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Identity politics can be complicated and confusing. It's okay if you can't find the right labels to fit you or if you don't feel like any labels fit right.

— Grace Ferguson, pg. 7



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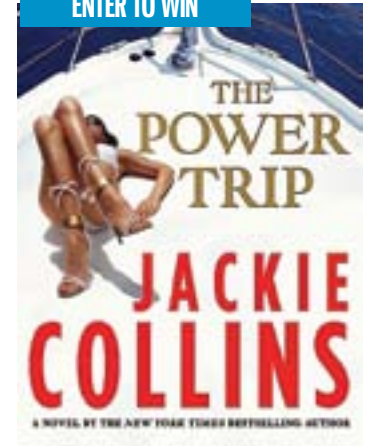
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Anti-Gay Boy Scout Ban Leads To Employment Discrimination For Young Michigan Woman

Young Lesbian Fired From Boy Scout Camp Could Have Kept Job in 21 Other States

BY DAWN WOLFE

While the Boy Scouts of America's National Executive Board delays deciding whether or not to partially rescind the ban on gay and lesbian scouts and volunteers, the organization says it does not discriminate against gay and lesbian employees – at least, not in the twenty-one states where doing so is illegal.

That news comes as no comfort to one young lesbian Michigander who was summarily fired in 2012 from a scouting summer camp in the state.

If Lauren Jasenak had lived in California, (or any other of those other twenty-one states that ban anti-LGBT employment discrimination) she could have continued to work in the camp's kitchen. But because she's a lesbian living in Michigan, the BSA was free to order her to leave Metamora's camp D-bar-A on July 18 – the day after the national organization affirmed its discriminatory policy.

Of course, no matter where Jasenak lived, she could still be barred from serving the Scouts as a volunteer under the anti-gay ban, which was affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2000.

After successfully completing summer



Lauren Jasenak was shocked to learn her minority status could be used as a reason to fire her from the job she loved.

employment at the Gregory, Michigan-based Camp Munhacker in 2010 and 2011, Jasenak was looking forward to spending another fun, productive summer as a kitchen and general-help worker at D-bar-A in 2012.

Unfortunately for her summer ambitions, Jasenak said she confided her orientation to Camp Commissioner Ann Spayts "a few nights before" she was fired.

According to Jasenak, the day – a Wednesday – started out, "...pretty normally. It was the first day we were supposed to start with the Cub Scout program. I was supposed to give the

and lesbians), there was a court case ... but the general attitude I'd heard was that wasn't a thing the Boy Scouts cared about anymore," she said.

After being forced to sign the paper terminating her employment, the then eighteen year-old, "...began crying hysterically. I was fired, I had no car to go home in and my rabbit, Thumper, was there with me." Jasenak added that while Licht and Spayt said that she could stay for dinner, but was required to leave immediately afterward – and they refused to give her

Because she's a lesbian living in Michigan, the BSA was free to order Lauren to leave Metamora's camp.

kitchen/dining hall spiel - you basically tell the kids how to line up, where their trays go, and how to get their food, (but instead) I was told to go to the camp office." When she arrived at the office, Jasenak said, she was confronted by Spayts and Camp Director Bill Licht.

"They gave me a document to sign (stating that she was being terminated as a result of her sexual minority status) that had Ann's and his (Licht's) signature already on it. I wasn't going to sign it at first, but Bill wouldn't take 'No' for an answer," Jasenak continued.

Jasenak was shocked to learn her minority status could be used as a reason to fire her from the job she loved. "Up until this point in Scouting I'd heard about it (the ban on gays

a ride for the roughly two-hour trip home.

Despite the tense situation, Jasenak said she repeatedly requested a copy of any employment policies banning gay or lesbian people from working at the camp, and "When I said I wanted the policy, Ann said 'That's understandable – if you stole something you'd probably want a policy about that, too.'"

Eventually, Jasenak said, she found a friend who was able to leave work early to give her a ride home from the camp – and, she said, Licht stood guard over her as she packed in her cabin. "I wore my 'Some Chicks Marry Chicks' shirt and played Lola the whole time," she added.

Camp Director Licht said he was not at

liberty to talk about Jasenak's termination and referred questions to the BSA's national office.

"What happened to Lauren is a terrible scar on the face of the Boy Scouts, and yet another example of why the national board has already waited far too long to make this change," said Equality Michigan Director of Victim Services Yvonne Siferd. The organization worked with Jasenak to file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in August 2012.

"We will continue to work with Lauren as she awaits word from the EEOC and handles any response from the Boy Scouts. Any other LGBTQ victims of discrimination at the hands of the Boy Scouts should feel empowered to contact us, so that we may help them navigate a system that often seems weighted against them."

Asked about the relationship between the organization's ban on gay and lesbian volunteers and its employment policies, Deron Smith, director, BSA Public Relations replied via email that, "The Boy Scouts of America will always follow applicable laws. All local councils of Boy Scouts of America operate in full compliance with all applicable laws, codes, ordinances, statutes, and regulations respecting nondiscrimination. The Boy Scouts of America does not unlawfully discriminate with respect to employment, volunteer or member participation, or provision of services on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, *sexual orientation*, *gender identity*, [Ed. Ital] disability or handicapped status, family or marital status, veteran status, or political affiliation."

To Report Discrimination

Currently, 21 states and Washington DC prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and 16 states and Washington DC prohibit discrimination based on gender identity. In Michigan there are local ordinances that protect these groups in some manner in Ann Arbor, Birmingham, Dearborn Heights, Detroit, Douglas, East Lansing, Ferndale, Flint, Grand Ledge, Grand Rapids, Huntington Woods, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Muskegon, Saginaw, Traverse City and Ypsilanti. Royal Oak is currently reviewing adding these policies.

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights is gathering information and they are asking that people share their opinions and experiences around LGBT discrimination. **"Do you think protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people should be added to the ELCRA? Have you experienced discrimination in Michigan because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?"** Please consider sharing your thoughts on the proposed amendments to this law. We are interested in hearing from individuals in favor of and opposed to such changes to the law.

Please email, anonymously if you prefer, calcagnor@michigan.gov to share your opinion," said a recent request for information.

INFORM

Unity Michigan

Michiganders can join the education campaign at <http://DontChangeYourself.com>, where they can add their name to the petition to Rep. Bolger, hear more stories about workplace discrimination, and download Not-Gay posters, screen savers and other "Not-Gay" tips so they can be sure to have a Not-Gay appearance at work.

The Unity Michigan Coalition was formed to ensure that all Michiganders are treated fairly in the workplace by advancing nondiscrimination policies. It includes the ACLU of Michigan, Affirmations, Equality Michigan, KICK, the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion and the Ruth Ellis Center. For more information go to <http://DontChangeYourself.com>.

Between Ourselves: Rebekah Warren

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Rebekah Warren is the Michigan State Senator for the 18th District. As an ally, she has pushed for amending the Elliott Larsen Civil Rights Act to include protections for LGBT people, as well as equality in adoption laws. Prior to working as a lawmaker she served as executive director of MARAL Pro-Choice Michigan for seven years, where she urged the board of directors to join the Coalition for a Fair Michigan, which organized field efforts and educated voters to oppose the 2004 ballot proposal to ban same-sex marriage.



Since then, she has received the Millie Award from the National Women's Political Caucus, the Legislator of

the Year Award from the Michigan Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) as well as Progress Michigan's Progressive State Representative Cherry Award. She has also been active in the national non-profit Women in Government (WIG), and served as the Michigan state director for the Women Legislators' Lobby (WiLL).

1 Why have you been such a passionate supporter of equality?

I believe in LGBT equality for the same reasons I believe in gender equality and racial equality – we are all people and we deserve the same respect and the same rights afforded to others. It's really that simple for me.

Beyond the ethical considerations though, I also think that Michigan is losing out economically with our regressive LGBT policies. We are creating a state that is unattractive to young people, to diverse families, and to employers who want to properly provide for their workers. As more and more states continue to pass equality legislation, we are falling behind.

2 Do you remember who was the first LGBT person to have an impact on your thinking and worldview?

I have lived in Ann Arbor for 23 years, but grew up in Owosso, Michigan, about 40 minutes northeast of Lansing. In high school, I had a friend who struggled with being gay in a small town and the challenges she confronted really made an impression on me. Up to that point, I had not seen the burden that comes with feeling you have to hide a part of yourself, or the fear of rejection by family and friends that can be associated with coming out. Her experience is another reason I am such a passionate supporter of equality.

3 What made you decide to go into politics?

When I was in high school, I decided I wanted to play percussion in the marching band; I had played piano since I was young and decided the drums would be a good new challenge for me. I asked the band director and he flippantly replied, "Girls don't play the drums." I went home and told my mother the story and she promptly went up to the school to speak to the director. Long story short, I was the first woman to play percussion in the Owosso High School marching band.

That experience illustrated to me that we didn't have to accept things as they were; we could push for change.

“Beyond the ethical considerations though, I also think that Michigan is losing out economically with our regressive LGBT policies”

4 What bills have you introduced that specifically affect the LGBT community, and can you explain them briefly?

In both the House and Senate, I have sponsored legislation to add sexual orientation, gender identity and expression to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, assuring that no one is denied housing or employment based on whom they love. I have also worked closely with the Coalition for Adoption Rights Equality to introduce a bill to provide for second parent adoption rights, so that all parents may be legally recognized under the law.

For the last three sessions, I have also sponsored and co-sponsored Matt's Safe School Law, which required our public schools to implement policies that prohibit harassment and keep all of our children safe.

5 Having been in Lansing, have you gained any insight into why some politicians are so fervently opposed to LGBT equality?

I think what we see in Lansing, and in Washington, is that unfortunately the establishment is sometimes slow to catch up to the people. Recent polls have shown that support for same-sex marriage has grown at a phenomenal rate, but I feel there is still a perception amongst some of my colleagues that there will be political repercussions if they vote for equality legislation. I am always hopeful with each new session that attitudes will have changed and there will be a resolve in Lansing to move forward, but the current political landscape makes me think this may be one of those instances where the people will have to lead the leaders.

6 What advice do you have for BTL readers who are frustrated with the fighting in Lansing or the slowness of the political process?

My advice is not to let that frustration stop you from engaging in the political process and communicating with our public officials. Here in Michigan, Democrats not only secured strong victories for President Barack Obama and Senator Debbie Stabenow, but we picked up five seats in the State House of Representatives. Nationally, three states – Maine, Maryland, and Washington – all approved same-sex marriage by popular vote for the first time in history. Minnesota also became the second state to reject a statewide constitutional ban on same-sex marriage at the ballot box.

These victories confirm what all of the polls have been telling us - that peoples' attitudes are truly evolving, and when we work to educate them and share our personal stories, we make great gains. While we may be frustrated at times, we must continue to make our voices heard, both in Lansing and in our everyday lives.

To learn more about State Senator Warren, visit her website at www.rebekahwarren.com.

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BRIEFS

DETROIT

LaChey, Stevenson To Run For LGBT Caucus Leadership

BTL'S co-publisher, Jan Stevenson, is running for vice chair of the LGBT Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party. Attorney Mark LaChey is running at the top of the ticket for chair with three vice chairs - Garnett Lewis, David Coulter and Stevenson. "I am honored to have this chance to support my friend Mark in his plans to advance the progressive agenda of the MI Democratic Party said Stevenson.

All Democratic Party members are encouraged to attend the state convention and to cast their vote for party leadership roles. The vote for LGBT Caucus chair will be 10 a.m. Feb. 23 at Cobo Hall room 03-45.

Victory Fund To Host Happy Hour At MI Democratic Convention

The Michigan Victory Fund Campaign is hosting cocktails and networking the evening before the Michigan Democratic Convention. Learn more about how the Victory Fund helps LGBT candidates get elected and how you can get involved. 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Feb. 22 at The Westin Book Cadillac Detroit, 1114 Washington Blvd., Detroit.

FERNDALE

HIV/STD Testing Expanded At Affirmations

Affirmations Community Center in Ferndale partners with Oakland County Health Division, AIDS Partnership Michigan and Michigan AIDS Coalition to offer free HIV and STD testing. All tests are free, confidential and anonymous. Find all schedules below and online at www.goaffirmations.org/group/AHIV.

Michigan AIDS Coalition:

HIV and Syphilis testing every Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 - 9 p.m. Youth only HIV testing provided 2nd, 3rd, 4th Fridays from 7:30 - 9 p.m.

Oakland County Health Division:

HIV, Syphilis, Gonorrhea and Chlamydia testing provided 2nd Tuesdays from 6 - 9p.m.

AIDS Partnership Michigan:

HIV testing Thursdays from 5:30-8 p.m. and Saturdays from 1-2:30 p.m. Youth only HIV testing provided on 1st Fridays from 7:30 - 9 p.m.

Testing Together:

APM also offers Testing Together. The program provides and opportunity for male couples/sexual partners to get tested for HIV together and receive their results together in a safe, neutral environment in a way that affirms their relationship and allows for open discussion about safer sex. Trained counselors help the couple through discussions about, not only their HIV test results, but assist the couple in developing skills for addressing issues around HIV and having continued dialogue about sex within the context of their relationship.

Couples/sexual partners will be screened separately to determine their eligibility for the service and (if eligible) will then be given a short survey about their relationship. They will then meet with a counselor, discuss risk factors and get tested together.

Currently, Testing Together is available by appointment only to ensure that trained counselors are on-site. For more information about Testing Together or to schedule an appointment, contact Clarence Peebles at 313-446-9820.

Extended briefs are available online at:

>> www.PrideSource.com

County Clerk Moves Out Of Way In State's Second Parent Adoption Case

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

When a Hazel Park couple filed a case to force the Michigan and Oakland County to allow second parent adoptions in 2012, Attorney General Bill Schuette, Gov. Rick Snyder and former Oakland County Clerk Bill Bullard quickly filed motions

and had psychological impairments. The mother surrendered her legal rights at the hospital and Rowse adopted him, even though both parents take equal pride in his upbringing.

In November 2009, J. was born premature at just 25 weeks. His mother was a drug-addicted sex worker, and the

Their lawsuit originally fought Michigan's second parent adoption law, but in Sept. 2012 it was amended, at the Judge's suggestion, to include challenging the ban on same-sex marriage as well. The complaint lists reasons why second parent adoption and marriage are important rights. "Plaintiffs are denied protections relating to the incapacitation or death of a spouse, support for family finances and other public and private safety nets and responsibilities attaching to marriage."

The suit lists reasons why denying marriage to couples is discriminatory and causes harm, including rights that come along with an estate, rights to spousal benefits like health care, life insurance, survivor benefits, filing jointly for tax benefits, hospital visitation and the right to make care decisions or burial plans. The suit purports that couples like DeBoer and Rowse are protected under the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which "provides that no state shall deny any person the equal protection of the laws."

At a hearing on Sept. 5, 2012 Judge Friedman told the parties that the underlying issue is the state's ban on same-gender marriage, and he gave the couple an additional ten days to amend their complaint to address the issue.

"I was surprised when Judge Friedman brought it up," said Dana Nessel, attorney for DeBoer and Rowse said at the time. "Our case has always been about what is best for the children and their rights, and that has been at the forefront of our argument. But if we have a shot at it this way, how could we not?"

Brown's withdrawal of the motion to dismiss brings down at least one road block for the mothers. Brown could not be reached for comment.

A motion hearing in the case is set for March 7 and will be held at the Wayne State University Law School before Judge Bernard Friedman in a special location for student observation.

For more on the case, visit Nessel's website at <http://nesselandkessellaw.com/deboer-rowse-fund>. Read BTL's original story online at www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=52468



April DeBoer and her partner Jayne Rowse have been together for eleven years, and have lived together for six. Rowse is the legal parent of 3-year-old N and 2-year-old J. DeBoer is the legal parent of 2-year-old R. Photo courtesy of family.

to dismiss.

But now that Bullard is no longer in office, the new Oakland County Clerk, former State Representative Lisa Brown, will not be trying to stop the case from moving forward. According to The Oakland Press, "On Tuesday, Brown took her hat out of the ring, filing a motion that implied the county wants to let the case be heard in court, and will no longer be contesting it. The motion -- five lines long -- simply concluded with: "Accordingly, the Motion to Dismiss is hereby withdrawn."

April DeBoer, 41, and Jayne Rowse, 47, both work in the medical field, and they have opened their home to their three children. In January 2009, N. was born to a biological mother who was homeless

newborn tested positive for marijuana, cocaine, opiates and methadone. After four months in the hospital, J was sent to live with DeBoer and Rowse and the state approved them to be co-foster parents. When it came time to legally adopt him however, DeBoer had to give up her guardianship rights so that Rowse could become J's single legal parent.

R came along in February 2010, when a 19-year-old who had not received any prenatal care, gave birth at a friend's house and the baby was dropped off at Hutzel Hospital. DeBoer legally adopted R, and the couple has been working hard to help him overcome the delayed gross motor skills that are the result of his biological mother not receiving any medical care while she was pregnant.

Kuseske LGBT Youth Scholarship Recipient Shares Advice

BY MEGAN ANDERSON

KALAMAZOO – As a 2011 Terry Kuseske LGBT Youth Scholarship recipient, 19-year-old Grace Ferguson started attending KGLRC youth group meetings after staff member David Topping spoke to students from the Portage Northern High School GSA.

KGLRC gave Ferguson a place where she could go to be unconditionally accepted for her identity. “When I was questioning my identity,

want to talk to their parents about their sexual orientation. “Take care of yourself first. It’s okay to wait to come out until it feels safe and right to you,” Ferguson advises.

“I know sometimes it feels like you absolutely need to come out right away, but if you know that your parents will struggle with it, it’s okay to wait. Take things slow. Bring up LGBT issues in a less personal context to see how your parents respond,” she says.

Ferguson found out about the Terry Kuseske LGBT Youth Scholarship when Toppings spoke at her high school’s GSA.

“I wasn’t going to apply, but then after a youth group meeting one week, Tracy Hall (former KGLRC Program Director) pulled me aside and told me that I had done a lot in the LGBT community, and that I should be sure to apply,” she says. “So I did, and I was surprised and proud to win.”

Currently, Ferguson attends Western Michigan University where she is majoring in social work with minors in nonprofit leadership and gender and women’s studies. She really hopes to work in the nonprofit sector someday, either for an LGBT focused organization or for a women’s health organization.

“I may someday want to continue my education and go to law school to become a legal advocate, but right now I’m just focused on getting my BSW and nonprofit certification,” says Ferguson.

These days, she likes going to movie nights and activism events because she feels like there is still a lot for her to learn. She spends her free time sewing, knitting, crafting, cooking, baking and reading.

And sharing words of wisdom... “Identity politics can be complicated and confusing. It’s okay if you can’t find the right labels to fit you, if you change labels many times, or if you don’t feel like any labels fit right. It doesn’t change who you are,” she asserts. “No matter what anyone says, you are the only person who needs to validate your identity.”

Editor’s note: This is an ongoing series of articles featuring KGLRC staff, volunteers and community members. Find out more at KGLRC.org



Grace Ferguson. Photo courtesy of Morgan Paul Photography

“Take care of yourself first. It’s okay to wait to come out until it feels safe and right to you.”

- Grace Ferguson

I could go and talk to the youth leaders, and they would let me talk to them without fear of judgment,” she shares. “It really helped me figure things out. It also helped me to connect with other queer youth at a time in my life when I felt really alone. I really liked going to the youth group when I was in high school. That was my favorite.”

She shares some advice for other kids who



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Viewpoint

OPINION BY LAURA NICHOLS

Women in Combat, A First-Hand Account

I am a Vietnam era veteran, with MP exit rank over 40 years ago, and very proud of my service. Recently, the U.S. government has decided to allow women in combat. This is not something new; women have been serving and fighting in combat since the beginning of time.

Recent statistics from the Department of Defense show that women in active duty make up 14.5 percent of Armed Forces personnel (207,308 out of 1.4 million). Shockingly, recent statistics also show that one in three of these women has been sexually assaulted! That translates to 3,192 sexual assaults reported out of 19,000. That's roughly 52 a day. It's no understatement to say this is a problem of horrific concern.

Most people believe that the only females that have served in combat have been nurses. I have met many service women who received orders to serve in combat units and have seen combat up close. These women receive orders from on high and were sent to inappropriate units due to clerical error. The problem with being sent to the wrong place is that it takes many months for any errors to be corrected.

Here is my first-hand experience. It's difficult even at this date to recall and to write about it. Given the recent statistics - as of October 2012 - from the U.S. Defense Department, one can only question have

times changed since Vietnam? Will things radically change in the future? During my duty stint I was asked to participate in a special unit that traveled to Vietnam to escort soldiers home who were either psychotic due to combat stress or had a severe problem with drugs. As military police, we were given orders to bring the individual "home" by whatever means necessary. We were given thiorazine in several vials and also a side-arm.

One of the first things you learn in the military is to follow orders and not ask questions. It was not hard to figure out that the GI's we were bringing home had fathers within the government. We took them to the closest military installation to their home and admitted them to a mental unit at the post hospital. There were always a set of orders at the hospital telling us where to go and who to pick up next.

I received a set of orders to pick up a woman in Korea at a "camp" close to the DMZ. I was to escort her out of the camp to the 121 hospital in Seoul. We were provided with extra armed soldiers to escort both of us there. When I reported to this camp, I was told that she was psychotic and a danger to herself and others. I was provided with an escort to the hut where she was held.

When I first met her, she had red paint all over her body. When I introduced myself to

her she told me the reason I was there was to move her to a better whore house and that she was glad to get away from where she was. Something didn't feel right so before we left camp I wanted to talk to her. I asked our escort to move her belongings out to the jeep while I helped her change her clothes and clean herself. While we were talking she became lucid at times.

She told me she had been held and raped repeatedly over a period of time and that the guys were going to show her how much of a whore she truly was. At one point, she observed that I had a gun and asked me to shoot her because she was in so much pain and couldn't take it anymore. The longer she talked to me, the more I noticed that fragments didn't fit to the story I was told by her company commander.

I remember hesitating after she told me her story and saw the pain she felt. I actually considered shooting her because her emotional and physical pain was so apparent. I thought how could she continue living with the memories of the abuse she had suffered? I knew something wasn't right, but just couldn't explain why I believed most of her story.

We stayed for two days at the hospital in Seoul and when they considered her stable enough to fly home we returned to Georgia. Before we moved from the camp to the hospital in Korea another service woman placed a note into my pocket and told me to wait to read it when we left the country. In Seoul, waiting to process out, I read the note, it contained information that the person I was relocating had been raped for ten days, almost non-stop, by our service men (officers included) because as the soldiers put it, "She was a smart ass and used her rank to get what she wanted and they wanted to put her in her place."

There were ten women stationed at this camp and the rest were left alone as long as they didn't act like her. The letter also read that the remaining women were to be

shipped out soon as they were too close to the DMZ (demilitarized zone).

What needs to be addressed is the "culture" within the military that women are just a piece of meat and expendable. It is a culture that is spread throughout all the branches of the military, enlisted men and officers included.

During my military career, I changed MOS's (military occupational specialty). The last trip I made overseas, I

requested a new MOS and to be reassigned. I went to school for my new job and was sent back east to a combat engineer unit. I was the only female in that unit for six months. During those six months I was sexually harassed by the men multiple times each day. Since they could not billet me with the men in the unit I was allowed to live off post. I had men from the unit showing up at my home trying to date me or just have sex.

Again this behavior reared its ugly head time and time again and yet at one point I too was raped only because I said no to all the advances. Because of the "culture" and other reasons I now suffer from PTSD.

There are many women who tried to serve their country honorably and were victims of sexual harassment and abuse. Many ended in a mental health unit and made to believe that it was their entire fault.

I strongly believe women can serve in combat and perhaps do a better job than some men. Again it is the "culture" of the military that prevents women from being the best they can be. Research has proven women can serve in combat situations and handle the stress that comes along with war. Women can be a very valuable asset serving in combat units and I hope they are allowed to continue.

Let's start to look at the culture of sexual predators who believe that women and sometimes men are nothing more than a sexual object.

Laura Nichols lives with her partner in southeast Michigan and she volunteers for the MCCD Choir.



Rub Peter. Lay Paul.



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

For whatever reason of erotic senescence or jaded performance acumen – emphasis on syllable three – I’ve been giving online erotica a clinical look. (Yeah, sure, Mary.)

Porn’s our 21st century version of the carnival sideshow; or, as it was known in earlier decades, the freak show. Indeed, it’s amazing the creative things that enterprising exhibitionists can do with cucumbers, cumquats, road cones. But not necessarily in that order.

I’m sure there’s a golden opportunity dawning, with no end of willing participants – who do come in all shapes, sizes, proclivities – to inaugurate a 2020 Sexual Olympics, provided Reblibicans, who at bottom are really strange bed fellows, don’t mandate videotaping in the Oval Office.

(By the way: it’s almost requisite for presidential candidates to talk about their religious beliefs. One would think that the same should apply to sexual proclivities, now that Bill Clinton set a precedence during his final year in office. “Mitt, have you ever deviated from the plural wives missionary position. If so, how? On shore or off? Tax free or otherwise?”)

I’ve lived long enough to be amazed at the sexual revolution that’s taken place since Kinsey’s 1948 sex study bombshell, a revolution in film, print media, Broadway musicals, TV talk shows, and, much more importantly, the internet - with an estimate range of 20,000 to 7 million x-rated sites. It blows one’s mind. Frequently.

When I was a kid my folks were hush hush. Sex wasn’t discussed at school, church, publicly. (I do remember, however, going through our neighborhood with other engaging seven-year-olds shouting fuck! fuck! fuck! We didn’t know what fuck meant, other than it bugged grownups big time.)

I must have been about eight or nine when I saw my first “dirty picture,” courtesy of a twelve-year-old friend. I found the naked guy intriguing. His partner, incidental. Go figure.

In middle school I peeped at my first Tijuana Bible (“illustrated comic booklets, the kind men like”). Secretly shared for a hot minute. If caught I risked expulsion and an embarrassing parental visitation. Who knows? Maybe jail.

A recent anthology, “The Best of Sexology: the Illustrated Magazine of Sex Science” (Running Press) brought back other memories. Founded in 1933, it was America’s first sex magazine. As a preteen I found a copy of it hidden under the cushion of our living room chair.

The bazaar pictures in that 25-cent monthly were slightly horrific to me: “elephantiasis of the testicles.” Big balls or not, I flipped through it every chance I could get my sticky fingers on it. Early on I was confused. Do my folks actually do that? No way!

The Running Press anthology includes: Extra Breasts in Women, Priapism, Pregnant Men, When Midgets Marry, Twin Beds or Single, Humans With Tails, Why Do Men Do It? (cross dress), Sex Desire for Shoes, Odor Fetishist, GI Paratrooper War Hero Returns a Woman, Homosexual Chickens.

Quote from the homo chickens commentary: “The lowest ranking cock may be psychologically castrated, in the sense that he may refrain completely from any sexual behavior as a result of social suppression.” Come to think of it, maybe these unplucked fowls were really ex-gays.

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Ozone House Peer Outreach Workers at the Drop-In Center in Ypsilanti.

Extended Hours For Ozone House's Drop-In Center

YPSILANTI – The daily hours of operation for the Ozone House Drop-In Center in Ypsilanti are being extended due to a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The new Ozone House Drop-In Center hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 4 - 6 p.m. and Thursdays: 4 - 8 p.m.

Colleen O'Brien, director of Youth Opportunity for Ozone House, said of the new hours, "We are really excited to be able to extend our hours at the Ozone House Drop-In Center because it allows us to have more programming for young people."

Government funding cuts for the Ozone House Street Outreach Program resulted in a reduction in operating hours for the Ypsilanti location in 2012. "Over the last several years Ozone House has faced increased competition for funding from larger metropolitan

areas," said Ozone House Executive Director, Katie Doyle. "The grant from the Department of Health and Human Services is vital to our ability to continue to meet the growing needs of youth in our community."

The Drop-In Center is visited about 5,000 times per year by area youth. Young people visit Ypsi Ozone every weekday to hang out in a safe place, eat a hot meal furnished by Food Gatherers, do their laundry, take a shower, use computers and phones, get help with schoolwork, and access Ozone House housing and support services.

Ozone House is the only agency in Washtenaw County that provides free, confidential, and voluntary shelter and support services to runaway, homeless and high-risk youth ages 10-20 and their families. To learn more about Ozone House programs and services, visit www.ozonehouse.org.

Shir Tikvah To Honor Rabbi Arnie On 25th Anniversary

BY BTL STAFF

TROY – Congregation Shir Tikvah will honor Rabbi Arnie Sleutelberg on his 25th anniversary as spiritual leader of the synagogue at 6 p.m. on March 2, at the Michigan State University Management Education Center, 811 W. Square Lake Road in Troy.

The gala dinner will pay tribute for the rabbi's service to the congregation, the Jewish community and the community at large. As part of his community involvement, Rabbi Arnie, as he is affectionately known by his congregants, supports many causes and has served on the boards of JARC, AIDS Interfaith Network, Triangle Foundation, Jewish Community Relations Council, Michigan Jewish AIDS Coalition and Jewish Gay Network.

He also served as Rabbinic Dean of the National Federation of Temple Youth-Michigan Region and on the staff of Albion College, where he earned his bachelor's degree. He is actively involved in bridge-building among different religious, ethnic and racial groups, and helps to foster understanding with Muslims, African Americans and Christians. He is a long-time supporter of the Troy Area Interfaith Group.

Rabbi Arnie received his master's degree and rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College in New York. He chose the rabbinate as his profession because it combined his love for Judaism with teaching, counseling and community development.

During his sabbaticals, he studied Hinduism and Buddhism, with special emphasis on meditation techniques and chanting. He has deepened his own Jewish spirituality by witnessing other traditional faith practices. He often connects with indigenous tribes and their spiritual elders in various countries in addition to bringing support for "lost" Jewish tribes in Africa and India.

On March 1, the congregation and its sisterhood will join for a special Music Sabbath, led by Rabbi Arnie's long-time friend Reb Eli Cohen of Santa Cruz, Calif. The Sabbath service also will commemorate the 100th

anniversary of the Women of Reform Judaism, in which the Shir Tikvah Sisterhood holds membership.



Rabbi Arnie will also be honored March 10 at a special tikkun olam (repairing the world) project entitled, "From Slavery to Freedom: Two Journeys, One Destiny," in collaboration with the Brightmoor community in Northwest Detroit. Brightmoor's City Mission and City Covenant Church will join members of Congregation Shir Tikvah for a Passover seder (traditional meal recounting the ancient Jews' deliverance from slavery), which will feature the blending of the food and traditions of two peoples who share the experience of slavery and freedom.

The March 2 gala is open to the public. Admission is \$65 per person. The evening will include dinner, hors d'oeuvres, entertainment and dessert. Checks should be made payable and mailed to Congregation Shir Tikvah, 3900 Northfield Parkway, Troy, MI 48084.

For questions or further information, call the synagogue's administrator Lorelei Berg at 248-649-4418.

Campaign Looks To Break Culture Of Silence Around Discrimination

HOLLAND – Hope is Ready has initiated a "Silence Isn't Always Golden" campaign in an attempt to open communication and education about the need to end discrimination against LGBTQ people. And they are calling on like-minded individuals to help.

The student-led group, which formed on the Hope College campus when the school wouldn't allow filmmaker Dustin Lance Black to speak, has been working this year on the theme "silence isn't always golden," promoting the message that it's not only a problem of open discrimination we face, but

more importantly it's the culture of silence surrounding LGBTQ issues that poses a serious threat to education and ending discrimination.

The culmination of those efforts is an April 14 fundraiser that it will raise money to foster education and conversation. Hope is Ready has partnered with student organizations and schools across the state, and hopes to grow the event as big as possible.

The fundraiser, a black-tie optional formal Masquerade Ball, will be held at DeVos Place in the Steelcase Ballroom.

"Please take a look at the website and consider attending and becoming a named partner," Hope is Ready urged in an email to Holland area organizations. "We need your help to make this dream come true."

Advance tickets are \$30 apiece (25\$ for students) and partner packages range from \$150-\$800. For more details, go to www.hopeisready.org/siag.

The Quick Details

Who: Hope is Ready and all people who

believe that a good way to educate and end discrimination is to foster conversation

Food, refreshments and entertainment will be provided

What: A black-tie optional formal Masquerade Ball fundraiser to garner the money to bring education and conversation about LGBTQ issues to Michigan

When: April 14 from 7-9 p.m.

Where: DeVos Place Steelcase room

Statewide Conference On LGBT Issues In Education Coming Up

In Second Year, SOGI Offers Credits for Continuing Ed At March 9 Event

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Last year's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Initiative Conference at Oakland University was such a hit that organizers are stepping it up for 2013, including offering Continuing Education Credits for education and counseling professionals.

This year's conference takes place on March 9 at the Oakland Center on OU's campus. It's an all-day event that includes continental breakfast and hot lunch. Tickets are \$100 for general admission and \$25 for students.

Tim Larrabee helped organize the conference as part of OU's commitment to diversity. The school set a priority for including sexual orientation and gender identity issues as part of their overall outreach to students in the School of Education.

"My charge was to make sure sexual orientation issues are infused through the school of education," Larrabee said. "What grew out of that was a taskforce of volunteers from every department to see what we could do. From that we created Michigan's first statewide conference on LGBT issues in education. We left it Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI), instead of making it LGBT. Sexual orientation and gender identity are labels we all live with. What we understood, is this is a human problem no matter where you lie on those spectrums, because everyone is impacted by perceptions."

Last year 150 people attended. This year more are expected because the event takes place on a Saturday and credits are being offered.

"This year's keynote is Debra Chasnoff of Ground Spark Films. She and her company produce gender and sexuality based films about youth. One of her most recent films is "Straightlaced—How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up." It looks at how we all are confined by gender stereotypes. Stereotypes constrict everybody," Larrabee said. He also recommends previous films of Chasnoff's including "It's Elementary—Talking, About Gay Issues in School," where she documented attitudes of youth in 1996, and the follow-up documentary "It's STILL Elementary," filmed in 2007.

“What grew out of that was a taskforce of volunteers from every department to see what we could do. From that we created Michigan's first statewide conference on LGBT issues in education.**”**

– Tim Larrabee

David Garcia, executive director of Affirmations Community Center will be emceeding the conference, and Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh will also be on hand to share a few words.

There are multiple sessions, including "Using Research for Messaging and Moving Toward Justice," by Emily Dievendorf, policy director of Equality Michigan, "Students with Transgender Identities," by Antonia Caretto, PhD; "Strategies to Enhance Conditions for Learning for LGBT Students," by Jeffrey Poirier of the American Institutes for Research and Dustin Miller of Dublin City Schools; and "Social Justice Issues: Helping All Students Reach Their Potential," by Larry Thomas of Oakland schools and R.J. Webber of Novi schools.

And of course there will be several other options for sessions throughout the day, including a networking hour after lunch and a general roundtable session where all facilitators will be available for questions. The day will conclude with a performance by Riot Youth, a group from Ann Arbor's Neutral Zone teen center. The youth dramatize real-world situations that teens in Michigan schools experience. "They performed last year and the feedback was this was really impactful. It's that immediate real-life, real-world connection they make that you can't do in a workshop," Larrabee said.

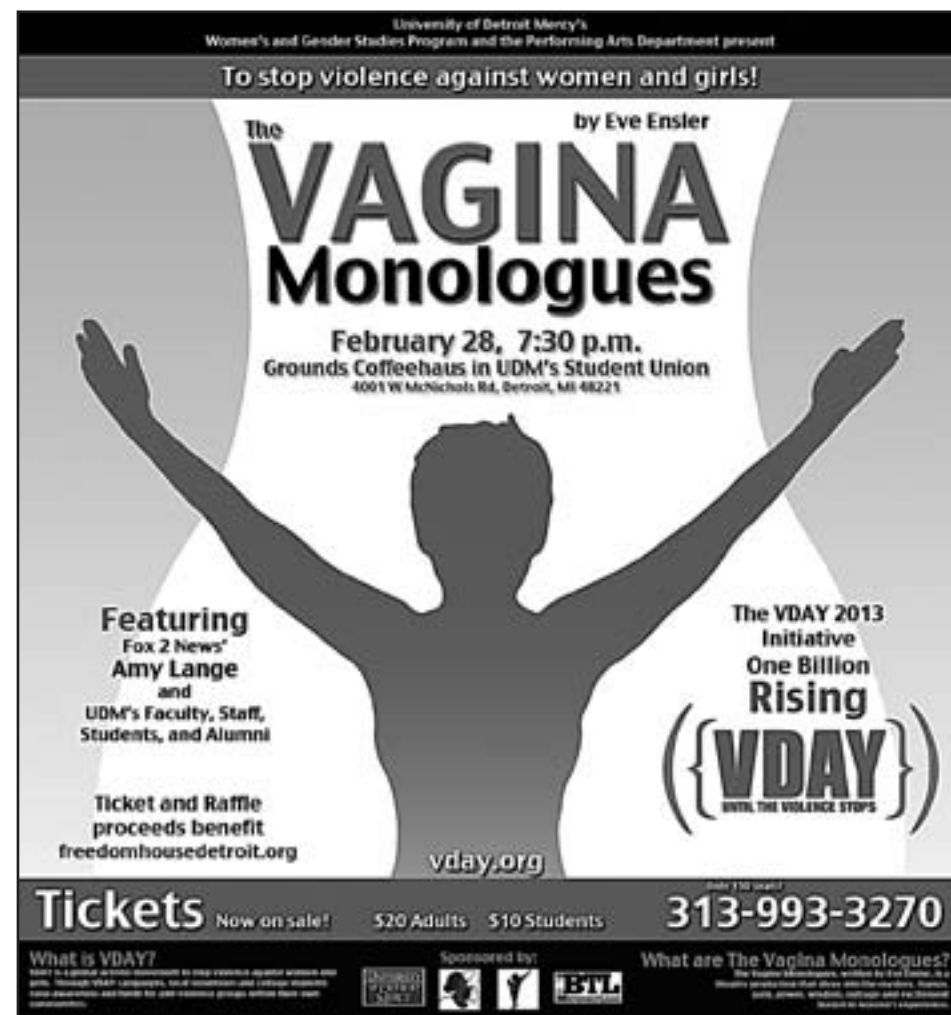
To learn more about the SOGI Conference visit their website at www.oakland.edu/sogi.



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Extensive Study By Gallup, Williams Institute Further Identifies LGBT Population In States

Most States Within Two Percentage Points of 3.5 National Average

BY LISA KEEN

There's a kind of urban myth that most LGBT people live in large urban areas on the west coast and the northeast region of the country and that they're mostly gay, male, young, and white. But a new study out this month (Feb. 15) begs to amend this perception slightly.

Data from the most extensive study ever of LGBT people in the general population says the highest percentage of self-identified LGBT people lives in Washington, D.C., followed by the relatively small population states of Hawaii, Vermont, Oregon, Maine, and Rhode Island. And while the distribution of self-identified LGBT people still falls roughly along the west coast and the northeast region, there are incongruities like low self-identification in marriage equality state Iowa and high self-identification in bordering South Dakota, a sparsely populated Republican-dominated agricultural state.

The analysis was based on data collected by the Gallup Poll group through phone interviews with 206,186 adults throughout the U.S. The pollster asked participants a number of questions, including, "Do you personally identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender?" The data was then analyzed and re-weighted to reflect known demographic

factors by Gallup Editor-in-Chief Frank Newport and Williams Institute Distinguished Scholar Gary Gates.

Out of the entire sample, all interviewed between June 1 and December 30 of 2012, 3.5 percent said yes.

Michigan weighed in at 3.8 percent out of 5,913 surveyed - falling between New York and Illinois.

The highest percentage of "yes" responses was found in Washington, D.C., where 10 percent of 493 adults self-identified as LGBT.

The second highest percentage - 5.1 percent - came in Hawaii, where 643 adults were surveyed. Others among the top ten states with the highest percentages included Vermont (4.9 percent of 664 surveyed), Oregon (4.9 percent of 3,655 surveyed), Maine (4.8 percent of 1,286), Rhode Island (4.5 percent of 735), Massachusetts (4.4 percent of 4,253), South Dakota (4.4 percent of 722), Nevada (4.2 percent of 1,493), California (4 percent of 18,636), and Washington State (4 percent of 5,990).

The ten states with the lowest percentage of LGBT people willing to identify themselves as such to Gallup were North Dakota (1.7 percent of 615 people surveyed), Montana (2.6 percent of 1,329), Mississippi (2.6 percent of 1,961), Tennessee (2.6 percent of 4,889), Utah (2.7 percent of 2,726), Idaho (2.7 percent of 1,582),

Nebraska (2.7 percent of 1,592), Pennsylvania (2.7 percent of 9,716), Alabama (2.8 percent of 3,603), and Iowa (2.8 percent of 2,692).

"This is the largest single study of the distribution of the LGBT population in the U.S. on record, and the first time a study has had large enough sample sizes to provide estimates of the LGBT population by state," notes a Gallup report released with the data.

To be more precise, this is the largest single study of the distribution of LGBT people willing to self-identify as such in a random phone survey, but even with that more narrow assessment, the data is still very important.

"A lot of people don't truly understand how little data we have," said Gates, who has been studying LGBT demographic data for many years. And because in all but nine states the survey involved more than 1,000 people, the analysis could "credibly" estimate the percentage of LGBT people willing to identify as such in all 50 states, said Gates. "Those data doesn't exist anywhere else."

And Gallup was careful to qualify and explain its methods:

"There are a number of ways to measure lesbian, gay, and bisexual orientation and transgender status," noted the Gallup press release. "Gallup chose a broad measure of personal identification as LGBT because this grouping of four statuses is commonly

used in current American discourse, and as a result has important cultural and political significance. One limitation of this approach is that it is not possible to separately consider differences among [LGBT] individuals. A second limitation is that this approach measures broad self-identity, and does not measure sexual or other behavior, either past or present."

The 3.5 percent estimate from the latest massive Gallup Poll data corresponds exactly with an LGB estimate Gates provided in April 2011, when he released his analysis of five different population studies. (Counting transgender people, he estimated 3.8 percent.) The five U.S. surveys included the mammoth General Social Survey of 2008 and the National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior of 2009.

In both analyses, Gates was estimating the percentage of adults in the United States who self-identify as LGBT. But Associated Press's report on Gates' 2011 analysis focused on the finding that 1.7 percent identified as "homosexual."

"That's a much lower figure than the three percent to five percent that has been the conventional wisdom in the last two decades," noted the AP report, carried widely by the mainstream media. Only near the bottom of the

Continued on Next Page

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article did AP mention that Gates' study found another 1.8 percent identified as bisexual.

The estimates of people willing to identify as LGBT are naturally smaller than estimates of people who have ever felt a sexual attraction to a person of the same sex or who have ever had sex with a person of the same sex. In his famed studies of the 1940s-1960s, researcher Alfred Kinsey estimated 10 percent of males "are more or less exclusively homosexual for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55." A Williams Institute analysis of subsequent studies found eight percent of adults reported having had sex with a same-sex partner at some point in their lives and 11 percent had been attracted to a person of the same sex.

Gates has been careful to point out, however, that Kinsey did not rely on large, population-based data, but rather interviews with several thousand participants in a study of human sexual behavior.

The 3.5 percent estimate nationally from the latest Gallup data and from Gates' 2011 analysis closely approximate data collected by a major media coalition during the national elections in 2010 and 2012. The National Election Pool found that about three percent to four percent of people answering exit poll surveys when leaving the voting booth identified themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

An earlier release of the Gallup data, covering data collected between June 1 and September 30, 2012, included about 121,000 respondents, noted Gates. The analysis released this month was collected from June 1 to December 30.

Two "big takeaways" Gates offers from the Gallup data is that the variation from state to state "doesn't play into the stereotype that the LGBT community is entirely concentrated in New England and the West Coast" and, with one exception,

"all the top ten states are some of the most gay friendly states in the country."

The exception is South Dakota, where 4.4 percent of 722 adults surveyed identified as LGBT. Gates suggested South Dakota might have shown a higher percentage because it was among the nine states where the polling sample was under 1,000. In fact, four of the top ten states plus D.C. had polling samples under 1,000.

Counting only states where at least 1,000 people could be sampled, the highest LGBT self-identification rates were in Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, California, Washington, Kentucky, Arizona, New York, Michigan, and Illinois.

Illinois and Michigan had 3.8 percent identifying as LGBT.

"Does this mean that gay people are moving to those states or that those states are more accepting and so people are more willing to identify?" asked Gates. "I'm skeptical that it's the migration to friendly," said Gates. "The evidence suggests more the latter. If a state has a more accepting social climate, the higher the level of identification."

But there's another stereotype being undone and another variable in play, said Gates. A disproportionate number of the self-identifying LGBT people are not young, gay, white and male, but young, bisexual, non-white and female.

"The young is not surprising. Younger people are more likely to self-identify," said Gates.

As for female, Gates said he has been seeing multiple surveys of women identifying largely as bisexual. And non-white people who self-identify tend to be younger and female.

To see chart of all states surveyed visit www.gallup.com/poll/160517/lgbt-percentage-highest-lowest-north-dakota.aspx

KICK: The Education & Advocacy Exhibition Feb. 23

DETROIT – Comerica Bank will be an associate sponsor of the Education & Advocacy Exhibition, an LGBT college conference, sponsored by KICK The Agency for LGBT African Americans, on Feb. 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Hannan House, 4750 Woodward Ave.

The exhibition will allow LGBT students, allies and their families the opportunity to interact with colleges and universities in a safe and supportive environment. There will be mini workshops, lectures, activities and information sessions focusing on a variety of topics specific to LGBT participants throughout the day. Admission officers, counselors, and financial aid professionals from colleges, universities, technical/

vocational schools, and training agencies will also be on hand to answer questions and provide information.

"Education is a foundation for the success of our communities and consequently, our business," said Robert J. Hammond III, assistant vice president Comerica Bank. "We are proud to support KICK's Education & Advocacy Exhibition." The Education & Advocacy Exhibition is free and light refreshments will be provided.

In addition to Comerica Bank, The Education & Advocacy Exhibition is sponsored by Cleary University, Marygrove College and Friends of KICK.

For more information contact Curtis Lipscomb at 313-285-9733 or curtislipscomb@e-kick.org.

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C. Todd Gilbert

Discrimination against lesbians and gays is but a figment of some overactive imaginations in Virginia so there's no need for silly laws against it.



So goes the thinking of Virginia Delegate C. Todd Gilbert who made sure a bill to protect LGBT state workers died in committee without ever getting a vote in the state house despite the bill's bipartisan support in the state senate.

Gilbert, a Republican (shocking, I know), claimed that those in favor of banning discrimination didn't prove there was a problem with discrimination in the first place. Never mind that in Virginia it is perfectly legal to fire an employee, public or private, because he or she is gay (which is true for a good number of other states, too. Check your

local listings). That simply isn't good enough for Gilbert.

"Among all the people who spoke [at the subcommittee hearing], there was not a single example of one that was discriminated against in public employment," Gilbert complained. "I challenge those in the room to bring forth an example. I was told the following year that there would be a line out the door of people with examples of having been discriminated against in public employment."

What? No line out the door of sad sacks who got sacked for what they do in the sack? Then clearly no anti-discrimination bill is needed. And anyway, don't these gays know how laws work? Things can only be made illegal after they happen. So if, for example, you live in a quaint small town somewhere that has never had, say, an ax murder, then ax murdering is totally legal where you live. After all, making a law against ax murdering would be silly if you couldn't get anyone with an ax in his or her head to testify at your subcommittee hearing.

"[W]e've heard from many people about this specter of oppression that really doesn't exist because, again we have not a single example of anyone who has been discriminated against for this reason," Gilbert said.

See? It doesn't even exist! Because if it did every LGBT person who lives in a state that has no laws protecting LGBT people against discrimination would definitely go testify in public about how LGBT-discriminated-against they were.

Gilbert continued, "There was not a single example anyone that felt that except that abstract fear that we've heard testified here today. I heard the gentlewoman today say that Virginia Commonwealth ... is this oppressive and intolerant environment. I dare say that's probably not true."

Yeah, you tell 'em, Gilbert. Abstract fear is for losers. And you, being a white and presumably straight male, definitely know what it feels like to be oppressed and have every authority to brush aside the concerns of people who go to work every day knowing that they have no legal recourse should some homophobe want to terminate them all because the state that they live in doesn't even value them enough to enact laws to protect them against such total bullshit.

It is worth noting that this is the same guy who said that abortion was a "lifestyle convenience" because he is definitely a gentleman and a scholar. I wonder if he has some equally compelling thoughts about racism.

What? No line out the door of sad sacks who got sacked for what they do in the sack? Then clearly no anti-discrimination bill is needed.

Mass. Ed Dept Issues Rules On Transgender Pupils

BY JAY LINDSAY

BOSTON (AP) — The Massachusetts Department of Education on Friday issued directives for handling transgender students, including allowing them to use the bathrooms or play on the sports teams that correspond to the gender with which they identify.

The guidance was issued at the request of state board of education to help schools follow the state's 2011 anti-discrimination law protecting transgender people.

"These students, because of widespread misunderstanding and lack of knowledge about their lives, are at a higher risk for peer ostracism, victimization, and bullying," the document read.

Gunner Scott of Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition the welcomed the guidance, saying it would be "immensely helpful to those parents who have been struggling with making sure that the school environment is safe and welcoming of their child."

But the Massachusetts Family Institute said allowing transgender boys to use girls' bathrooms, and vice versa, endangers other students and violates their privacy.

"Fundamentally, boys need to be use boys' rooms and girls need to be using the girls' rooms, and we base that on their anatomical sex, not some sort of internalized gender identity," said Andrew Beckwith, general counsel for the institute.

The education department said it prepared the 11-page document after consulting policies in several states, as well as advocacy groups, parents and students.

The document said whether a student identifies as a boy or girl is up to the student or, in the case of younger students, the parents.

In all cases, "the student may access the restroom, locker room, and changing facility that corresponds to the student's gender identity," it said.

The guidance said some students may feel uncomfortable sharing those facilities with a transgender student but this "discomfort is not a reason to deny access to the transgender student." It urges administrators to resolve issues on a case-by-case basis, and recommends sufficient sex-neutral restrooms and changing areas.

The guidance also addresses what to do if other students consistently

and intentionally refuse to refer to a transgendered student by the name or sex they identify as: "It should not be tolerated and can be grounds for student discipline."

Beckwith said the guidance forces students to ignore "a basic truth of anatomy" or face punishment. He also said the guidance is an end run around the state Legislature, which specifically excluded public accommodations, such as rest rooms and locker rooms, from the 2011 bill.

But education department spokesman JC Considine said school restrooms aren't public accommodations.

"We're talking about the use of school facilities by students who have no choice but to be in a school building," Considine said. "Kids have to have restroom access."

Scott said disciplining students who won't acknowledge a student's gender identity is appropriate because it amounts to bullying. He said the directives simply aim to create a safe learning place for a group that's statistically far more likely to be harassed.

"The reality is that it's about creating an inclusive environment for all students to learn," he said.

Pro Soccer Player Robbie Rogers Says He Is Gay

BY RICK FREEMAN

Robbie Rogers, a former player for the U.S. national team and Major League Soccer, says he is gay and "could not be happier" about his decision to go public with his disclosure.

In a post on his personal website, Rogers writes: "Life is only complete when your loved ones know you. ... Try explaining to your loved ones after 25 years you are gay." Rogers' agent, Shaun Higgins, confirmed to The Associated Press on Saturday that the post was from his client. Rogers, who linked his Friday post from his Twitter account, said he was retiring.

"It's time to discover myself away from football," he said. "It's 1 a.m. in London as I write this and I could not be happier with my

decision. Life is so full of amazing things. I realized I could only truly enjoy my life once I was honest."

The midfielder has been receiving an outpouring of support from American teammates, players in England's professional leagues, soccer officials and others around the world.

While several major individual-sport athletes have been openly gay, no professional athlete in any of the four major North American team sports has come out until well after he was done playing. U.S. women's soccer star Megan Rapinoe came out last year before the Olympics and plays for Lyon in France.

Rogers played for the Columbus Crew of MLS from 2007 to 2011, winning the MLS Cup in 2008. For the U.S., Rogers made 18 appearances, seven in games that

were not exhibitions. He scored two goals, one in a CONCACAF Gold Cup match, and another to give the U.S. a draw in an exhibition game against Mexico.

Among those tweeting support to Rogers were many U.S. teammates and U.S. women's players, MLS Commissioner Don Garber, NBA star Steve Nash, Minnesota Vikings punter Chris Kluwe and former England star and broadcaster Gary Lineker.

After five seasons in MLS, Rogers went to play in England last January. He joined Leeds United, which plays one step below the Premier League. He never really got going with Leeds because of injuries and went on loan to third-division Stevenage for this season. After more injury trouble, he returned to Leeds in January and was released.

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Benefit Buddies

APM's Barbara Murray finds lifelong friendship in stage actor Ben Lipitz

BY ANDREA POTEET

In his eight years performing as Pumbaa in the stage production of Disney's "The Lion King," Ben Lipitz has always taken time to give back, putting on over three dozen benefits for charities at stops along the show's tour.

But when it came time to plan one for AIDS Partnership Michigan he drew on a longstanding friendship to help him create something special.

Lipitz is putting on a production of Claudia Sheer's hit Broadway play "Dirty Blonde" in honor of the retirement of his longtime friend, APM Executive Director Barbara Murray.

The two met five years ago when Lipitz, a coordinator for theater fundraising organization Broadway Cares, produced "Spirit of Hitsville," a Motown review benefit for APM. He said he and Murray hit it off and began a friendship based on their mutual desire to help wherever they could.

"Building this one-night concert, we just hit it off," Lipitz said. "I think we have a lot of similarities in that we're working toward anything that's going to find a pathway to curing HIV and taking care of everyone along the way."

After the benefit was over, Lipitz and Murray stayed in touch, based on their shared desires to help wherever possible: Murray continuing her more than 40 years of non-profit administration work at APM and Lipitz for Broadway Cares, producing benefits for a variety of charities.

"We just recognized something in each other," Lipitz said. "I like to think I'm this way, but I know Barb is always working to answer the question (of), 'What more can I do to make it better?'" That's what we responded to in each other – and that's why we've become great working colleagues."

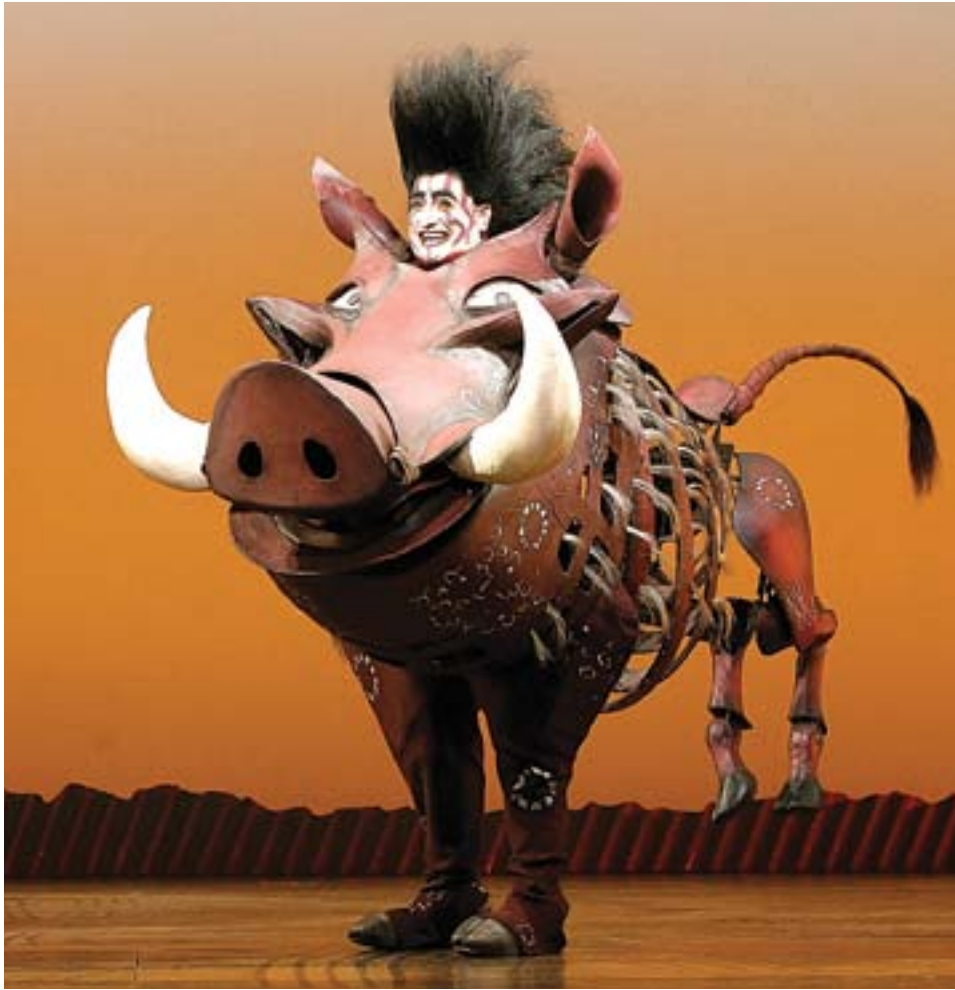
Though the two speak occasionally while Murray, who is set to retire in March after more than 20 years at APM, is finishing up her duties and Lipitz is touring as Simba's warthog pal in "The Lion King," Lipitz said he is touched by a memento that Murray has in her office.

During an auction at the end of the Motown benefit, Murray bid on a decorative kite. After learning that her opponent in the auction wanted to give the kite to her granddaughter, Murray stopped bidding and the kite went home to the little girl. A few days later, Murray received a package at her office: a similar kite, a gift from Lipitz.



“I think we have a lot of similarities in that we're working toward anything that's going to find a pathway to curing HIV and taking care of everyone along the way.”

– Ben Lipitz



Ben Lipitz plays Pumbaa in "The Lion King," now at the Detroit Opera House. Photo: Joan Marcus / Disney

The kite hangs in her office today. "That's the kind of guy Ben is," Murray said. "I love it!"

Lipitz said he is touched that Murray has the memento on display.

"It proudly hangs in her office as a daily reminder that there are total strangers that are willing to step up and make a difference," he said.

Lipitz said when he saw "The Lion King" was coming back to Detroit, now at the Detroit Opera House, he jumped at the chance to team up with Murray again in support of Broadway Cares and APM.

"In combination with her retirement party, we wanted to do something a little bit different, rather than just a regular singing cabaret," he said. "We wanted to do something a little more personal and a little more substantive."

He said he chose "Dirty Blonde," the story of two obsessive Mae West fans who forge an unusual relationship after meeting at the icon's grave, because it is one of his favorite plays and carries a powerful message.

"APM is a huge support organization within the LGBT community and I think the story of learning to develop a power out of being true to who you are is something that is a really positive message that can be shared

not just within the LGBT community but with everyone – that power and love can come from acceptance," he said.

Lipitz said he has been drawn to charity work his entire life but started trying to give back in earnest when he joined the cast of "The Lion King" and had an opportunity to work with Broadway Cares. HIV, he said, is a cause especially close to his heart.

"I'm 48 years old," Lipitz said. "I remember firsthand how devastating AIDS and HIV was in the '80s. I lost dear friends and it has an impact and you can't lessen that impact just because we've moved further away from the time when an HIV status was a death sentence."

In addition to honoring Murray's retirement, Lipitz said he's also excited to perform one of his favorite plays with some of his other closest friends during the benefit, slated for March 4 at the Gem Theatre in Detroit. He'll be producing and acting alongside Michigan-based actress Colleen Flynn, whom he has known for more than 25 years, and his "Lion King" co-star Mark David Kaplan, who plays Zazu in the show.

"It's exhilarating and exciting to be working with dear friends for a good cause," Lipitz said.

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BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI



For a Good Time, Call ...

“For a Good Time, Call ...” keeps the dirty-girl trend going with a sweet/sexy story of two college foes – they hate each other because of a urine spill oopsy – who bond once they launch a phone-sex operation. Justin Long is their gay bestie who’s responsible for their loathed reunion, while Kevin Smith and Seth Rogen make cameos as turned-on callers. The cheeky-good ’80s throwback, though, is all about Lauren and Katie (Lauren Miller and scene-stealing phenom Ari Graynor) and how they get over their hang-ups, and it’s done with more charm and faux lesbianism than you’d expect from a filthy flick about phone wanking. Special features include an amusing screw-off commentary with Miller, Graynor and out director Jamie Travis examining very important elements of filmmaking (i.e. Ari’s “lesbian outfit” and female pee positions). Check out the deleted scenes, too, for a fun dildo fight.



Keep the Lights On

“Gay film” doesn’t have to be the routine coming-out drama or inflated vanity project, as 2011’s “Weekend” demonstrated with its understated romance about a bittersweet gay fling. Now we have further proof that queer cinema can overcome such triteness: “Keep the Lights On,” a four-time Independent Spirit Awards nominee, is an explicit and sensitive exploration of love – and the burdens that drive us out of love – inspired by director Ira Sachs’ own past relationship with literary agent Bill Clegg. Sachs’ very personal story is conveyed through long-term boyfriends Erik (Thure Lindhardt) and Paul (Zachary Booth), a crack addict who up and leaves his partner without any mention of his whereabouts. Years of this flightiness, and a particularly tragic scene in which a meth-influenced Paul screws a stranger in front of the partner he seems to have forgotten about, unravels with rawness and devastating reality. That authenticity is palpable in large part because of Lindhardt and Booth’s subtly powerful performances. Extras are abundant: a making of, Sachs commentary, audition clips and some sexy deleted scenes.



Killer Joe

One of the most under-recognized films of last year involved Gina Gershon’s bush, sexually abused fried chicken and a plot so unbelievably bizarre it makes “A Clockwork Orange” look like a Disney flick. Matthew McConaughey as the electrifyingly creepy Joe, a detective who moonlights as a hit man, leads an ensemble of unhinged performances in this hardcore stage-to-screen dark comedy from William Friedkin (director of Al Pacino’s gay thriller “Cruising”). Joe’s latest kill involves murdering a woman so her deadbeat family can inherit the life insurance to pay off drug debt. Things go wrong. People die gruesome deaths. McConaughey shows more skin than in “Magic Mike.” It all comes to an absurdly crazy head so disturbing that if any film deserves its NC-17 rating, it’s this one. Aside from the film itself, the other real thrill here is hearing Friedkin’s insight and rambles during the commentary.



Ted

Imagine “Toy Story,” just with a grown man and his boozy, sleazy and sailor-mouthed teddy bear, instead. If there was a Woody in this hilariously crude dude-comedy, it’d be between Ted’s little legs. “Family Guy” creator Seth MacFarlane voices the stuffed animal, a childhood friend of John Bennett (Mark Wahlberg) who just never went away. Now John’s an adult with a big person job and a big person girlfriend (Mila Kunis), and Ted’s still hanging around like they never grew up. Together, they’re an unruly pair of pot-smoking/gay-mocking buddies. But this isn’t just a tasteless gag flick that’ll have you laughing like a big idiot when Kunis cleans up poo or Ryan Reynolds shows up in a gay cameo. When a kidnapping plot threatens Ted’s existence, slipping into more sadistic territory than any movie about a stuffed animal ought to, how can you not feel sad? I did. I even cried. The bloopers aren’t bad, but listening to MacFarlane’s dirty riffs during the alternate takes is much funnier. Also, that bear brawl, where Ted flogs Wahlberg’s bare bottom, rightfully gets its own behind-the-scenes feature.



Game Change

No wonder Sarah Palin didn’t approve of Julianne Moore’s uncanny take of the Alaska governor in HBO’s drama “Game Change”: as if Palin hadn’t already made herself look bad, Moore’s portrayal takes bad to a whole new level with diva tantrums, cattiness and an embarrassing level of political stupidity. But this isn’t a Tina Fey impression; Moore, who deserves every award she’s won for this role, taps into Palin as a human, not a cartoon. This is Moore’s movie, but Ed Harris and Woody Harrelson both deliver fine performances as McCain and his strategist Steve Schmidt, respectively. Sarah Paulson, though, is also quite a revelation. Interview footage with Anderson Cooper and Katie Couric is cut into this political soap opera, but it’s really the backstage bits that reveal, much to our amusement, why the McCain campaign was a failure. Two short featurettes – one focused on the book, the other a presidential how-to – are included.



To Rome with Love

Poor Italy. It was better served in Diane Lane’s picturesque romance “Under the Tuscan Sun” than in this, Woody Allen’s dumpy career-low “To Rome with Love,” where setting has little to do with the director’s awfully bland connect-the-dots style of trail-mix storytelling and exhausted postcard realism. One of cinema’s most unpredictable bad-then-good-then-bad-again filmmakers – he’s either right on (“Match Point”) or way off (“Scoop”) – casts Alec Baldwin, Ellen Page, Penélope Cruz and Jesse Eisenberg and does absolutely nothing with them. What a letdown after Allen made one of many career comebacks with “Midnight in Paris,” which was charming and whimsical. Basically everything “To Rome with Love” is not. There’s a lot going on, but almost none of it’s interesting – and almost all of it’s boring. It’s a cobbled mess of meandering tangents and a wasted ensemble cast (poor Greta Gerwig). With just a short doc on the Rome shoot, the bonus features are as disappointing as the movie. To Rome, with hate.

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"The OffBeats" plays Thursday nights at 10 p.m. through April 4 at Go Comedy! Improv Theater and features Joe Hingelberg, James Quesada, Ryan Parmenter and Travis Pelto. Photo: SMyers

And The 'Beat' Goes On!

BY JOHN QUINN

You've got to hand it to the Merry Pranksters at Go Comedy! Improv Theater – they sure do their research. So what if it took 60 years to deliver the satirical thumping earned by the self-indulgent Beat Generation. The troupe has managed to evoke an era that even their fathers are probably too young to remember. "The OffBeats," a new late-night show, can heat up the coldest Ferndale February.

According to Wikipedia, the ultimate online source of reliable information (I'm KIDDING; I kid a lot), Jack Kerouac introduced the phrase "Beat Generation" in 1948 to characterize a "perceived underground, anti-conformist youth movement in New York." While originally meaning "beat down," Kerouac repurposed it to mean "upbeat." The Beat poetry movement rejected poetic as well as social conventions, through liberal doses of mood altering drugs, pan sexuality and petty larceny. Eventually many of the writers were drawn to Oz on the Pacific, otherwise known as San Francisco.

Thus we find our heroes, Bram (Joe Hingelberg), Mac (Travis Pelto) and Karl (James Quesada), Beat poets extraordinaire. Leaving the "gosh-forsaken heck hole" that was 1952 Detroit, the trio work their way west. Hopping one Beat bar at a time with no visible means of support, they're urged on by a mysterious stranger, Bart Ender (Ryan Parmenter), who is driven by ulterior motives. "On the road" to destiny they inevitably land in San Francisco to participate in the biggest poetry Beat meet of all time.

The Beat movement was a counter-cultural

REVIEW

'The OffBeats'

Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 10 p.m. Thursday through April 4. 1 hour, no intermission. \$10. 248-327-0575.

www.gocomedy.net

challenge to the status quo. The poetry was rife with "informal phrasing and diction and formless verse that attempts to capture spontaneity of thought and feeling." That's the key to the special humor of "The OffBeats."

The earnest sincerity of the characters contrasted with the inanity of their poetry makes this a showcase of satire. The script was written by the cast, and the hours of work necessary to create and then edit the wonderfully silly poetry shows in every moment. A Beat rap that includes a "gargantuan tarantula" is only a small sample of word play bubbling in this script.

Directing sketch comedy can take many forms, but I suspect Lauren Bickers may have employed a whip and chair. The portrayals are at a perfect level, suitably over the top but never overdone.

One note occurs to me. The writers might want to check Wikipedia about SENATOR McCarthy and the HOUSE Un-American Activities Committee.

Go Comedy! is yet another local company that knows its audience and crafts its offerings accordingly. "The OffBeats" is an intelligent, engaging production, regardless of its long-gone topic.

In short, it's "snaptastic," Daddy-o!

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The Tree of Life from "The Lion King" national tour. Photo: Joan Marcus

'The Lion King' Still Rules

BY JENN MCKEE

As the lights came up for "The Lion King"'s intermission at the Detroit Opera House, my nearly-five-year-old daughter looked at me and said, "They've got really good costumes."

"Yes, yes they do," I agreed with a laugh, noting that the very thing that captivates adults about the Disney stage show is the same thing that apparently captivates young kids: It's an eye-popping, distinctly wondrous theater spectacle.

Indeed, it's hard not to be awed by Julie Taymor's imaginative rendering of a hit animated film that, by rights, should be impossible to translate to the stage. A broad range of exotic animal characters (and no human ones)? Various jungle settings? A wildebeest stampede?! Check, please.

But Taymor's vision for the show, paired with Roger Allers and Irene Mecchi's book, and Elton John and Tim Rice's majestic music and lyrics (additional music and lyrics provided by Lebo M, Mark Mancina, Jay Rifkin, Taymor, and Hans Zimmer), makes the impossible not just possible, but delightful.

More than most adaptations of kiddie fare, "Lion King" hews closely to the original film's storyline, in which Mufasa (Dionne Randolph), the king of the jungle, has a young cub named Simba (Adante Power or Zavion J. Hill). This

PREVIEW

The Lion King
 Broadway in Detroit at Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit.
 Tuesday-Sunday through March 10. \$25+.
 313-872-1000.
www.BroadwayinDetroit.com

upsets Mufasa's jealous brother Scar (Timothy Carter), who feels his chance to seize power slipping further and further away.

Scar lures Simba into a stampede, but Mufasa, in an effort to save his son, is killed, and Scar convinces Simba to leave and never return. Though Simba soon befriends a meerkat, Timon (Nick Cordileone), and a warthog, Pumbaa (Ben Lipitz), and lives among them for years, his childhood friend Nala (Syndee Winters) eventually finds him, by accident, and tells him of the terrible conditions in the Pride Lands under Scar's rule. Simba is forced to face his responsibilities and his past and confront his uncle one last time.

One of the brilliant things about Taymor's costume design is the way it fuses form with function, making, essentially, wearable puppets that move in animalistic fashion. (See the hyenas for a prime example of this). When the creatures are smaller – like the bird Zazu (Mark David Kaplan) and Timon – the actor primarily wears clothes and makeup in one color, so our eyes

stay more focused on the puppet. And Taymor's costumes also cover some ground regarding set design (otherwise covered by Richard Hudson); consider, for instance, a scene in which actors enter with a sheet of tall grasses poised on their heads. As Garth Fagan's fanciful choreography assembles them in rows, they become tall grasses through which puppets representing Mufasa and Simba run together.

There are many such instances, where the lines between various tech elements – choreography, set design, costumes, lighting (designed by Donald Holder), mask and puppet design (Taymor and Michael Curry), hair and makeup (Michael Ward), and sound (Steve Canyon Kennedy) – break down and blur, thus making plain how they harmoniously complement each other to create the show's stunning illusions.

Plus, the cast is uniformly polished and strong, working together like a well-oiled machine.

Yes, with a running time of just under three hours, the show is long for a show aimed (at least in part) at kids, and its stream of powerful visuals offsets some of the story's less-riveting moments.

But the reason "The Lion King" has made such a mark on Broadway is that no one had seen anything quite like it before – and we haven't since. The spectacle is what you go for, and what still makes it a can't-miss show.

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This Week: Propeller Lands Again At Power Center

All-Male Shakespeare Company Returns With 'Twelfth Night' And 'The Taming Of The Shrew'

ANN ARBOR – The month ends with five days of performances by the exquisitely bawdy all-male Shakespeare company Propeller, performing “Twelfth Night” and “The Taming of the Shrew” in repertory with the same acting ensemble. Performances begin Wednesday, Feb. 20 and conclude Sunday, Feb. 24.

Presented by the University Musical Society, Propeller is an all-male Shakespeare company that seeks to find a more engaging way of expressing Shakespeare and to completely explore the relationship between text and performance. Mixing a rigorous approach to the text with a modern physical aesthetic, Propeller has been influenced by mask work, animation, film and music from all ages.

One of Shakespeare’s best loved comedies of love and confusion, “Twelfth Night” tells a twisted tale of mistaken identity, transformation and deception. With a man playing a girl disguised as a boy, illusion and reality are almost indistinguishable on Propeller’s island of Illyria. Dark and delightful, the plays asks “What happens when you fall in love with the wrong person?” – and the answer is both beautiful and bittersweet.

In “The Taming of the Shrew,” two disguised, competing suitors clamor for the hand of the beautiful Bianca, while gold-digging Petruchio agrees to wed her viciously ill-tempered sister Kate sight-unseen. The difference between marrying for love and marrying for money, however, becomes increasingly difficult to judge.

The New York Time says, “As directed by Edward Hall, the Propeller Company specializes in knuckle-duster Shakespeare that digs for the harshness beneath the lyricism. Funny, antic, bawdy: the productions are all these expected things. But they also make sure that the chuckles stick in your throat. The poetry may still be pretty; the comedy definitely is not.”

Performance dates and times are as follows:

Twelfth Night

Wednesday, Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m.

The Taming Of The Shrew

Thursday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 24, 2 p.m.



Ben Allen (Olivia) and Joseph Chance (Viola) in Propeller’s “Twelfth Night.” Photo: Manuel Harlan

All performances take place at Power Center, 121 Fletcher Street, Ann Arbor.

Tickets start at \$18. To purchase tickets or for more information, log on to www.ums.org, call 734-764-2538, purchase in person at the Michigan League (911 North University Avenue), or at the performance venue beginning 90 minutes before performance start time. Box office hours are Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., closed Sunday.

Free Related Events:

Opening Night Q&As

“Twelfth Night”: Wednesday, Feb. 20

“The Taming of the Shrew”: Thursday, Feb. 21

Get a glimpse into the lives and minds of the artists who bring their creativity to the stage after each opening night performance. Must have a ticket to that performance to attend.

People Are Talking Live: Twelfth Night

Friday, Feb. 22
Sava’s (216 South State St.)

A post-performance audience meet-up at Sava’s, where audience members can exchange their interpretations, questions and responses in a social setting. No registration or expertise necessary. Hosted by Clare Croft (U-M Department of Dance) and Jim Leija (UMS director of education & community engagement).

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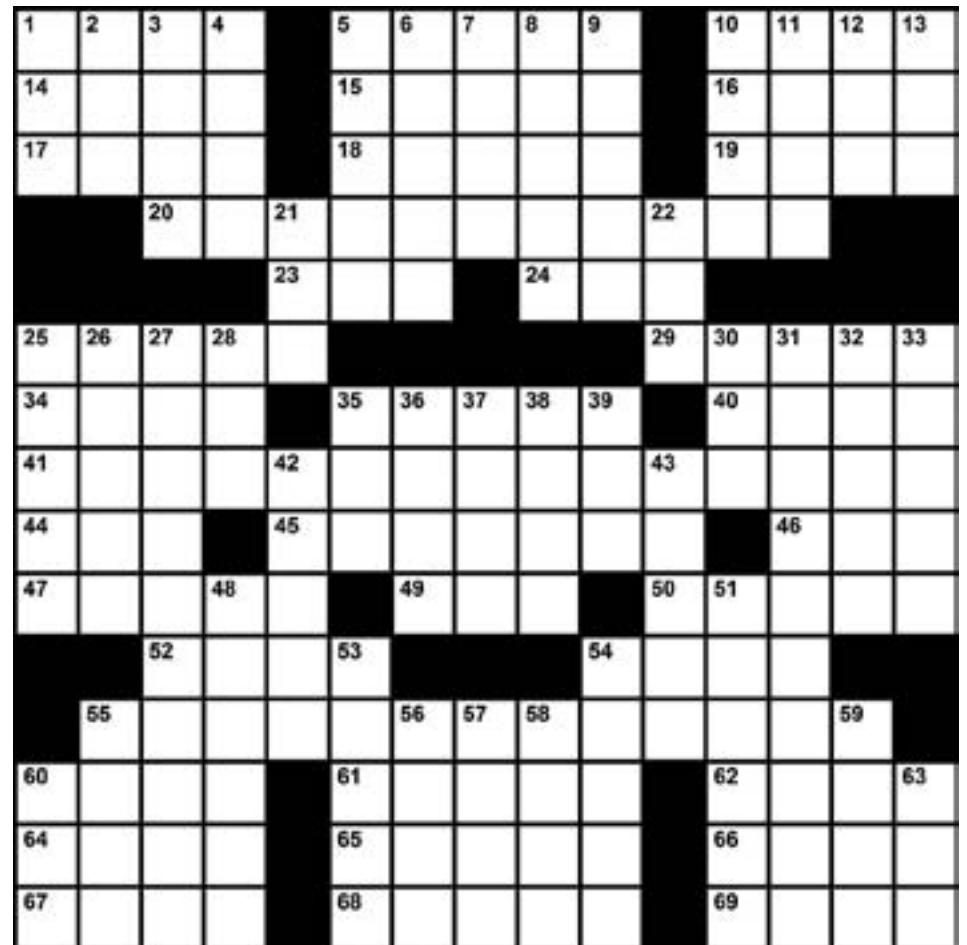
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Across

- 1 Clinton of this puzzle's quote
- 5 Teo of Notre Dame, who could also have said this puzzle's quote
- 10 Leave a trail behind a boa?
- 14 Soft cheese
- 15 Big jugs
- 16 "Nurse Jackie" nurse
- 17 Ward of "Once and Again"
- 18 Final straw
- 19 Ready for plucking
- 20 Start of a quote
- 23 NYC arena
- 24 Slippery one
- 25 Loads of
- 29 Like some trigger fingers
- 34 Place for Young men?
- 35 Receiver of stolen goods
- 40 Skin moisturizer
- 41 More of the quote
- 44 A little more than bi-
- 45 Event for drawers?
- 46 Match a poker bet
- 47 Come slowly closer
- 49 That to Juan
- 50 Operates like a chickenhawk
- 52 Sings like Eazy E sang
- 54 Bucks, for example

55 End of the quote

- 60 Like a great review on Broadway
- 61 Causing goosebumps
- 62 In a bit, to the bard
- 64 Steven's opening
- 65 Moon of Uranus
- 66 Ice house (var.)
- 67 Cheeky
- 68 Rock-bottom
- 69 Sign gas

Down

- 1 Tiny balls
- 2 Hot temper
- 3 Composer Boulanger
- 4 Big part
- 5 Card combos
- 6 In the hole
- 7 Verne captain
- 8 Old hat
- 9 "Where ___ Life That Late I Led?" (Cole Porter)
- 10 Griffin of game shows
- 11 Garfield's sidekick
- 12 Labium
- 13 Photographer Corinne
- 21 "___ Yankee Doodle Dandy"
- 22 He knocked out many men

- 25 Fantasizes about a hottie
- 26 Funny Cheri
- 27 1976 Jodie Foster film
- 28 Moo ___ pork
- 30 Half a cocktail
- 31 Notes Glenn can sing?
- 32 Mead base
- 33 Ass-kissers' responses
- 35 First name in Follies
- 36 Art deco illustrator
- 37 Is left with
- 38 African queen
- 39 Copland capability
- 42 Alpha, to the circumcized
- 43 It's not a mistake at the Red Cross
- 48 Lingering in the closet
- 51 Stay put
- 53 One way to get to second base
- 54 Was a liver
- 55 Surfer's ride
- 56 On the spot
- 57 Opera queen's delight
- 58 Neckwear
- 59 Legal plea, briefly
- 60 Log Cabin member, for short
- 63 Woman who doesn't date men

Solution on pg. 28

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Editor's Pick

Since 2000, the WSU Studio Theatre has hosted the Louise Heck-Rabi Dramatic Playwriting One Act Festival, encouraging young playwrights to submit their original works. Each year, six or seven semi-finalists are chosen out of all submissions. The plays are then read at a workshop, where they are critiqued by judges. Three finalists win a scholarship, as well as

the opportunity to produce their play in front of a live audience utilizing the talents of a student director and student performers.

Running Feb. 28 through March 9, audiences can see this year's selected student plays: "Hurts So Good" by Carollette Phillips and Edmund Alyn Jones; "A New Play by Neil Simon" by Dave Toomey; and "Chiseled" by Laura Heikkinen.

Tickets are \$5 and are available by calling the Hilberry Theatre Box Office at 313-577-2972 or by visiting the box office at 4743 Cass on the corner of Hancock in Midtown Detroit.

▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 24

PROFESSIONAL

Blue Man Group \$37-72. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. Feb. 22 - 24. 800-WHARTON. WhartonCenter.com

Detroit \$12-\$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through April 5. 313-577-2972. hilberry.com

Edward the Second \$10-15. The New Theatre Project at Mix Studio Theater, 130 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti. March 1 - 31. 734-961-8704. TheNewTheatreProject.org

End Days \$15-22. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Through Feb. 24. 517-655-SHOW. WilliamstonTheatre.org

Extremities \$16-\$18. The Box Theater, 90 Macomb Place, Mount Clemens. Through Feb. 23. 586-954-2677. theboxtheater.com

Gee's Bend \$12-18. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Through March 3. 810-237-1530. FlintYouthTheatre.org

Hair \$30-70. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 2 - 3. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

How The Other Half Loves \$15 opening night; \$18 all others. Broadway OnStage, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Feb. 22 - March 23. 586-771-6333. BroadwayOnStage.com

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat \$18-\$32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Through March 3. 734-268-6200. TheEncoreTheatre.org

Lake Effect Fringe Festival \$10. Dog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson SE, Grand Rapids. Through Feb. 24. PCShakespeare.com

Looking \$29-32 adult, \$27-\$30 student & senior. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Through March 3. 248-347-0003. tippingpointtheatre.com

Making Porn \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Feb. 22 - March 18. 248-556-8581. TheRingwald.com

Marriage \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Feb. 22 - April 6. 313-577-2972. Hilberry.com

Next to Normal Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Through March 10. 248-377-3300. mbtheatre.com

Oh, Ananse \$10 adult, \$5 child. PuppetART at Detroit Puppet Theatre, 25 E. Grand River, Detroit. Through Feb. 23. 313-961-7777. puppetart.org

Passing \$16-26. The Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Feb. 21 - 24. 248-661-1900. theberman.org

Phoenix \$20. Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley, Detroit. March 1 - 24. 313-967-0999. matrixtheatre.org

Potted Potter: The Unauthorized Harry Experience \$35-75. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 1 - 17. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

Pride and Prejudice \$15-25. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 7 p.m. Feb. 21. 586-286-2222. MacombCenter.com

Rain \$30-70. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Feb. 23. 313-471-6611. Olympiaentertainment.com

Rock of Ages \$25-65. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Feb. 20 - 21. 810-237-8689. TheWhiting.com

Show and Tell \$15. Puzzle Piece Theatre at Russell Industrial Center, 1600 Clay St., Detroit. Through Feb. 24. 313-303-8019. PuzzleStage.org

Soul Mates \$15-\$18. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company at The Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Through Feb. 24. 313-408-7269. MagentaGiraffe.org

The Lion King \$25+. Broadway in Detroit at Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Through March 10. 313-237-SING. BroadwayinDetroit.com

The Male Intellect: An Oxymoron? \$40-55. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. March 2. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

The Meaning of Almost Everything \$18.50 - \$42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through March 9. 734-433-7673. purplerosetheatre.org

The Vagina Monologues \$20. UDM Theatre Company at Grounds Coffee Haus, Student Life Building, 4001 W. McNichols Road, Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 28. 313-993-3270. Facebook.com/UDMTheatre

The Whipping Man \$23-27. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Through Feb. 24. 269-343-2727. FarmersAlleyTheatre.com

Tony n' Tina's Wedding \$63. Detroit Actors Guild at Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E 14 Mile Road, Warren. 6:30 p.m. Feb. 22. 313-885-3032.

Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf \$8-10. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes and

Noble Booksellers, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Through Feb. 24. 248-850-9919. TwoMusesTheatre.org

ART'N'AROUND

Charles H. Wright Museum "Visions of Our 44th President" 315 E. Warren, Detroit. Nov. 18 - April 30. 313-494-5853. Thewright.org

Cranbrook Art Museum "Soo Sunny Park: Vapor Slide" 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 18 - March 17. 877-462-7262. CranbrookArtMuseum.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Hidden Treasures: An Experiment" 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1 - March 3. 313-833-7900. DIA.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Around the World with 80 Objects" 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 1 - June 30. Flintarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Stoked: Five Artists of Fire and Clay" 314 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Jan. 20 - April 7. 269-349-7775. KIAarts.org

Lawrence Street Gallery "TheBody Eclectic" 22620 Woodward Ave. Suite A, Ferndale. Feb. 1 - Feb. 28. 248-544-0394. Lawrencestreetgallery.com

M&M Enterprises "The Southfield Pavilion Antiques Exposition" Admission: \$8 regular admission. One paid admission is good for all three days of the show. Children 12 years old or under: free admission. Parking is free. The Southfield Municipal Complex - Southfield Pavilion, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield. Feb. 22 - Feb. 24. 586-465-9441. Antiquesexposition.com

Michigan State University Museum "East Meets West: The Transgender Community of Istanbul" 409 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing. Jan. 22 - April 14. Museum.msu.edu

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit "Voice of the City" 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 18 - March 31. 313-832-6622. MOCADetroit.org

The Henry Ford "Celebrate Black History" 20900 Oakwood, Dearborn. Feb. 1 - Feb. 28. 313-982-6001. TheHenryFord.org

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Francis Alys: Guards" 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Dec. 15 - March 31. 734-763-4186.

University of Michigan Museum of Art "El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You about Africa" 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 2 - May 5. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Buddhist Thangkas and Treasures" 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 23 - June 9. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

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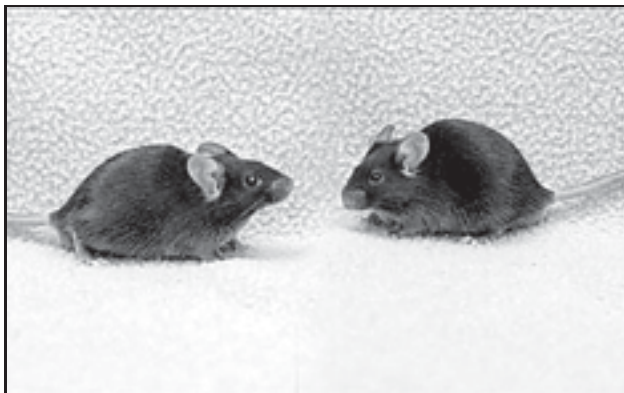
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Classifieds

101-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AA MEETINGS

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

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, Odd Fellow's Hall, 830 S Monroe St Closed/Discussion.

101-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AL-ANON MEETINGS

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 (in basement)
Pinecrest & Drayton, Ferndale
Closed Meeting

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Solution to puzzle from page 26

B	I	L	L	M	O	N	T	I	M	O	L	T		
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The Cream Of The Cropped



Dating Diet

BY ANTHONY PAULL

Once had a prominent politician say I was more of a publicity whore than a journalist. I was insulted, taking offense at the superfluous word “publicity” until I found myself drunk in an Irish pub scribbling “Anthony Paull gives good head” on the bathroom wall. It felt right until I posted the pic to Facebook like I was famous, only to get called out by a friend who was familiar with my handwriting. Yes, I knew my behavior was pathetic, but I loved it because I knew the episode would lead to my name in people’s mouths. Does he spit, swallow – shoot out a spout like Shamu? In the end I kept mum, having learned it’s best to remain a mystery. That’s what people really want – the truth blurred.

I wonder if that’s why some men consistently shove their iPhones down their pants, spreading poorly formatted penis pics on the Internet.

It’s like, “Wow, look at my half-limp dick. It can get hard...so hard I can fuck you. I’m-a-gonna-do-it. I’m a-gonna-fuck-you with my veiny, gross developmentally delayed dick that makes me super special even though most dudes and certain chicks have the same thing.”

It only gets worse when complete strangers begin passing the pics off as their own. That’s what happened to my friend Jake. He was involved in an online romance with a gentleman named Ross for three months before he had any idea of who or what was on the other side of the computer. It was all Picasso pics of Ross’ naked body – blurred images and talk about being cultured, and excuse after excuse as to why Ross could never meet. He kept late hours at work. He was a paid intern at the modern art museum. He had a dog.

Jake was on the verge of ending things until one night when Ross got brave enough to come over after one too many Mai Tais.

“But first, I need to tell you something,” Ross said. “I have scoliosis.”

Jake thought, “No problem, I can love him diagonally – I can make it work. Isn’t that what you do in a relationship – find beauty in a fault line to rise above?”

An hour later Jake heard a bang outside, opening the front door to find Ross had crashed his electric wheelchair into the house while trying to press the doorbell.

No problem, Jake thought. Scoliosis, handicapped or whatever this is – love is love. That is until Ross began driving circles around Jake’s living room, dropping his iPad and running it over.

“It’s no big deal,” Ross slurred. “It happens all the time.”

Jake shook his head, confused. “You getting drunk?”

“No, me dropping loads.”

Still perplexed, Jake slowly handed the iPad to Ross, who quickly turned it on, changing the subject to the arts – an interest the two shared.

Flipping through Instagram pics, Ross flaunted pop art images he’d taken at the museum. It was all Ben-Day dots and cartoon characters until a real pic of an unflushed toilet came along. Ross glanced over it but Jake couldn’t let it pass.

“Um. Was that a toilet?” he asked, as Ross continued to scroll.

Ross lingered, gaging Jake’s reaction. “Yes,” he said, casually. Jake maintained a neutral expression as Ross paused to explain. “Look. I have something to tell you,” he began.

“Again?” Jake said, bracing himself. “You know, usually when somebody tells me they have something to tell me it’s usually not followed by something good.”

“I’m into turds.”

“Turds?”

“Poop.”

Jake flinched, recalling their previous conversations, how the Lichtenstein pop art of yesteryear compared to the Banksy street art of today, how much they both favored the dark literature of Palahniuk to Thoreau. Yet at no time during these spirited conversations had the exchange of words on art and literature turned to scoliosis, a wheelchair or...poop. But the relationship sure did.

I guess what Jake forgot to remember during his pop-art penis affair was that a picture may speak a thousand words but there are approximately 249,000 words left in the English language, leaving a lot unsaid. No Instagram or Photoshop app can sugarcoat a real person. A pic is only part of the equation that will never add up to the ideal mate that you have in your mind. The whole story of a person requires an entire collection – the good, the bad, and the ugly portraits. Jake got caught up in the good for so long he forgot all that came with it.

As for me, I find it humorous when I hear of guys on sites refusing to meet unless they see an X-rated pic. My question is, would they have the nerve to request the same thing of a guy in real life? Would they even know how to say hello? These days, I find myself, more and more, reflecting back to a time when that’s how a relationship developed.

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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Benedict Cumberbatch steps into DiCaprio's shoes as Alan Turing

It's turning into Benedict Cumberbatch's year at the movies. Co-starring in "The Hobbit" trilogy, "Star Trek Into Darkness" and the film adaptation of "August: Osage County" will put the acclaimed, chameleonic British actor on multiplex screens stateside for the foreseeable future. And now he's in talks to star in "The Imitation Game" as famed British World War II hero Alan Turing (quick history lesson: Turing cracked the German "Enigma" code during the war, helping Allied forces win; he was prosecuted in the 1950s for homosexuality and chose chemical castration over imprisonment, later committing suicide). Originally planned as a vehicle for Leonardo DiCaprio, Cumberbatch is the likely successor to play the man widely considered to be the father of the computer. Morten Tyldum will direct Graham Moore's screenplay and, OK, yes, it's another gay tragedy in the "Brokeback Mountain" and "Milk" vein, that's true, but it's also the kind of historically important story that's all too often been hidden from history. And you can bet it'll be the kind of prestige project that gets the heavy Oscar push when it all finally comes to pass.



Benedict Cumberbatch. Photo: Helga Esteb

Adding on to Gregg Araki's 'White Bird'

Unlike filmmaker Gregg Araki's most acclaimed film about troubled youth, the novel-based "Mysterious Skin," his latest project feels a little more like a delicate secret being kept from advance spoilers, almost a protest to Internet movie information glut. What we've known up to this point is that its title was "White Bird" and it starred "The Descendants"' Shailene Woodley as a teenage girl whose life is thrown out of control when her mother (Eva Green) disappears. Well, we're still fresh out of details regarding the plot, but there are other developments. Its title has grown and is now called, evocatively enough, "White Bird In A Blizzard." The cast has expanded, too, rounded out with Chris Meloni, Angela Bassett, "Precious" star Gabourey Sidibe, "Glee"'s Jacob Artist and "Ugly Betty"'s Mark Indelicato. And now for a reader's poll: Who among you quit reading after seeing Meloni's name and went off to obey a Pavlovian response involving old "Oz" DVDs? No judgments.

Sean Bean and Channing Tatum are 'Jupiter Ascending' with the Wachowskis

The crazy, heart-on-its-sleeve sci-fi epic "Cloud Atlas" didn't get the kind of love Andy and Lana Wachowski were looking for, but their latest project, "Jupiter Ascending," is reported to be much more like their mega-successful "Matrix" trilogy (and that's good for everyone's bottom line in the long run, since "Atlas" made about 35 cents at the box office). Of course, that doesn't mean anybody can adequately explain the new film's plot, which involves genetic superbeings who've been bred with animal DNA and the bounty hunters whose job it is to track them. But no matter, the Wachowskis are never boring, as though their own genetics were incapable of something so routine. It can be about anything, really, and nobody will accuse them of slacking. The movie stars Channing Tatum, Sean Bean (as a Han Solo-esque rogue), Mila Kunis and "Les Miserables"' Eddie Redmayne in what is sure to be a head trip to Jupiter and back. That is, unless the characters never actually ascend to Jupiter. We'll all just have to wait and see.

'Lust For Life' digs deeper into the 'Velvet Goldmine'

Director Todd Haynes' trippy art-fantasia about an imaginary glam-rock past, "Velvet Goldmine," was never meant to be a faithful portrayal of the glitter-bombed 1970s: his David Bowie wasn't really Bowie and his Iggy Pop wasn't really Iggy. A more historically accurate representation now falls to "Lust For Life," the story of the friendship between the musicians, their collaboration on both Bowie's "Low" album and Pop's first two solo records and their years spent being cooler than everyone else in West Berlin. A script is ready from Robin French based on Paul Trynka's Bowie book "Starman" and his Pop biography "Open Up And Bleed" and Gabriel Range ("Death of A President") is attached to direct. Now for the fun part - who gets to play two iconic musicians? Casting news coming soon...

Romeo San Vicente is still absolutely fabulous himself. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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