norm Foster had one specific meaning in mind for the title of his comedy "Looking": the stigmatized, desperation-rank practice of actively seeking a mate. Everybody wants to find love, yet to search for it, ostensibly to force it, paradoxically comes off as repellent. It's therefore no coincidence that Tipping Point Theatre's take on amorous connections sought and stumbled across, helmed by director Kate Peckham, flourishes on the basis of one intangible, organic ingredient that also portends romantic success. Put simply, it's all about the chemistry.

At a tennis club in the here and now, Andy (Dave Davies) and Matt (Wayne David Parker) discuss Andy's fruitless quest for a partner, a conversation mirrored by Val (Anne K. Miranda) and her friend Nina (Sandra Birch). Some are divorced, with adult children; all are single, with contrasting opinions and desires regarding dating, companionship and sex. What links the men's and women's stories is the personal ad Andy considers placing in the paper, the same one Val later reads with interest. Foster doesn't dilly-dally about getting the two together on a blind date, each with their friend in tow as wingman. Yet the framing material is hardly wasted, full of tangential details that provide excellent comic fodder, such as Davies' goofy sing-along peccadillo – keenly reflected in sound designer Christie Nichole's '70s-anchored pop hits to which you

PREVIEW

Looking

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know most of the words.

The pub where the duos meet, as well as the gym and a handful of other locales, are imagined on designer Bartley H. Bauer's modular set, with its many angles, tones, doors, configurations and levels on which the actors gaily play. Costumes by Amber Cook serve as a window into the characters' expectations, especially with respect to first-date wear. Throw in a major misunderstanding prompted by outdated technology (cheers to properties designer Amanda Ewing), and you have a not-great start portending a not-great date.

It takes a sharp ensemble to champion the kind of misfires that ensue: Here, even the lousiest of lulls is rife with cooperative energy and abundant humor, with the performers' exceptional harmony showing through disastrous repartee and keeping the laughter rolling. Although theirs is a tersely barbed world, the players strike a delicate balance of being cynical, but never hopeless.

Curiously, though, as the night wears on, the tedium of Andy and Val is drawn into harsher relief by the cerebral and carnal pull between Matt and Nina. Parker and Birch together are a tour

de force in moments big and small, especially the latter's sly, timid thrill as she opens up to irrepressible attraction.

The accidental match leads to a continuation of Foster's he-said/he-said/she-said/she-said formula, as one couple uses the other to justify seeing each other again – think teenager-like scenes of overlapping phone calls, guided by Joel Klain's lighting design. But after the jovial parallels of the first act, intentions are bound to fall into discord, and successes balanced out by failures. Peckham and company dive right into the stickier material with tender results, while remaining ever true to the characters and sustaining the plentiful humor of the world they've cultivated. As Val and Andy endeavor to support their friends' happiness, Miranda and Davies also evolve incrementally. In rounding out their characters by building on and reinforcing established flaws, the pair that was initially all wrong for each other grows into something more interesting and complex, developments that feel duly earned.

This "Looking" approaches a satirical, hilariously disparaging text with finesse; the encapsulated story wells with humor in the telling, but softens sharp edges to make room for sensitive payoffs, delivered by a cast performing at the very top of its game. The production rarely reaches for extremes for its humor – thanks to rarefied comic chemistry, it reaches dizzying heights of hilarity without them.



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St. 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 Pincrest. Closed/
Discussion.

Livonia-Friday
8 p.m., West Side Story's Gay
AA, Providence Medical Center,
7 Mile & Newburgh. Closed/
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Warren-Monday
7:30 p.m., Eastside Serenity Gay
AA, Odd Fellow's Hall, 830 S
Monroe St Closed/Discussion.

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Solution to puzzle from page 24

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Hunter Valentine perform Feb. 7 at The Loving Touch in Ferndale.

► Hunter Valentine

Continued from p. 14

sort of a liberating experience.”

Liberating and match-making, as it turned out. The budding romance between McCloskey and fellow cast mate Lauren Bedford Russell became a major story line on the show.

Despite having a new partner – who recently revealed that she was living with multiple sclerosis – and that romantic band name, this Valentine’s Day she’s looking forward to a rare break.

“Here’s the crazy thing about Valentine’s Day: I will not be on tour, which is amazing,” she says. “That’s a plan in itself. But I’m sure I’ll be wining and dining and running around New York City.”

When she’s not living la vie bohème in NYC, she’s out on tour living the rock life. As with any great rock star, she’s got a lot to say. Being one of the few women – not to mention queer women – in rock, she believes it’s important to be a role model.

“I’ve never tried to deny who I am and what my sexuality is,” she says.

“It’s important to stand up and be that role model for younger people within our community and within our country right now. It’s an important time to stand up for equality and gay rights and gay marriage.”

“I think it’s important to stand up and be that role model for younger people within our community and within our country right now. It’s an important time to stand up for equality and gay rights and gay marriage.”

Never one for drama, McCloskey was quick to throw praise on another queer female musician who she thinks is doing it right. Beth Ditto, lead singer of rock band Gossip, is known for her fearless push for body acceptance, which McCloskey thinks is both necessary and thrilling.

“She’s an amazing idol,” McCloskey says. “I think it’s really important that there are women out there with beautiful curves like her. I mean, she’s gorgeous and she doesn’t hide her body and she shows it off in a way that’s very proud.

I think that’s very important, because what we see in pop culture is not that body type. It shows young girls that they should be proud of their bodies.”

McCloskey finds aspiration – and inspiration – in Ditto and Gossip’s continued success. With Obama’s gay-affirming second inauguration, she’s finding a similar aspiration. Of course, that little issue of nationality might get in the way, but it never hurts to dream.

“That would be like a big dream,” she says of wanting to perform at the president’s inauguration. “First of all, half the band is Canadian, so I’m not sure it would be completely appropriate. But just to see those musicians at the inauguration with proud looks on their faces, it really gave people something to look forward to.”

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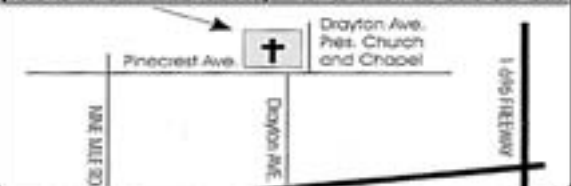
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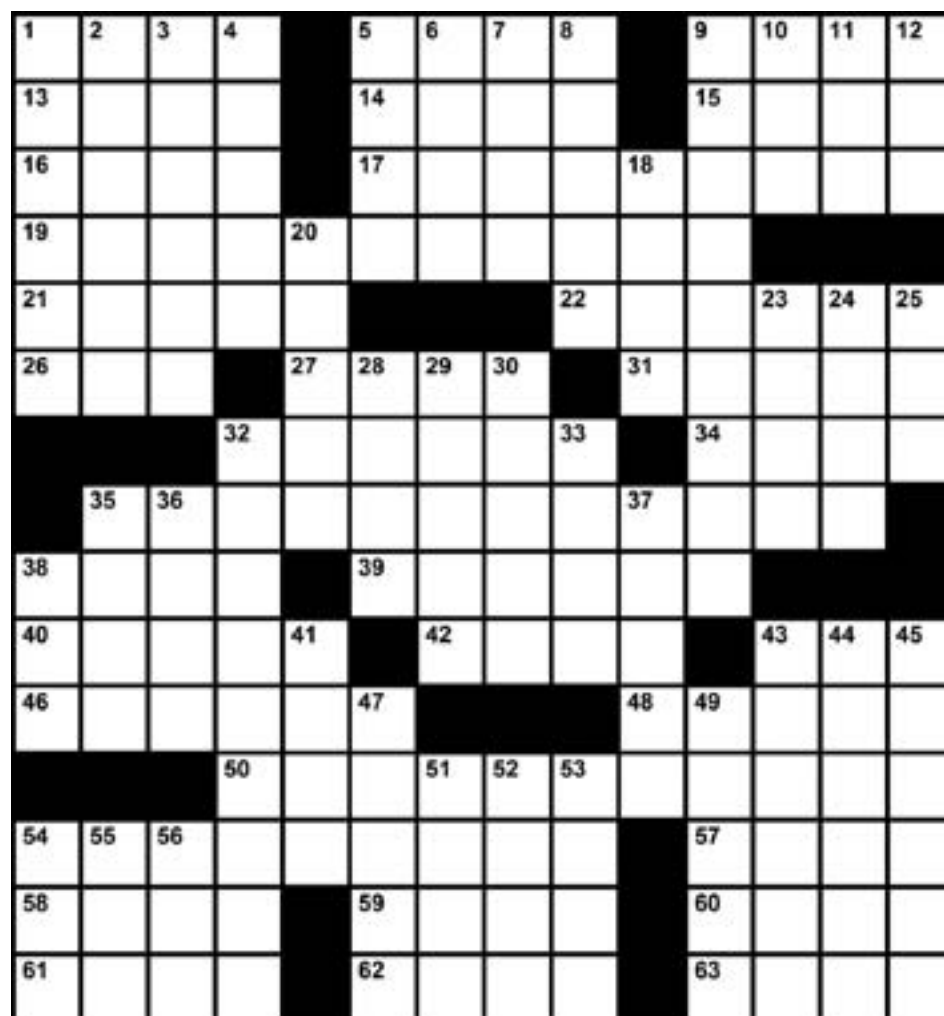


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Girl Groups Of The Sixties



Across

- 1 Problem for a drag queen's hosiery
- 5 Rock Hudson's "A Farewell to _____"
- 9 Dirt clump
- 13 Jason Lee TV role
- 14 Lincoln's Johnson
- 15 Folk history
- 16 Pink Triangle Press publication
- 17 Willa Cather novel
- 19 "Be My Baby" singers
- 21 Made easier to bear
- 22 Gets to second base, perhaps
- 26 Alternative to HBO
- 27 "Brothers & Sisters" producer Ken
- 31 Sound of a sudden, involuntary discharge
- 32 They wave their sticks in Atlanta
- 34 Dance club speakers
- 35 "Will You Love Me Tomorrow" singers
- 38 Environs
- 39 Show and tell
- 40 Back biter?
- 42 Belgrade resident
- 43 Strong joe
- 46 Nicosia's island
- 48 Too big for your britches

50 "Stop! In the Name of Love" singers

54 Public lavatories, e.g.

57 Collette of "United States of Tara"

58 Party after a Hawaiian wedding, perhaps

59 "Snail-mail" org.

60 Supporter of two plastic brides

61 Role for Bela

62 Gave the slip to

63 Art Deco design name

Down

1 Three couples in bed?

2 Lane of _The Birdcage_

3 Put the collar on

4 Blinding light

5 Shakespearean stream

6 Director Norman of "Prelude to a Kiss"

7 Come together

8 Dice markings

9 Phone message from Glenn?

10 Mary's TV boss

11 Bruin Bobby

12 Some NFL linemen

18 Salty, white stuff from the Greeks

20 Ban targets

23 Quaint sigh

24 Does a birth rite

25 Signal that goes either way

28 "If I Were King of the Forest" singer

29 High-tuition schools

30 Cheek

32 She played Maude Findlay

33 One who looks into crystal balls

35 Reverend Perry

36 Fab Four flick

37 David Marshall Grant's "____ of Love"

38 Where to see a Sharon Stone movie, perhaps

41 Essen's river

43 "Rita Will," for one

44 Collection of on-line discussion groups

45 Handle on a streetcar, for Williams?

47 Asian capital

49 The Divine Miss M

51 Matching notes for Rorem?

52 Dave Pallone and others

53 "Hey, over here!"

54 Nellie in journalism

55 Mo. named after a Caesar

56 Benjamin Hoff's "The ____ of Pooh"

Solution on pg. 22

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Fun. In Detroit: 'Fight For Equal Rights'



BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

It could've just been a fun, show Saturday night at the Fillmore Detroit, and it was. But the sold-out crowd got more than a flashy good time.

The big happy party that the trio and their band threw – a high-spirited show with beaming rainbow lights, endless energy from frontman Nate Ruess and songs from their infectiously giddy chart beast “Some Nights” – also served as a soap box for their continued efforts as gay rights activists.

“Fight for equal rights,” Ruess declared near the end of their 80-minute show, driving concertgoers to the front lobby where they could support the Ruth Ellis Center and the band’s Ally Coalition. Formed to create awareness of LGBT issues, volunteers from the area manned the donation table where people held up ally signs to demonstrate advocacy for gay issues. It was cool to see so many LGBT-affirming people – young people, especially – interested in standing up for, and sometimes with, their friends.

Acceptance and unification was a running theme of the show, actually. Everything about their largest-to-date Detroit stop, down to the performances of two of their biggest singles “We Are Young” and “Carry On,” was rooted in liberation – liberation from conceit, from heartache, from inequality. fun. ’s not just fun;

they’re inspiring.

Now, I’ll be honest: I didn’t completely warm up to “Some Nights,” a pretty solid album but definitely far from groundbreaking. I still think it’s slightly forgettable and, in some parts, mind-numbingly repetitive.

Not live, however. There’s a charm about Ruess, who has the swaggering star-power of a frontman but also manages to pull off likable like he’s some kind of deity leading people to a place of love and compassion. Joined by guitarist Jack Antonoff and multi-instrumentalist Andrew Dost, a Detroit native who Ruess mentioned still has a place in Royal Oak (they all wore Pistons jerseys during the encore as a cool nod to his hometown), the three guys know how to give sparkling life to the shoddiest of songs. Nearly every one of them sounded like a hit that night, but no more than “Why Am I The One,” a highlight that, done live, really embellished the flamboyant Queen sound already apparent on the album cut.

Most of the set list was, for obvious reasons, spent on “Some Nights,” up for an impressive six Grammys, but the band didn’t ignore their previous album, “Aim and Ignite.” It didn’t matter that most of the shiny happy people weren’t familiar with the songs from their debut. You couldn’t help but feel a part of something special, and something fun.



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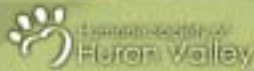
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