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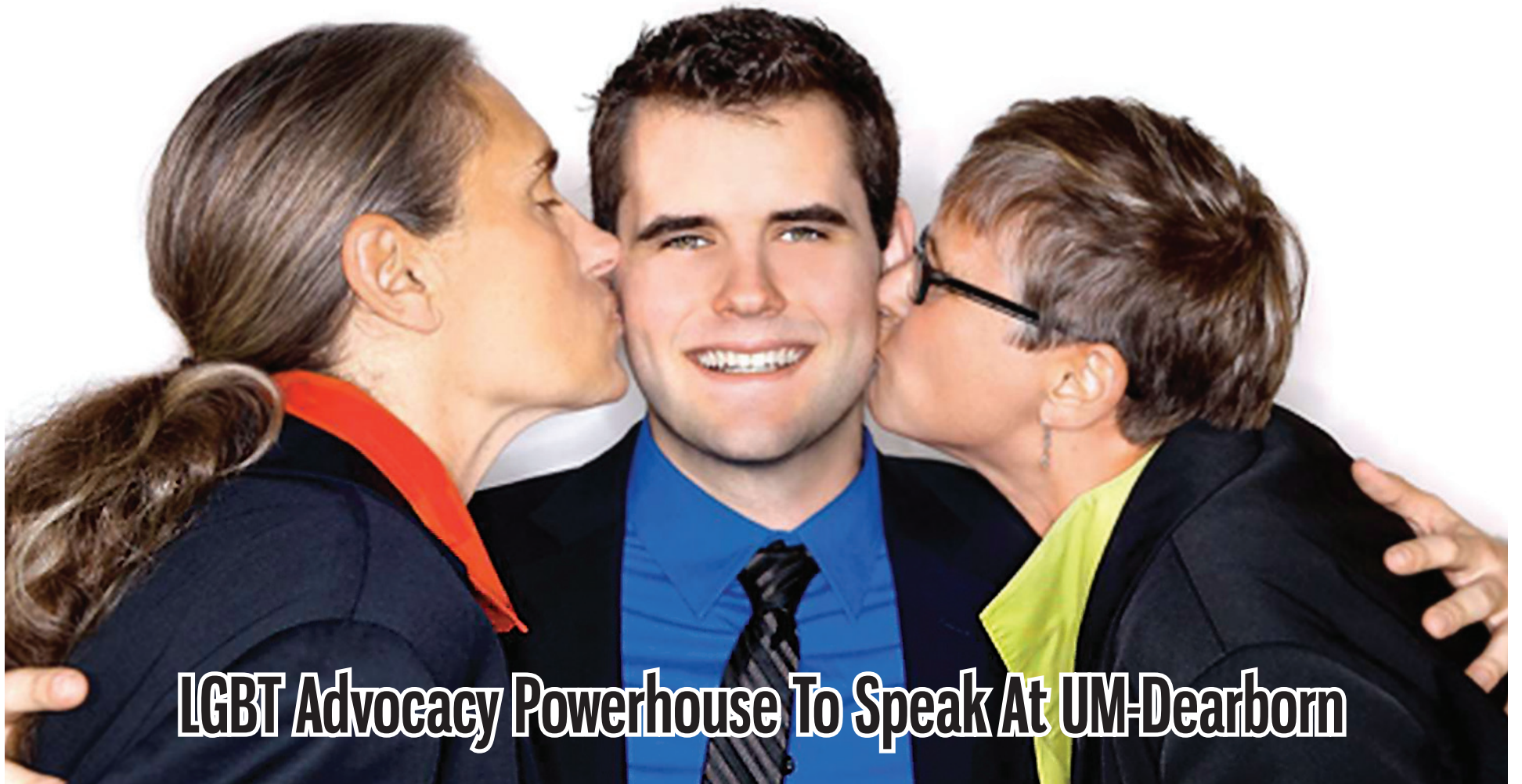
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- Dido



ZACH WAHLS ON BEING A 'QUEER SPAWN'



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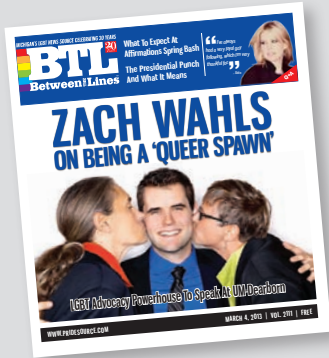
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VOL. 2111 • MAR. 14, 2013 • ISSUE 807

PRIDE SOURCE MEDIA GROUP

11920 Farmington Rd., Livonia, Michigan 48150
Phone 734.293.7200

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Susan Horowitz & Jan Stevenson

MEMBER OF

Michigan Press Association
National Gay Media Association
Q Syndicate



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Zach Wahls with his family at last fall's HRC National Dinner in Washington, D.C.

Zach Wahls On Being A 'Queer Spawn'

LGBT Advocacy Powerhouse To Speak At UM-Dearborn

BY DAWN WOLFE

On Jan. 31, 2011, a nineteen-year-old college engineering student stood up for his moms when their marriage was threatened by the Iowa legislature.

Within twenty-four hours the video of his testimony was burning up the Internet, and Zach Wahls found himself an instant celebrity. Wahls stepped up to the challenge, taking his message about his “boring” life with his two moms to The Ellen Degeneres Show, The Daily Show, and other national forums.

Not content to bask in his extended fifteen minutes of fame and call it a day, Wahls has continued to use his celebrity to advocate for the rights of the LGBT communities, including the “queer spawn” of LGBT parents. His autobiographical book, *My Two Moms: Lessons of Love, Strength, and What Makes A Family*, hit bookstores in April 2012. An Eagle Scout himself, Wahls is the leader of Scouts for Equality (<http://www.scoutsforequality.com/>), the grassroots organization seeking to overturn the BSA's ban on LGBT Scouts and volunteers.

In addition to his LGBT advocacy, Wahls is the owner of a successful tutoring business, Iowa City Learns (<http://www.iowacitylearns.com/>), and a passionate environmentalist.

Wahls took time from his incredibly busy schedule – he is still a part-time environmental engineering student at the University of Iowa – to speak with BTL about being a queer spawn and being a straight member of the LGBT community, his environmental advocacy, and how a crush on a girl started him on the path to

becoming one of the LGBT movement's youngest (and most famous) activists.

Before we get any further, I have to ask – you're a published author, you run a small business, you're an activist for LGBT and environmental causes, and you're a part-time student. Do you ever get any sleep?

(Laughing) I get about 4-5 hours a night. I'm doing all right at the moment.

The term “queer spawn” has been used to define children of LGBT parents since at least 2006, when an award-winning documentary by that title came out. How do you feel about the term, and what does it mean to you?

I don't mind the term. I think one of the challenges we have as a movement is that occasionally we forget that there are those of us who are not LGBT-identified who are part of the community. I like “queer spawn” because it reminds me of that, and because it makes some people very, very uncomfortable. My existence makes some people very, very uncomfortable – but I don't think discomfort is a bad thing.

One of the reasons I identify so strongly as a member of the LGBT community is that I was born into this; I didn't choose this. I know what it's like to be in the closet, and I know what it's like to be hated and feared because of who I am. Society sees me as an LGBT person – I don't think it makes a lot of difference whether I actually am gay or straight.

“ *Not all women spend their time on women's reproductive health issues, not all people of color concentrate on racism issues, civilians do peace work – the thing is not to let yourself get pigeonholed by any aspect of your identity, but to do the work you're passionate about. ... While it's tempting to say you have to do what makes sense to your identity – and in some sense that's true – you need to do work you find gratifying and fulfilling, or your work will not be sustainable.* **”**

- Zach Wahls

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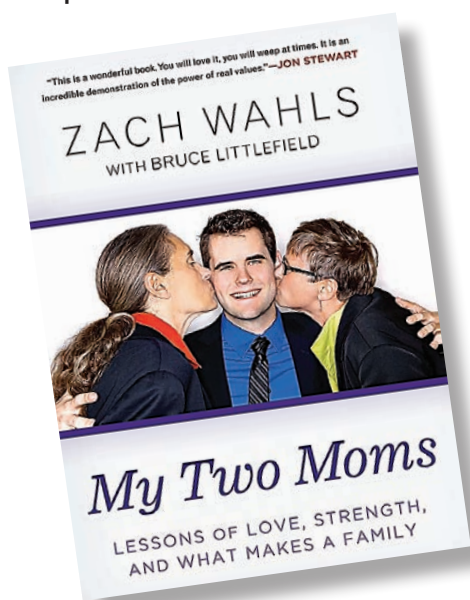
“If there’s anything I’ve learned over the last two years it’s that the future’s incredibly hard to predict.”

While many people who step up to the LGBT advocacy plate make that work their full-time passion, you’ve managed to balance your advocacy on behalf of sexual minorities while continuing to speak out as an environmentalist. Why is this important to you?

Actually I got involved with environmental stuff because of the Boy Scouts – I spent a lot of time in the outdoors growing up. The beauty of seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time... I’ll never forget the serenity of walking through a forest. ... From as young and as early as I can remember I’ve been a passionate, passionate supporter of environmental work...

Not all women spend their time on women’s reproductive health issues, not all people of color concentrate on racism issues, civilians do peace work – the thing is not to let yourself get pigeonholed by any aspect of your identity, but to do the work you’re passionate about. I do look forward to wrapping this (gay advocacy) up so I can get back to my environmental work. ... While it’s tempting to say you have to do what makes sense to your identity – and in some sense that’s true – you need to do work you find gratifying and fulfilling, or your work will not be sustainable.

Your famous testimony before the Iowa legislature wasn’t the first time you stood up for your family publicly – your first public statements were in a series of columns you wrote for your high school newspaper. What led you to take what must have been a pretty scary step?



The story’s kind of funny. The first time I wrote about it publicly I was a freshman in a high school Intro to Journalism class – we had the opportunity to write a column for extra credit. ... I didn’t think it would ever be published; it was just between my teacher and me.

The day we got our papers back mine was covered in red ink, and I was a little scared. Then I looked a little bit closer, (and saw that) the column editor for the school newspaper, Miriam, had written, “I LOVED this!” on my paper. I had a huge crush on her, and she loved this thing, and she talked me into publishing it. I was terrified, scared – but MIRIAM!

And you know what? Nobody cared. Nobody in my age group cared – people were really supportive. What I learned from Miriam is that nobody would stand up for me unless I stood up for myself. That was a profoundly important lesson.

You’ll be at the University of Michigan’s Dearborn campus on March 20. You’re continuing to take classes and do your other work; but that’s the present. What do you see in your future?

This whole campaign (Scouts for Equality) is developing very, very quickly. ... I’ll be graduating with my college degree in May 2014 with part time semesters. I’m super stoked – it’s going to be great! I’m also continuing to do advocacy work – I think the BSA work will move to a phase where I won’t necessarily be involved in the day-to-day management. I really enjoy media work, I think there are a lot of possibilities for me, but at this point if there’s anything I’ve learned over the last two years it’s that the future’s incredibly hard to predict.

INFO

What Makes a Family?

Zach Wahls to speak at the University of Michigan/Dearborn
Wednesday, March 20, 6:30 p.m.
Kochoff Halls, University Center
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Judge Decides To Wait On Adoption, Gay Marriage Decision

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Hazel Park couple Jayne Rowse and April DeBoer will have to wait until June before U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman will make a decision in their case involving the right of two same-gender, unmarried couples to adopt and marry.

In a hearing held at the Wayne State University Law School Auditorium on March 7, Friedman listened to arguments from both sides, but said his ruling will come shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court hears two cases regarding same-gender marriage.

"The court believes it could craft an opinion on this matter, but no matter what I did would not satisfy either side," he said. "Hopefully the Supreme Court will give us some direction. I think it's important for this case to move forward, but the court believes I should have stay a decision until these decisions."

He said that if he ruled immediately it would only create further legal work for both sides as each would be likely to appeal. He also said that "without these two cases it would not be fair to either side."

Rowse and DeBoer have lived together for more than six years. They share their home with Nolan, Jacob, and Ryanne. Nolan and Jacob were adopted by Rowse, and Ryanne was adopted by DeBoer. Because Michigan only allows adoption to individuals or to married couples, each child has only one legal parent. The lawsuit against the State of Michigan seeks to allow second-parent adoptions. It also now seeks to over-turn the ban on same-sex marriage, which is the barrier preventing the women from joint-adoption.

Ann Arbor-based attorney Carole Stanyar, representing the couple along with attorney Dana Nessel, argued that denying same-gender couples marriage violates the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. "The right we're asserting is not the right to same-sex marriage," she said. "We are asserting the right to marriage itself." The case has been likened to civil rights cases of the past, where courts trumped the states



Hazel Park couple Jayne Rowse and April DeBoer speak with reporters March 7, after the court decided to wait for the U.S. Supreme Court decisions involving same-sex marriage are heard. Those decisions will come down by the end of June. BTL photo: Crystal Proxmire

in order to allow racial integration and gender equality to advance.

Representing the State, Joseph E. Potchen argued that changes in marriage and adoption should be made in the legislature, not in the courts. He repeatedly claimed that having a man and a woman in a home is the "optimal situation" for childrearing.

“Hopefully the U.S. Supreme Court will give us some direction.”

- U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman

Potchen also said that while the state did approve both Rowse and DeBoer for foster parenting, adoption is different because foster care situations are intended to be temporary and the state or the biological parent retains guardianship.

In Rowse and DeBoer's case, however, each was individually approved as an adoptive parent. The state did not address why they saw each woman fit as an individual, but not as a couple.

Currently in same-gender couples, only one parent may adopt, leaving the other parent with no legal tie to their child. This is problematic in many situations, including in custody if something were to happen to the legal parent, the ability to make medical decisions for the child, the ability to provide insurance for

the child, and relationships with the child's school. "Children in same sex households are harmed because they don't have the protections afforded other families," Stanyar said. "A mother is a legal stranger to her children."

DeBoer shed tears as the couple left the courtroom, telling the press that "It's kind of hard, but like he said, he's got to have all the facts to make the right decision and we're confident that the will, and that our children will be ours."

Friedman gave assurances to the mothers, stating "I promise as soon as these two cases go down I will have a written opinion."

INFO

Wedding Expo Workshop

BTL will hold a discussion at this year's Same-Sex Wedding Expo, Sunday, April 7 that includes attorney Dana Nessel. She is representing the clients in this Michigan adoption and marriage case. Other panelists include ACLU's Jay Kaplan. A Q&A that includes the U.S. Supreme Court cases will update people on what these cases may mean for marriage equality in Michigan.

Sunday, April 7, 1 - 4 p.m.

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Workshop will begin at 2:15

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Creep of the Week

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Queen Elizabeth II



Queen Elizabeth II has no direct impact on my life. I'm not one of her "subjects," nor do I follow the obsessive tabloid coverage of what the Royal Family does in their day-to-day lives (granted, I can't help but hear

"news" that someone named Kate is having a baby and someone else let his Royal Dinger get photographed in a hotel room with a bunch of chicks. Important stuff). I'm an American, damn it, and we got rid of all that royalty stuff a long time ago because it was weird to be ruled by kings and queens and we decided we'd rather be ruled by money, the way God intended.

And then there was that whole kerfuffle a few years ago about Michelle Obama "breaking protocol" and daring to touch the Queen as if they were equal humans or something. Give me a break. The Queen should feel privileged to even be in the same room with the FLOTUS. Also, for the record, photos clearly show Queen Elizabeth II with her hand on Michelle Obama's ass. Google it.

But when I heard that Queen Elizabeth II was about to sign some important thing that included LGBT folks, I thought, "Hey, that's good news. Looks like she's earned the title of Queen at long last."

That document was a new Commonwealth Charter, which was dubbed a "21st Century Commonwealth Magna Carta" by the Daily Mail. The Charter, according to National Public Radio, declares the core values for the 54 member states, most of which were once under British rule. So in addition to

the United Kingdom, it includes places like Australia, Rwanda, South Africa, the Bahamas, and Canada. And, as it turns out, some of these places do not like gays very much at all.

So what does this amazing new Charter have to say under the heading "Human Rights?" It says this: "We are implacably opposed to all forms of discrimination, whether rooted in gender, race, colour, creed, political belief or other grounds."

Did you notice the big brave stand for gay equality in there? What? You missed it? Well, read it again. Still don't see it? Let me help you out. You see, Queen Elizabeth II is famous for her notoriously bad spelling. And in the Charter she spelled "sexual orientation" "o-t-h-e-r g-r-o-u-n-d-s." It's a common mistake.

Now, I know that Queen Elizabeth II did not actually write this Charter, but she did

Did you notice the big brave stand for gay equality in there? What? You missed it? Well, read it again. Still don't see it? Let me help you out. You see, Queen Elizabeth II is famous for her notoriously bad spelling. And in the Charter she spelled "sexual orientation" "o-t-h-e-r g-r-o-u-n-d-s." It's a common mistake.

sign it publicly with a bunch of fanfare and she's now being hailed as this great progressive leader even though gay people aren't even mentioned in the Charter! Gays are referred to as "other," this category that dare not speak its name.

And why is anti-discrimination protection not spelled out in this document? Because a lot of the 54 members of

the Commonwealth Club stone cold hate gay people.

According to the Daily Mail, "The 'other grounds' is intended to refer to sexuality – but specific reference to 'gays and lesbians' was omitted in deference to Commonwealth countries with draconian anti-gay laws."

In other words, the Queen didn't want to step on anyone's toes.

The Daily Mail also reports that the Queen is "aware of the implications of the charter's implicit support of gay rights and commitment to gender equality."

And now we're all supposed to hail her as a supporter of civil rights because for the first time during her 61-year stint as Queen she used a special secret code to imply that gays are maybe human, too? Give me a break.



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Immigration: We Cannot Be Quiet

BY MEGAN ANDERSON

Brad Allison, 45, has spent the last year thinking about leaving his home in West Michigan and migrating to Canada or moving to Uruguay in order to be with his partner and fiancé Christian (Chris) Gonzalez. Brad is the U.S. end of a bi-national relationship, and he and his fiancé are facing struggles to be together amid discriminatory immigration and federal marriage laws.

A warehouse supervisor for the Kellogg Company, Brad met Chris through Facebook more than two years ago. Chris showed up as a friend suggestion, as they share similar interests. “I had recently separated from a 15 year relationship and really was not looking for a partner. I was, at the time, enjoying my single life,” Brad said. “At first glance, I thought he was very handsome. He accepted my friend request, and we started chatting through Facebook. Also at the time, he was with his (now) ex-partner, and I respected that.”

Brad and Chris became good friends. They are both big gamers - Brad is into Xbox and Chris likes all types of game systems - and they also share a big love for music. In December 2011, they really started to discuss more about life and love. At that point, Chris was single, and Brad was ready to develop another serious relationship.

“We officially became a couple on February 15, 2012 and were engaged on May 12,” Brad shares.

Once they were a couple, things started to get complicated with immigration and the effect that the Defense of Marriage Act had on their relationship. Brad admits that it’s all a learning process.

“At the time Chris and I got together - when we really knew that we would spend our lives together - I was ignorant of the laws. I knew that the Defense of Marriage Act existed, but I did not really know that it would affect me the way it has,” he said.

“Under federal guidelines, since DOMA defines a spouse or marriage to be between a man and a woman, I cannot even apply for a fiancé visa for Chris,” Brad shares. “Or rather, I can apply, but I know at this time it will be denied.”

In wanting to be together long-term, Brad and Chris are weighing their options. They could wait out the process to see if DOMA is overturned and/or immigration reform occurs. Brad could seek a position in Canada through Kellogg Company or move to Uruguay facing limited job opportunities.

“We could wait out the process in hopes

that the U.S. Supreme Court will strike down DOMA and/or immigration reforms will also include the Uniting American Families Act,” according to Brad. “We actually have more hope on the former that the death of DOMA will come in June. The minute that DOMA is killed by the Supreme Court, same-sex bi-



Brad Allison. Photo courtesy of Morgan Paul Photography

national couples will be able to apply for their partner. Because this is an existing law and not a new law that needs time to go into effect, it will be stricken off the books once the ruling is handed down.”

Because Brad works for an international company with facilities in Canada, transferring to Canada is a secondary option, and one that he has been exploring for the past several months. “If I were to be offered a job through Kellogg Company in Canada, I would be able to migrate there, and they do recognize Chris as part of my family,” says Brad. “However, qualified visa jobs available in Canada are far and few between.”

The couple’s final alternative is for Brad to move to Uruguay.

“The last option is to give up everything I

have established here - family, home, a good job and friends - and migrate to Uruguay,” Brad states. “Uruguay is supposed to have marriage equality by this summer so it would be a very easy move; however I am not fluent in Spanish, so my job options would be very limited there, and Chris has aspirations of doing his art and graphic design here in the

“*We deeply love each other and for some reason, destiny has put us together. He is my core, and I am his. I am the tree, and he is the roots. Without the roots, the tree will die.*”

United States.”

Brad’s ideal resolution would be that the Uniting American Families Act be included in any immigration reform bill signed into law by President Obama.

“I feel that the current immigration laws are not hurting my relationship with Chris, but it is DOMA that is my Berlin Wall (as I call it),” says Brad. “However, I do feel that immigration law has to be reformed with common sense. I heard the other day that it needs to be called ‘common sense’ immigration reform and not ‘comprehensive’ immigration reform. Any new immigration reform has to include GLBT families.”

Since their relationship began, Brad has visited Chris in Uruguay four times and is traveling to see him again in March 2013, the day before the Supreme Court begins to hear

oral arguments for Prop 8 and then the next day on DOMA.

Between travels, Brad has focused his efforts on spreading the word locally about his situation, working with several Kalamazoo-area organizations, including the Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center, who is supportive in this cause.

“The Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center set me up to be a guest speaker at a conference hosted by the Hispanic American Council,” states Brad. “This conference was attended by several politicians including Representative Fred Upton. I was able to briefly speak with him at the end of the meeting. I also met his administrator so I made a very important connection there.”

Brad recently submitted a call for a resolution to the City of Kalamazoo clerk’s office. The resolution is for the City of Kalamazoo to support the Uniting American Families Act. This resolution will appear on the city clerk report.

“I am going to ask the city council to adopt the resolution, and I will be speaking during the public comments,” Brad shares. “I hope that some of the KGLRC community members will be in attendance to support me and call to attention to some of the city commissioners that this resolution needs to be passed.”

Brad shares advice to those who want to assist in his effort.

“Be vocal about this and other issues that matter,” he states. “We cannot be quiet about these things. Especially right now before the Supreme Court ruling and the congressional debate on immigration reform issues. If we are quiet, then those who make the decisions on Capitol Hill will do so without knowing what the real issues are.”

While this issue is receiving national attention, for Brad, it’s a personal one.

“I never in my life thought I would be affected by discrimination,” he says. “Being gay I was bullied when I was younger, but I did not really care about that. Now my own government is bullying me.”

It all circles back to love and family. Brad continues to share his story so that he and Chris - as well as other bi-national gay couples - can be together.

He shares this final thought on his relationship with Chris: “We deeply love each other and for some reason, destiny has put us together. He is my core, and I am his. I am the tree, and he is the roots. Without the roots, the tree will die.”

This is an ongoing series of articles featuring KGLRC staff, volunteers and community members.

In wanting to be together long-term, Brad and Chris are weighing their options. They could wait out the process to see if DOMA is overturned and/or immigration reform occurs. Brad could seek a position in Canada through Kellogg Company or move to Uruguay facing limited job opportunities.

Artist's First Keeps Her Learning, Growing

Older Adult Art Exhibition Opens March 14

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Darlene Hermann was 64 when she began doing art three and a half years ago. Now it is a major part of her life.

"I met a woman who did mosaic art and who encouraged me to try it. Well, I did and I never looked back. Within six months, I redid my basement into a studio and was finding myself doing mosaics in most of my spare time. My life work was as an insurance agent and financial planner, which is about as far away from artist as I can imagine. But at 64, I was eager to work less in this field and do more of something that gave me pleasure," she said.

“ I encourage you to try something new, something you've never dared to do, give it a shot and see what happens. It's opened up a whole new world for me. **”**

Adult Art show at the Pittman-Puckett gallery at Affirmations opens on March 14 with a reception from 7 - 9 p.m. Several senior artists will be featured in a variety of mediums.

Hermann hopes this will be a chance to make her first sale. She described her work in an artist statement for the exhibit, stating "My body of work is very diverse, ranging from mirrors and mannequins to windows, wall hangings and masks. Mosaics give me the freedom to



Darlene Hermann will be one of several artists featured at Affirmations Pittman Puckett Gallery beginning March 14. Photo courtesy of Darlene Hermann

create using a large range of materials including stained glass, fused glass, beads, stones, shells, and on and on. What I especially love is that each project is new and different and presents an exciting challenge.

"So, as an 'older adult' I am continuing to grow and learn. I haven't really studied mosaics per se but took a class in experiencing color and am now taking a design class at Oakland Community College. I encourage you to try something new, something you've never dared to do, give it a shot and see what happens. It's opened up a whole new world for me."

Find out more about the exhibit by visiting the Affirmations website at www.goaffirmations.org. See more of Hermann's work on her Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/Darlene-Hermann-Mosaics/153946058094350.

Older Adult Art Exhibition

Exhibition Opening and Artists Reception
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ROSEVILLE, CALIF.

Gay Rights Activists Protest N. California Mall

(AP) – Gay rights activists are protesting a Northern California mall where a same-sex couple says they were ejected for kissing.

The Sacramento Bee reports <http://bit.ly/16jlmKQ> a lively crowd of about 250 people gathered Saturday for a "kiss in" and rally at the Westfield Galleria in Roseville to protest the March 2 incident.

Daniel Chesmore and Jose Guzman say a security guard told them to leave because they were kissing and holding hands.

Westfield initially apologized for the incident on Tuesday, but later defended the guard's actions, saying the couple's "sexually explicit" behavior violated its code of conduct.

On Friday, the company said it was exploring new ways to work with gay organizations.

Vice President Keith Kaplan told activists Saturday that "everyone is welcome here at Westfield" and apologized for the incident.

PROVIDENCE, R.I.

RI Gay Marriage Bill May Hinge On Religious Clause

(AP) – Maria Valente and Andrea Bond were married in Massachusetts four years ago by a justice of the peace. The East Providence women insist they're just like any other couple raising three children. But a few years ago, when Bond had surgery in Rhode Island, they found out not everyone agrees.

"I was told I couldn't be in the room with her," Valente said. "It was discouraging and hurtful. The children were upset. Why drive a wedge into a family like that?"

Valente and Bond hope Rhode Island joins the rest of New England this year in allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry. But they're concerned that the kind of treatment they received may still be allowed if lawmakers insert a broad religious exemption allowing religious organizations like churches, hospitals and schools – or private businesses – to ignore the law and decide for themselves whether they want to extend benefits and rights to married gay couples.

Supporters and opponents alike predict the debate could turn on the religious exemption. The bill passed the House in January but has yet to receive a vote in the Senate. Senate President Teresa Paiva Weed, who has opposed gay marriage in the past, has said the sticking point in the debate for many senators is how broad the exemption is. Several senators, she said, wanted a more expansive exemption to protect religious organizations and private individuals who do not want to recognize gay marriage.

Sen. Harold Metts opposes the legislation and said the effect on religious organization is a "big consideration." The Providence Democrat said it would be contrary to the nation's traditions of religious freedom to force anyone to recognize the marriages of same-sex couples.

Other states with gay marriage laws have handled the religious question in different ways. In Washington state, for example, the law says that no religious leader is required to perform a gay marriage, and that no religious organization is required to provide "accommodations, facilities, advantages, privileges, services, or goods" related to a marriage ceremony or reception.

Extended briefs are available online at:
 >> www.PrideSource.com

Other People's Politics

And We Just Have To Deal With It



Thinking Out Loud

OPINION BY ABBY DEES

Having friends who don't share your political views is very inconvenient. It requires you to think in terms of individuals, rather than lump everyone you disagree with into a tidy group that is (pick one:) stupid, greedy, evil, brainwashed or out to get you. It means you have to get your news from multiple sources and that takes so darn much time. It's much easier to know there are only two types of people in the world: us and them. Then we can use our critical thinking skills for other things, like deciding who deserves our vote on "The X Factor."

Last week I ran into an old, dear friend. The last time we met was almost 30 years ago when we were still basically kids. She was the kind of person who made you smile just to look at her. Bright eyed and curious, she always led with her heart; I remember that most vividly after all these years. The person I met last week was no different, except perhaps more settled and confident – the lovely patina that comes with age. My friend told me that since we last met, she had become born again and involved with the local Tea Party group.

To a typical tree-hugging lesbian, this combo rarely suggests "ally," and yet here I was with my old friend who has only ever been someone I'd consider an ally. And this week she gave me no reason to think that's changed. I don't actually know what she thinks about things like same-sex marriage, abortion, immigration, or whatever. I do know that she was genuinely happy to hear that I'm happy. It's mutual and I'm glad we found each other again.

So, like I said, most inconvenient. It would be so much easier to think my friend had become a fundamentally different person or was under the insidious influence of some nutty political propaganda. I could maintain a nice us/them view of the world...and nothing would ever change.

This is the problem when we get lazy about our politics and opinions. If we stay in our respective camps of people we agree with, we lose the opportunity to find common ground. And maybe "common

ground" is too common a term. When I think about my friends, it feels more like common humanity.

As I watch so many right-wing talking heads on TV railing about the gay agenda, I always feel like they turn us into cartoon versions of people – two-dimensional characters intent only on dismantling what's important to other, "real" Americans. Yet when I think about LGBT rights, I imagine a million ordinary people who only want what everybody wants: family, love, and security. I picture closeted kids in small towns wondering if they will ever get to truly be who they are. It makes my heart ache. "Why is this so frickin' hard to understand?" I keep asking the TV.

Then I fall into that trap myself, thinking that those talking heads represent all of "them," the other side that is so firmly against "us." Where does my friend fall into that narrative? Is she one of the few exceptions? Those exceptions I keep meeting? Is it really possible that each one

of my conservative friends or family is a very rare outlier? Am I that good at sniffing people out? Or are they hypocrites? Am I?

Frankly, we're all probably hypocrites on some level. Lord knows I thought Bush's tax cuts were obscene. And in the few ways they extended to me, I was happy to take full advantage of them.

But calling people hypocrites and then expecting change is unproductive and, well, hypocritical. My friends and I, by definition, have each other's back. Disagreement between us is painful sometimes, so I must remember what I know for sure: They too only want family, love

and security. In pursuit of these things, we are all guilty of having irrational fears and blind spots, and we are each doing the best we can in a confusing and loud world. This is our common humanity – recognizing it is a lot easier than maintaining the false dichotomy of us and them. How about we start right there?

To a typical tree-hugging lesbian, this combo rarely suggests "ally," and yet here I was with my old friend who has only ever been someone I'd consider an ally. And this week she gave me no reason to think that's changed.



Fleet Too Out, Get Outed



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Back in the “good old days” of Great Depression #1, following Stock Market Crash ‘29 – years and years – well, at least a galloping few – before my time, the seven arts took a real financial broadsiding.

Money for spending on painting, sculpture, plays, Broadway musicals wasn’t available as it had been during The Roaring Twenties, when my sainted mother was just a kid, and I not a twinkling (or a twink) in anybody’s eye.

Shortly after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office in ‘33 – defeating the Republican George W of his day, dour, doggedly conservative Herbert Hoover – the Works Art Project was formed. WAP provided federal funding to keep artists, musicians, composers, playwrights afloat.

It was a bright move for FDR’s administration, for a nation cannot be truly healthy without visionaries to show the way. One of those WAP recipients, Paul Cadmus, was gay. There were others, too, but Cadmus – remembered today by a tribute DVD biographical title of “Enfant Terrible” – is special.

Cadmus, who died 14 years ago at 95, made it big at 30, not only as a supremely gifted artist, but as a cause celebre of big-time art censorship. The resulting national notoriety and newspaper publicity got his career ship-ahoy! with a thundering five-gun salute – AND – a long-lasting, highly memorable finish. Here’s background ...

Way back in America’s Twenties and Thirties homosexual men frequently identified themselves as “gay” – for straights the word meant happy – by wearing a red tie. (In my teenage days, a yellow shirt worn on Thursday was cueing. That and penny loafers.)

In 1934, “The Fleet’s In!” painted by Cadmus, was chosen by the WPA for inclusion in a show at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Within a day or two of the opening a testy letter to the editor appeared in The Evening Star, denouncing “Fleet” as anything but “in port”, as far as the Navy might be concerned. “Unpatriotic!” “Damnably Neurotic!”

Others voices shrilly joined in. Editorials clamored. Prompted by shocked outcries about showing sailors as rowdy, party types (and who’s that fey looking guy in the background with the red tie – and you know what that means – elbow, elbow – don’t you?), Secretary of Navy Claude A. Swanson pulled the plug on the fleet.

Swanson ordered Ass’t. Secretary of the Navy Henry Latrobe Roosevelt (a cousin to the President), to scuttlebutt the painting. It wound up sunk out of sight in D.C.’s Alibi Club until 1981, when – still under guard in the naval brig, if you will – it was restored at Navy expense – under threat of public lawsuit – in time for a Cadmus retrospective.

“Fleet’s In” was put on permanent exhibit in 1985 at The Navy Museum, Washington Navy Yard. Jon Anderson, his model/partner of 35 years attended. In 1991, on two separate occasions, feminist visitors objected that the painting depicted sexual harassment. (One presumes of the docksider doxies, not the fag in the red tie.)

Moral: If you want to make a name for yourself in the art world – talent or no talent – start with a loud mouthed censorship. (This time around, being gay’s a plus artwise. Go figure.)

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History In The High Court

The Presidential Punch And What It Means

BY LISA KEEN

How strong a position did the Obama administration take in its briefs on the Supreme Court marriage cases –and can it make a difference?

The following is part of a series to prepare readers for what to expect March 26 and 27 when the U.S. Supreme Court takes up the marriage equality cases.

LGBT legal activists and their allies have nothing but praise for the Obama administration's decision to submit briefs in both marriage equality cases before the U.S. Supreme Court this month. The administration was obliged to file only in *U.S. v. Windsor*, the case testing the constitutionality of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). That's because the U.S. is a party to that case, defending the administration's obligation to enforce DOMA.

But the administration's brief in the DOMA case made clear it wants DOMA ruled unconstitutional and – in a brief it did not have to submit – it also made clear it thinks Proposition 8 should be declared unconstitutional.

The Proposition 8 brief came in *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, the case testing the constitutionality of California's 2008 voter-approved ban on marriage licenses for same-sex couples. The U.S. is not a party to the lawsuit that challenged that law. The fact the administration chose to submit a brief anyway is being hailed by many as an important political gesture, backing up President Obama's commitment to equality for LGBT people with the power of his position.

But did the briefs go as far as they could to support marriage equality? And, could the briefs have any real likelihood of influencing any justice on the court?

What The Briefs Said

As is custom, Solicitor General Donald Verrilli filed the administration's briefs in both cases, and he did so with several of his staff, including Stuart Delery, the openly gay head the DOJ's Civil Division.

In the DOMA case, the DOJ argued that Section 3 of DOMA violates the equal protection clause of the constitution. Section 3 prohibits the federal government from recognizing marriage licenses of same-sex couples for the purpose of any federal benefit.

DOJ also argued, as the Second Circuit

appeals court ruled in its decision in *Windsor*, that courts should subject laws which disadvantage citizens because of their sexual orientation to a "heightened scrutiny," a much more stringent level of review than has ever been applied to such laws before. And it argued that DOMA fails to pass muster under heightened scrutiny, a point first raised by U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder's famous letter advising House Speaker John Boehner that the administration would enforce, but no longer defend DOMA as constitutional.

The brief in the Proposition 8 case takes essentially the same positions – Proposition 8 violates equal protection, it should be subjected to heightened scrutiny, and it fails to pass heightened scrutiny. And much has been made of the fact that the brief also noted that seven other states have laws similar to that of California, making civil unions or domestic partnerships possible for gay couples, but not marriage. (Those states are Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon, and Rhode Island.)

The administration's urging heightened scrutiny for laws treating people differently based on sexual orientation is a "clear path toward marriage equality across the United States" even beyond the seven states similarly situated as California.

What The Briefs Didn't Say

DOJ did not argue for strict scrutiny – the toughest level of judicial review. And it did not argue that DOMA is unconstitutional if judged under the most basic level of scrutiny, rational basis.

The level of scrutiny matters.

Generally speaking, there are three levels: rational, heightened, and strict. Until the Second Circuit decision in *Windsor*, most courts, including the Supreme Court, have examined laws that disfavor LGBT people against the easy rational basis standard. To pass rational basis, a law must simply be rationally related to achieving a legitimate governmental interest. The intermediate level of scrutiny – heightened scrutiny – requires that a law must be "substantially related" to achieving an "important" governmental interest. And strict scrutiny requires that a law be

"narrowly tailored" to achieve a "compelling" governmental interest.

Laws affecting people based on race and national origin are examined under strict scrutiny and have very rarely passed this test. (A notable exception being an executive order requiring internment of Japanese American citizens during World War II, with the compelling reason being identified as national security.)

As the Solicitor General's briefs noted, the Supreme Court has yet to identify what level of scrutiny should apply to laws that disfavor citizens based on sexual orientation. In recent cases (overturning an anti-gay ballot initiative in *Romer v. Evans* and striking down sodomy laws in *Lawrence v. Texas*), he noted the court applied rational basis and said the laws did not pass.

The Solicitor General's brief in the DOMA case states explicitly, "The government does not challenge the constitutionality of DOMA Section 3 under deferential rational-basis review...." And it noted that the government has previously defended Section 3 under rational basis review.

"The Justice Department argues in its brief that DOMA is unconstitutional if heightened scrutiny is applied, but valid if rational basis review is used," explained long-time gay legal activist and scholar Nan Hunter in a March 4 blog post at *TheNation.com*, "unless the Court uses heightened rational basis, in which case DOMA is unconstitutional after all."

So, the Solicitor General's DOMA brief doesn't concede on rational basis. It just tries to focus the court's attention on the worthiness of applying a more stringent form of review. And it gives credit for the idea to a former U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Reagan appointee Sandra Day O'Connor. In *Lawrence*, concurring Justice O'Connor suggested the court consider a "more searching form" of rational basis review when a law is "directed toward gay persons as a class." The Solicitor General's *Windsor* brief said DOMA, "would fail" such an analysis. And his *Hollingsworth* brief sticks with the mantra that Proposition 8 fails heightened scrutiny.

The bottom line, "The most important outcome of the DOMA case for the future of gay rights law," says Hunter, "is that the Court is likely to declare itself on which standard should be applied to any law that discriminates based on sexual orientation." The administration is arguing for a middle ground that could have huge consequences for LGBT people, making any laws aimed at disadvantaging them much harder to survive.

Reactions

Ted Boutros, one of the lead attorneys for the same-sex couples challenging Proposition 8, told reporters in a telephone conference call Feb. 28 that he was "extremely pleased" with the Obama administration's brief in that case. He said the brief is "powerful" and places the "full weight" of the government behind their arguments against the ban. The administration's urging heightened scrutiny for laws treating people differently based on sexual orientation, he said, is a "clear path toward marriage equality across the United States," even beyond the seven states similarly situated as California.

Heightened scrutiny, said Boutros, "is extremely important in other contexts where gay and lesbian Americans are discriminated against."

"And the United States government has said in its brief to the U.S. Supreme Court that this discrimination cannot be tolerated," said Boutros. "It's extremely important."

Boutros acknowledged that the Solicitor General's brief did not, as the Proposition 8 challengers' brief does, argue that there is a "fundamental right" to marriage. Laws that infringe upon a fundamental right must also be reviewed using strict scrutiny. But he reiterated that he could say only positive things about the administration's brief and added, "it can only make our case that much stronger."

Mary Bonauto, civil rights director for Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), said LGBT legal activists have "all sought strict scrutiny, starting with Gill." GLAD's *Gill v. Office of Personnel Management*, coupled with the *Massachusetts v. Health and Human Services* case by the Commonwealth, were the first to take on DOMA; and the first to succeed all the way through the federal appeals court. GLAD also had *Pedersen v. OPM* in the Second Circuit and *Lambda Legal had Golinski v. OPM* in the Ninth Circuit.

“Golinski and Pedersen made headway on this,” noted Bonauto, “and the Second Circuit in Windsor became the first appellate court to find heightened scrutiny for sexual orientation classifications.”

But Bonauto and others pushing for the end to DOMA and Proposition 8 are not critical of the administration for seeking heightened scrutiny, rather than strict scrutiny.

“They could obviously have been more ambitious and far-reaching, but that doesn’t mean they hedged,” said Laurence Tribe, the widely respected Harvard constitutional law expert. Tribe argued against sodomy laws in the 1986 *Bowers v. Hardwick* case and filed what many consider the most influential brief against sodomy laws in the *Lawrence* case. He called the Obama administration’s briefs “excellent” and said they “took reality into account, as I think they should have.”

At least one former Supreme Court insider suggested it’s actually a good thing the administration took a middle road. Rather than facing the options in Proposition 8, for instance, of “marriage for all” or “marriage for just California,” said the source, the administration brief in Proposition 8 offers the court a third option – marriage for eight states.

And Bonauto is quick to point out that the Solicitor General’s brief on Proposition 8 represented the first time DOJ officials have submitted a legal brief seeking “the right to marry.” In other cases, she noted, the DOJ has sought the right for equal treatment of same-sex couples who were already married. And its discussion in the Proposition 8 brief, said Bonauto, “clearly” addresses the California ban “in ways that could affect the legal debate beyond California.”

Beyond The Briefs

As much as legal experts like to focus on the language of the law and on finely tuned arguments on scrutiny, legal standing, and the constitution itself, the justices do not hear cases such as *Hollingsworth* and *Windsor* in a vacuum. Justices read, they speak in public and engage in Q & As, they submit to interviews, and they are aware of public opinion. They are obviously aware of the extraordinary mound of friend-of-the-court briefs piled up on either side in both cases. They almost certainly read former President Bill Clinton’s op-ed in the *Washington Post* March 7, explaining his regret for having signed DOMA into law in 1996.

“I know now that, even worse than providing an excuse for discrimination, the law is itself discriminatory. It should be overturned,” wrote Clinton.

It would also be hard to imagine that any of the justices missed the splash of news four months ago when three states adopted marriage equality and one rejected a ban on it. There was considerable publicity last May, too, when President Obama said he supports the right of gay couples to marry. So, to some extent, the Solicitor General’s briefs just make the president’s already known support for marriage equality formal and particular to the two legal

It would also be hard to imagine that any of the justices missed the splash of news four months ago when three states adopted marriage equality and one rejected a ban on it.



How strong a position did the Obama administration take in its briefs on the Supreme Court marriage cases – and can it make a difference in their ruling?

battles here.

But these two cases also come to the Supreme Court at an especially volatile juncture. The justices must issue a decision soon in a case challenging the constitutionality of college admission policies tailored to achieve a racially diverse student population. They have been asked to review a case concerning state regulation of medications to induce abortion. And many believe a conservative majority might be on the verge of issuing a decision that could trigger a civil rights backlash - by striking down a section the Voting Rights Act, a 48-year-old law to prohibit discriminatory practices against racial minorities at the voting booth. The section in question, akin to the Proposition 8 case, considers whether states have a right to determine their own laws.

Conservative Push?

“The Roberts court stands on the brink of making an error of historic proportions” in that regard, predicted *New York Times* veteran Supreme Court reporter Linda Greenhouse.

If she’s right, it will be a big conservative push, with a key swing voter – Justice Anthony Kennedy (who led the majority in *Romer* and *Lawrence*) - pushing once again with the conservatives. In 2010, Kennedy led them with the controversial *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* decision, allowing unrestricted independent campaign expenditures by corporations and unions. And last year, Kennedy led the dissent against the *Affordable Care Act* case.

On the other hand, Justice Kennedy joined an 8 to 1 majority in 2010 that said a Washington

the vicious verbal assault” that makes “no contribution to public debate.”

It is also comforting to supporters of marriage equality that there were not four justices on the court in January 2011 when the group of clergy in Washington, D.C., tried a second attempt to challenge that city’s new marriage equality law.

Will Obama’s Brief Sway Court?

But could the Obama administration’s briefs in these two marriage cases really sway any of the nine justices?

In her *TheNation.com* post, Hunter (who believes Alito is also likely to join Scalia and Thomas) suggests the justices have many more pressures to consider.

Justice Kennedy, she wrote, is “a strong believer in state sovereignty, and a decision forcing legal change in forty-one states may be too much for him to join...”

“The defenders of Proposition 8 will try to assuage the justices that, if the political process is left to work, more and more states will re-amend their constitutions and change their statutes to gradually adopt gay marriage laws on their own, without judicial ‘interference,’” wrote Hunter. “In addition, the liberal justices who support gay marriage may worry that a sweeping *Roe v. Wade*-like decision will trigger a massive backlash.”

These concerns, and the questions of legal standing, she wrote, “sure seem like a nice way to kick a vexatious can down the road.”

But former Solicitor General Ted Olson thinks the briefs could have “great effect.” Olson was solicitor general under President George W. Bush in 2003 when the *Lawrence* case in the Supreme Court challenged laws banning same-sex sexual relations. He did not file a brief in that case. Thurgood Marshall was solicitor general under President Lyndon Johnson during the *Loving v. Virginia* contest. He did not file a brief in that case, challenging laws that banned interracial marriage. Nor did Reagan Solicitor General Charles Fried file a brief in the 1986 *Hardwick v. Bowers* case, nor did Clinton Solicitor General Drew Days file a brief in the *Romer* case.

So, if for no other reason, the Obama administration’s willingness to have the

State law requiring the names and addresses of petition signers be made public does not violate the First Amendment. And he joined a 5 to 4 majority that same year in *Christian Legal v. Martinez*, ruling that religious beliefs may not always trump policies seeking to ban discrimination.

Roberts surprised many court observers last June when he led the brief to uphold the Obama administration’s *Affordable Care Act* in *HHS v. Florida*. And in March 2010, Roberts denied an emergency motion to stay enactment of Washington, D.C.’s new marriage equality law (though he did hint the group bringing the case made an argument with “some force”).

While many, if not most, court observers believe Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas are certain to vote to preserve DOMA and Proposition 8, there is at least one ray of hope Justice Samuel Alito is persuadable. In

The fact the administration chose to submit a brief anyway is being hailed by many as an important political gesture, backing up President Obama’s commitment to equality for LGBT people with the power of his position.

March 2011, Alito was the lone vote against the Westboro Baptist Church position that the First Amendment gave it the right to publicly hurl anti-gay epithets outside a private funeral. Alito’s dissent said he does not believe the First Amendment gives anyone “a license for

federal government weigh in on the marriage cases is undeniably significant, even if it fails to persuade a single vote.

As GLAD’s Bonauto puts it, “That brief is the brief of the United States of America, and it’s hard to match that in influence.”



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March 28:

Maundy Thursday Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.

March 29:

Good Friday Liturgy, 12 Noon

March 30:

The Great Vigil of Easter, 8:00 p.m.

March 31:

Easter Day Festival Service, 10:30 a.m.

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New Film Spotlights Religious Intolerance

BY CHUCK COLBERT

What's it going to take for the Vatican to change its hardline doctrine against homosexuality?



Andy Abrahams Wilson, founder and president of Sausalito, California-based Open Eye Pictures.

Whomever the College of Cardinals selects as pope to succeed Benedict XVI, the new Holy Father would do well to consider the case of a 39-year old Italian writer and ex-seminarian

from a small town in Sicily, who set himself

on fire in St. Peter's Square.

Alfredo Ormando's suicide in January 1998 was purposeful as his correspondence made clear. "I hope they'll understand the message I want to leave," he wrote to a friend beforehand. "It's a protest against the Church that demonizes homosexuality, and at the same time all of nature, because homosexuality is her offspring."

And yet the Vatican was emphatic in its denial that Ormando's suicide had anything to do with the Church's harsh condemnation of homosexuality.

"In the letter found on Alfredo Ormando," a Vatican spokesperson said, "he doesn't affirm in any way that his actions were prompted by his presumed homosexuality or as a protest against the Church," adding, "He tried to kill himself for no better explanation than family motives."

Not to be forgotten, however, Ormando's heroic act or mad gesture, his self-immolation on January 13, 1998, is now the subject of a soon-to-be-released documentary, *Alfredo's Fire*, by Andy Abrahams Wilson, founder and president of Sausalito, California-based Open Eye Pictures.

The film explores the clash between faith and homosexuality and a struggle common among many gay people — reconciling sexuality and faith or spirituality.

The documentary, mostly in Italian with English subtitles, opens a window into the interior life of Alfredo, relying on unpublished writings, correspondence, and interviews with family members, friends, and an intimate companion.

Wilson speaks Italian, lived in Italy for a short period of time, and is quite familiar with the Catholic tradition there.

In the midst of a crowd funding campaign to finish the film (<http://bit.ly/kickstartfire>), Wilson discussed his motivation for producing the documentary and the importance of its message.

"Really, it was the fire that I was drawn to," said Wilson over the telephone. "The symbolism of fire as it relates to LGBT people. Fire represents self-annihilation and annihilation by others, recalling the burnings at the stakes of homosexuals during the Middle Ages."

"Fire," he went on to say, "is an expression of pent up passion and rage, communion with God, purification, liberation, and a dramatic coming out. Self-immolation, historically, is a powerful protest, specifically as it relates to the LGBT population."

"What I like about (the fire) is that it's not just one thing. It doesn't just represent an expression of a life force, it's also the expression of the extinguishing of a life force."

As gay people, we have these two divergent paths that face us. As Alfredo said: "You either accept being gay or you kill yourself."

Alfredo Ormando's suicide by fire defies easy explanation. "You cannot say anyone does what he does for any one reason,"

The film explores the clash between faith and homosexuality and a struggle common among many gay people — reconciling sexuality and faith or spirituality.

said Wilson, raising key questions about Alfredo's desperate act: "Was Alfredo a little off balance? Yes. Why was he off balance? Can you blame just the Church? Probably not."

"Clearly, he's an extreme example of what people endure everyday all over the world by an anti-gay Church and an anti-gay society."

"Even in becoming a human torch, he wasn't seen. There's a terrible injustice there."

Indeed Catholic hostility to gays dates back centuries, when during the Inquisition the Church executed gay men — or sodomites — by burning at the stake and other dreadful means.

Modern day animus towards gays persists as official church teaching speaks of "objective disordered" to describe the "homosexual inclination" and "intrinsic moral evil" to explain "homosexual acts."

Continued on Next Page

www.PrideSource.com



St. Peter's Square, The Vatican, Rome, the site of Orlando's self-immolation in 1998.

In fact, two years after Alfredo's suicide, overlooking the spot where Alfredo set himself on fire, then Pope John Paul II, said, "Homosexual acts are against the laws of nature."

More recently, Benedict XVI, now Pope Emeritus said, "[Homosexuality] is a concept of human nature that has proven defective."

Increasingly, Catholic

yet you resent it at the same time.

"The Church is the ultimate family, and the Pope is the patriarch of the family. That's strongly ingrained in many Italians."

Alfredo's struggle, then, is a common thread and tension in the life experience of many gay people: How to come terms and find peace when religious authority, Catholic or otherwise, says being gay and living openly is outside the natural order devoid of any true spiritual life or sanctified relationships.

"You cannot say that Alfredo was not religious, that he did not care about God or his Church," said Wilson. Still, "he had conflicted feelings."

Wilson readily acknowledges LGBT people have every reason to reject any kind of religious tradition, given its vehement anti-gay teachings. But outright rejection, he said, "is problematic," adding "I think we're just hurting

ourselves further. While orthodox religious traditions may deny us access to the divine, we can claim a full spiritual life. We don't need to buy into our own marginalization."

Although Jewish, Wilson hopes "for a more open and inclusive Church. I want the film to be part of that change," he said. "Alfredo is just one example of a life destroyed in large part by teachings of the Catholic Church."

To facilitate dialogue and change, Wilson said the documentary's engagement campaign includes outreach to faith-based organizations and LGBT groups around the world.

Alfredo's Fire's engagement campaign also features an open and interactive "Sparks of Fire" transmedia project, which includes a new map-based app that allows users worldwide to share their personal stories at "the combustible place where faith and homosexuality clash."

Learn more about the film and contribute to its crowd funding campaign to raise finishing funds. <http://bit.ly/kickstartfire>



Italian newspaper story of Alfredo Orlando's suicide.

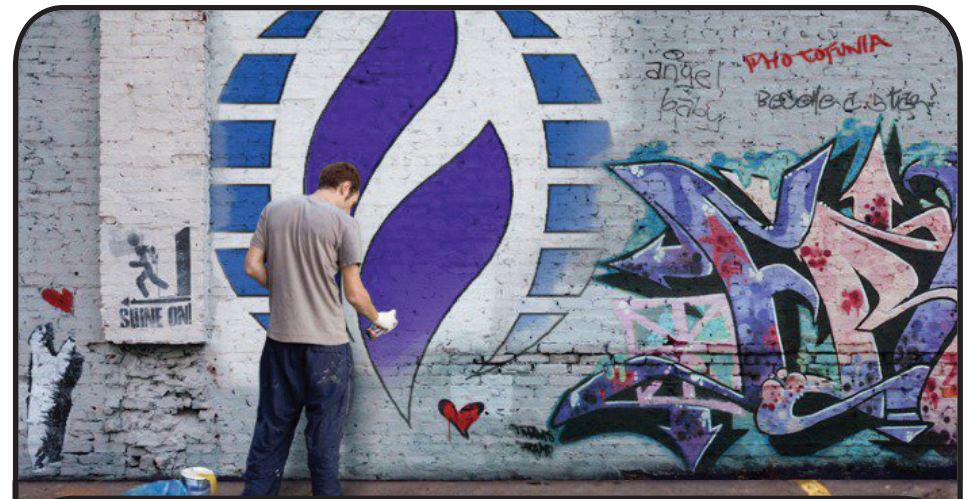
hierarchical leadership stateside and globally has stepped up its rhetoric in the secular, political arena, too. One of the major forces, if not the major force against civil rights or equal rights for LGBT people, is the Church, especially its adamant opposition to same-sex marriage.

While Wilson hesitates to draw a straight line between Alfredo's suicide and Vatican anti-gay rhetoric and politics, the documentary highlights a trickle-down effect from Church pronouncements to society and family life.

One of eight children from a poor family in Palermo, Alfredo's homosexuality was not well received by the two bothers to whom he came out, one of whom physically assaulted him.

Alfredo felt societal pressure to keep his gayness secret in order to protect family honor, a strong Sicilian value.

"Think about that in the context of a gay person," said Wilson, "the need to honor the family. You don't want to hurt the family, and



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March 28, 2013, 7:00 PM

Good Friday
March 29, 2013, 7:00 PM


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MCC Windsor Celebrates 25 Years Of Service

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

WINDSOR, ONTARIO - Nestled in the heart of Windsor, in space rented from the Westminster United Church (1680 Dougall Ave.), Metropolitan Community Church is celebrating 25 years as a congregation.

Rev. Martha Daniels has been with MCC Windsor since November 2004. Though the clergywoman was not there at the time, she is familiar with the church's history, stating that they started as an outreach of MCC Toronto in 1988.

In the 1990s they were one of the main supporters of the Pride Festival and the Windsor Pride Community Center which grew out of it.

With a typical crowd of about 30, Daniels said "it's a family atmosphere. There are several families with small children. It's a huge, beautiful space with a nice organ that we use. But it's not too formal. There's a lot of laughter and its warm and welcoming."

Her favorite task as Reverend is the officiating at weddings. "Same-sex marriages have been legal since 2003 here in Ontario and 2005 for the whole country. I love that I get to do nationally, federally recognized marriages."

Daniels grew up in Michigan and lived on the east coast of the U.S. for

several years. When the opening became available in Windsor, she jumped at the chance to be part of a welcoming and affirming congregation, especially so close to her home state.

MCC, founded on the principle of



equality and affirmation for LGBT individuals and families, has been performing same gender ceremonies from its beginnings as a church in 1968. Prior to joining MCC, Daniels served in the United Methodist Church. When she came out as a lesbian she gave up her Methodist stole and sought a more inclusive way to worship.

The most surprising thing in the past

few years has been that the number of weddings performed at MCC Windsor has gone down. "I was doing 2-3 a month, but now it's not so much. More of the other churches do them now. It's more accepted. I miss doing them, but I'm glad to see there are more of them. It means that more congregations are welcoming."

Though the number of weddings has declined, Daniels said there are still a good number of couples that come from Michigan to exchange vows. "Even though they don't live here, and it's not recognized in their home state, people just want to know that somewhere in the world their relationship is validated and that they are married," Daniels said.

MCC Windsor's inclusivity statement shares the core value of their faith, quoting Romans 2:10, 11, which states "... but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good... For God shows no partiality"

Their inclusivity statement says, "We are a very distinctive community and we seek to be a truly inclusive church. We pride ourselves on being a bit different, on taking risks and pushing back the walls of discrimination. If God shows no partiality, why should we?"

Beyond her work at MCC, Daniels is President of the Windsor Pride

See Windsor, page 17

*Celebrate
Easter!*

Maundy Thursday Worship
Downtown 7pm

Good Friday Worship
Downtown 12, 12:30, 1pm
Green Wood 7, 7:30, 8pm

Holy Saturday Worship
Green Wood 5pm

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Light The Way To Justice Rally Planned

Detroit Area Vigil Planned During U.S. Supreme Court Hearings Mar. 26

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

DETROIT – Raymond Shepherd has never considered himself a leader, but the issue of same-gender marriage has brought the 65-year-old Ferndale man out of his shell for what he hopes will be a proud moment of support for the LGBT community.

Shepherd has organized a Light the Way to Justice rally to take place on March 26 from 6 - 9 p.m. at the Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse at 231 W Lafayette Blvd in Detroit to show a hope for justice as the U.S. Supreme Court listens to two cases involving the rights of same-gender loving human beings to marry.

“This is not a march, a fight or a demonstration - this is a peaceful show of solidarity, a stand for LOVE, not hate. Make signs to hold, bring candles and help show our desire to be equal. We will also be having conversations with people and collecting Freedom To Marry signatures. History is in the making and it is time to bring America into the 21st century. Let’s give people hope and create change by using the voice of the people,” says the Detroit Light the Way to Justice Rally Facebook Page.

On March 26 and March 27, the U.S. Supreme Court will be listening to oral arguments on the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). DOMA states that marriage is between one man and one woman, and gives states the option of ignoring marriages performed in other states where same-gender marriage is legal. The Court will consider if the federal government should recognize legal marriages, and also what states’ rights are in the matter.

Vigils are popping up across the country in support of same-gender marriage, and Shepherd has been able to connect with some of them. There are at least 78 events happening throughout the country in over 30 states. Marriage Equality USA and GetEQUAL have been hosting conference calls and connecting event organizers.

“I have been on a conference call on Thursday nights for about the last month. Tonight we had Stuart Milk, who is, if anyone is old enough to remember, is Harvey Milk’s nephew. For those who don’t know, Harvey Milk was shot in his commissioner’s office in 1978. He was one of the first out elected gay politicians elected to office,” Shepherd said in an earlier interview. Working with other organizers has been an inspirational experience. “Even though I felt this needed happening in Detroit, I have felt completely overwhelmed in trying to organize the vigil until now. With me I always have been a follower instead of a leader. Tonight I think I got the inspiration to do it right,” he said on Facebook after the discussion.

Shepherd and his partner Raymond Misera are separated because of the antiquated marriage laws in Michigan and in much of the country. “I am part of a bi-national couple with my spouse in the Philippines. He has tried to get a student visa three times since May 29, 2010 when we met online through Facebook. If we were a man and woman I could have sponsored him for a fiancée visa then green card. In the last attempt of his getting a student visa we used a lawyer recommended by Immigration Equality. We made a brief attempt at his getting a work visa to Canada, we decided he probably would not get the visa to Canada. Our lawyer then said our best bet would be the repeal of DOMA.”

The couple connects via the Internet at least once a day, and Shepherd has visited him in the Philippines. They’ve agreed that Shepherd is not healthy enough to move to the Philippines, but they are working on possibly getting married through a different U.S. state.

“I am hoping for DOMA being declared unconstitutional so Raymond Misa can finally get over here and we can be together forever,” he said.

For more information on the vigil, check out the event page at www.facebook.com/events/196557793823514

► Windsor

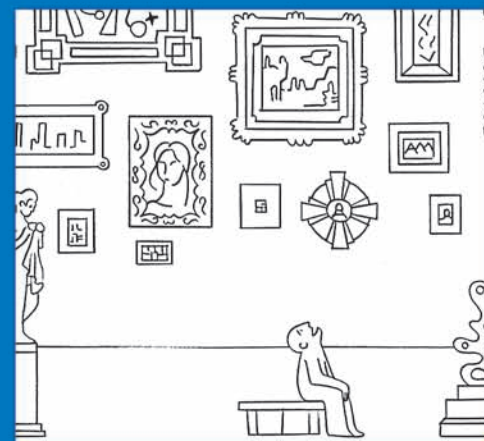
Continued from p. 16

Community Center Board, which she says “is the Windsor equivalent of Affirmations.” It’s a place where LGBT adults and youth can access services, hold meetings, get tested for

HIV, enjoy social and activism-related events and just be themselves in a safe environment.

Windsor’s annual Pride celebration, which takes place this year on Aug. 9, 10, and 11.

To learn more about MCC Windsor, visit their Web site at www.mccwindsor.org.



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Sunday Music Bar

Pianist Kazimierz Brzozowski celebrates the birthday of Frederic Chopin. 1 & 3 p.m., Kresge Court.

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LCC Theatre Brings 'The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later' To Downtown Lansing

LCC Theatre will present "The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later" March 15-23 at Dart Auditorium on LCC's campus in Downtown Lansing.

On a late October night in 1998, gay University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard left the Fireside Bar with Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson. Eighteen hours later he was discovered on a prairie at the edge of town, tied to a fence, brutally beaten. He died six days later. The following month, the Tectonic Theatre Project traveled to Laramie, Wyo. and conducted interviews with the people of the town, returning six times and conducting over 200 interviews. These texts became the basis for the iconic play "The Laramie Project." Ten years later the Tectonic Theatre members returned to try to understand the long-term effect of the murder. Through follow-up interviews with residents, TTP created the companion piece, "Ten Years Later." They found a town wrestling with its legacy and its place in history.

The play debuted as a reading at nearly 150 theaters across the U.S. and internationally on Oct. 12, 2009 – the 11th anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death. The opening was

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linked by webcam to New York City where Judy Shepard and the play's producers and writers gave an opening speech, followed by an address by Glenn Close.

Tickets are \$10 and can be ordered online at www.LansingArts.org or by phone. For information, call 517-372-0945 Tuesday through Friday from noon to 4 p.m.

PREVIEW

The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later

Dart Auditorium, 500 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing.
8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. March 17.
March 15-17 and 22-23. 120 minutes. \$10. 517-372-0945.

www.lansingarts.org

The Laramie Project

Ten Years Later

Written by *Moisés Kaufman, Leigh Fondakowski, Greg Pierotti, Andy Paris, Stephen Belber*

Directed by *Chad Badgero*

March 15-23, 2013

8pm Fridays & Saturdays

March 17

2pm Sunday (sign interpreted)

Dart Auditorium, \$5/10 Admission

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Musician On First Album In Five Years, 'Loyal' Gay Following & Anger Issues

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

It would be easy to mistake Dido as being as mellow as her music – but don't.

In our chat, the British singer-songwriter – promoting her first album in five years, “Girl Who Got Away” – didn't just chat about her gay fans and the Eminem song that launched her career. We found out what turns the musically meek songstress into an angry beast. Let's just say this: Tequila makes Dido dangerous.

Welcome back, Dido.

Thank you very much. It's nice to be back.

When did you recognize you had a gay following?

Pretty instantly, I would say. I've always had a very loyal gay following, which I'm very thankful for.

Do you have a lot of gay people in your own life?

Oh yeah, tons. I mean, friends, work people ... everybody.

Everybody?

(Laughs) No, not everybody, but a huge amount. I'm surrounded by very good people.

Two of your biggest singles, “Thank You” and “Don't Leave Home,” are wedding favorites.

It's funny: I think “Don't Leave Home” at a wedding is just completely weird. It surprises me that anybody has that at their wedding. It's a song about being incredibly claustrophobic. (Laughs) People are like, “I've played that at my wedding,” and I'm like, “Why, if I can be honest?” I guess it's the title. “Thank You,” though, is a perfect wedding song, and I've actually sang it at quite a few friends' weddings. But if someone asked me to play “Don't Leave Home,” I'd just be like, “Really?”

Have you ever sung at a gay wedding?

I haven't actually, no. I haven't really sung at many weddings. It takes quite a bit of alcohol and coaxing to get me to sing at anyone's wedding.

What kind of alcohol?

Back then I used to drink quite a lot of tequila, but then that all went a bit wrong and I found that's just the one thing I cannot drink. So now I like to drink wine. Does that mean I'm getting old? It probably does. (Laughs) But tequila makes me get into fights.

Tequila makes you fight?

Yeah! It used to make me weirdly aggressive – and I'm like the most unaggressive person ever. (Laughs) But tequila makes me quite angry.

But, Dido, you seem so mellow.

It takes so much to piss me off. Someone's gotta poke at me quite a lot to get me even remotely angry, but if I have tequila, I'll just get angry at the next person who comes around.

DIDO
Thanks You

Photo: Guy Aroch

How personal is "Girl Who Got Away" in relation to your other three albums?

All my albums are pretty personal. You can't help your life filtering into your songs – or if you're me, you can't. I can't help it. I'm a very open person. I'm very honest in life and I'm very honest in my music, as well. I think I'm always going to write that way.

Who is the "girl" and who/what/where is she trying to get away from?

Actually, my brother (Rollo Armstrong) is the "girl who got away," and he wrote most of those lyrics.

There's some gender-bending going on there.

(Laughs) Definitely! I love that song ("Girl Who Got Away"). He sent me the lyrics and I just remember reading it thinking, "I love this song." It's about so many things: about how I used to feel, that sort of restless feeling, that feeling of maybe there's another life somewhere and that feeling of wanting to be exceptional but not quite reaching it. It's my favorite song. But then, as far as the title of the album, it's also about everyone reaching out to me (saying) that I keep disappearing, and it was quite a good comment on that. I don't think I was disappearing, but everyone else thought so.

Maybe because it's been five years since you released an album. What's your life like when you're away from music?

I'm never really away from music. I might be away from the public eye, but I'm never away from music. I'm always making it, I'm always writing it, I'm always playing it, and then obviously it builds up into an album and I put it out and I'm back in the public's consciousness. And then I'm out of it again.

I took a bit of time between albums two and three just because I realized I'd been on the road for nine years at that point and that it was probably time to go home and clean up the mess I left, and so I took a bit of time in making the third album. But actually, this record I put together quite quickly. Then in the middle I had a baby. You know, a small event. (Laughs)

How do you feel before an album drops?

Oh my god, I'm so excited. I've only put out three records in my life; this is only my fourth, and so this is still so fresh and exciting to me. It feels like the first time I ever put a record out. I'm really proud of this album. I feel like it's my best record. It was such a fun record to make. Me and brother just had such a brilliant time. I'm so lucky to have my brother as my producer. It's just a happy record for me.

What kind of place in your life were you at when you recorded the song "Let Us Move On"?

You know how we all go around saying life is short? I remember saying once, "Life is

actually really long, and not in a bad way but in a good way." When things are just really dark, when you look back on it, this will be such a small moment in your life. You know when something's so huge you can't get past it? Actually, it's not. It's just a very small part of a very big life.

Your debut, "No Angel," obviously had such a huge impact on your career, as did your featured spot on Eminem's "Stan." Did you worry about the possible repercussions of performing with one of the most controversial entertainers at the time?

I didn't, because when I met him he was so respectful to me and treated me so well. I saw integrity. I think he's one of the greatest storytellers around, and so no. As a real fan of his music, I have a lot of respect for him musically, and he treated me well. That, for me, was enough. I just really enjoyed working with him.

You had mentioned to Playboy once that people kept asking you about your feelings on the misogyny and homophobia in his music. Working with him, did you feel sucked into that controversy?

I didn't really feel sucked into it, to be quite honest. I'd heard that he was making a social commentary on things and I just thought he was a great storyteller and I didn't get too sucked into it. Isn't that, I guess, why he performed with Elton John at the Grammys?

Yeah, he was debunking the homophobia talk.

Yeah, exactly. I go on the person I see in front of me, and he was really not a misogynist to me at all. Quite the opposite. Just utterly respectful – and all the people around him were utterly respectful, as well.

Many of your songs have been featured on television and in film. For you, what's a standout scene that included one of your songs?

Being played during "127 Hours" was really cool. While I was watching it, I was wincing and listening to my song and thinking, "This is so wrong but so good." That was a thrill being nominated for an Oscar. A dream thrill. "Sliding Doors" was the first song I had in a movie, and that moment was most exciting for me because I had never heard myself used in a film before.

They used the same song, "Thank You," during the love scene with Ellen DeGeneres and Sharon Stone in "If These Walls Could Talk 2." Have you seen that?

Oh, totally!

What'd you think of your song being used during a lesbian sex scene?

That was really cool! There have been so many good uses. It's just been brilliant, and I've been really lucky.



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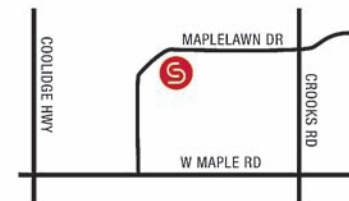
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Hear Me Out

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Drake Jensen, Plumb



Drake Jensen, 'OUTlaw'

Is the world ready for its first openly gay male country-music star? We might not know for sure with Drake Jensen's "OUTlaw" – and not because he's queer. The burly, full-bearded, Nova Scotia-born honky-tonker deals with well-worn genre platitudes – though, interestingly, never seems to embrace his "out" status on anything but the title – and has a couple of feathers in his cowboy cap. That's if you can get past his voice, first. Jensen lacks any distinct character in his butch Southern drawl, doing him no favors when he's letting loose on "Fast Enough for Me." Here, he sounds as unique as that one dude you saw at karaoke last week who received pity claps after his performance of a Garth Brooks song. Jensen just doesn't have the vocal capabilities – or even the charisma – to rise above country music's Tim McGraws and Keith Urbans, both of whom could sing circles around him (while riding a horse down a mountain). On "Crazy Beautiful," an expression of self-empowerment, Jensen barely enunciates all together, sounding about as bored with this cheesy Hallmark song as you'll be listening. "I Don't Want to Know" reaches a climax that never climaxes (again with the flat delivery), and "Midnight Forest Cricket Chorus" is almost passable, though there's no stomaching lines like "kiss and

hug, god bless those bugs." It's admirable for Jensen to be out in the country-music world when so few are, but "OUTlaw" would be better left in the closet. *Grade: C-*



Plumb, 'Need You Now'

You don't have to be a pulpit-kneeling Jesus zealot to worship Tiffany Lee's alt-rock knockout. Lee, who goes by the moniker Plumb, conceals the Christian themes with an almost-Evanescence-sounding surge of, well, heaven on her first album since 2007's "Blink." To her advantage, the Indiana native sings with a forceful diva belt; with a voice like that, she could recite psalms and please the most devout atheist. Title track "Need You Now" (not to be confused with Lady Antebellum's much-lesser drunken love song) starts with the big drum pops of Beyoncé's "Halo" but then takes the power ballad back to Plumb's rock roots. Even though she name-drops the Man Himself, the song's ambiguous enough to disguise this desperate prayer for divine intervention as a longing-for-love song. It helps, too, that she sings the hell out of it. The same ambiguity is present on "I

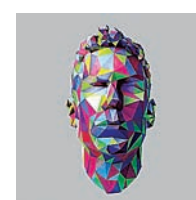
Want You Here" and "Say Your Name," both burdened by a tragic loss – the frustrations, the pain, all that screaming. Plumb's even more lyrically striking, and thematically engaging, during the close-to-home tragedy "Unlovable." Written from the perspective of a person who's been condemned for making other people feel "uncomfortable," the powerful piece was inspired by a friend whose family disowned him for being gay. Now about this being a "Christian" album ... *Grade: B+*

Also Out



Belinda Carlisle, 'ICON'

The best part about Belinda Carlisle's latest hits collection isn't the greatness of these nostalgic gems, but the significance of "Sun." The song is Carlisle's first pop single in 15 years, a club joint with a high-energy build and Kylie Minogue ethereality that honors the '80s singer's roots without losing touch of modern-day dance. It fits snugly into Carlisle's hit catalog – but, unless you've never experienced Belinda (and to you I say, WTF?), there's little else besides "Sun" that hasn't been covered on any of the icon's umpteen other compilations.



Jamie Lidell, 'Jamie Lidell'

English crooner Jamie Lidell is known for his soul-doused songs and a sexy falsetto that could easily fool folks into thinking he's Prince – the most obvious influence on his self-titled retro redux. Going back in time has him cozying up with some of the glittery and funky Scissor Sister sounds; "Do Yourself a Faver" could be a "Night Work" outtake. With its "The Pleasure Principle"-ish opening, "Big Love" launches like the best Janet Jackson single since the early '00s, but then morphs into something all its own with, perhaps, the album's hookiest chorus. Get your break-dancing shoes out.

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



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Affirmations' Event Manager Mark McMillan. BTL photo: Crystal Proxmire

Affirmations To Host 'Mission Possible' April 13

James Bond-Themed Benefit Makes Book Cadillac Debut

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Playing with the pop-culture theme of James Bond's 50th anniversary, Affirmations is preparing for their large annual black-tie affair, the Spring Bash. This year's theme is "Mission Possible" and their goal is to raise up to 10 percent of their general fund budget with ticket sales, auction items and other sponsorships.

The soirée takes place on Saturday, April 13 at the Westin Book Cadillac, 1114 Washington Blvd., in Detroit. Tickets are \$225 for General Admission and \$325 for VIP. VIP guests will have complimentary valet, a reception in the Italian Garden from 6-8 p.m. with a hosted bar and hors d'oeuvre and an exclusive performance by Matt Kysia. All guests are welcome to enjoy the Crystal Ballroom Reception and dinner in the Woodward Ballroom. As always, there will be a live auction and a silent auction and other Mission Possible-themed activities.

Mark McMillan is the event and

volunteer manager at the Ferndale-based LGBT community center. He and the rest of the 10-person planning committee are hard at work gathering items for the auction and silent auction. This year they are hoping to attract some big-ticket items, though they are also happy to have donations from local businesses of any size.

"We're really excited because we have been trying to have an event at the Book Cadillac for a long time. It's a very prestigious, historical building that used to be the tallest building in the city," McMillan said. The Italian Renaissance-style hotel was built in 1924 and recently restored to its original splendor.

This is the second year that the Spring Bash has been a black-tie affair, providing guests with an unprecedented

elegance for LGBT events in Michigan. "Last year we wanted to add to the prestige of our big annual fundraiser and

This is the second year that the Spring Bash has been a black-tie affair, providing guests with an unprecedented elegance for LGBT events in Michigan.

to have an event of this caliber for the LGBT community. We need a time to dress up and have fun, and to appreciate our donors."

It's also a great opportunity to be fashionable as elegant dresses and

suave tuxedos are the expected attire, though it does not matter which any particular guest selects.

Jeffrey Nelson of The Tux Shop on Woodward, one of the event sponsors, said that last year he was able to rent tuxedos for over 30 men – and women – who attended the Spring Bash. Those who rent from his shop get a 25-percent discount, plus an environment that is

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Leon & Lulu Marks 7th Year With Sweet Event April 7

Destination lifestyle store Leon & Lulu is celebrating its seventh birthday with cake for everyone, including diabetics. The Let Them Eat Cake Pro-Am Baking Extravaganza is a baking competition open to both home and professional chefs, which features delicious, visually appealing and diabetic-friendly desserts of all kinds. The April 7 event will benefit the American Diabetes Association. Three prizes will be awarded in both the amateur and professional category.

“Diabetes affects an estimated 25.8 million children and adults in the United States and we want to show people that diabetic-friendly food can be delicious,” said Mary Liz Curtin, co-owner of Leon & Lulu. “This is a fun way for bakers to compete for prizes and recognition, and for Leon & Lulu

to celebrate seven fantastic years in Clawson with our patrons, neighbors and one of our many, many favorite charitable partners,” said Curtin.

Leon & Lulu’s birthday party will include tastings of all desserts, entertainment and traditional roller rink fare served by the store’s famous skillful skating waiters. Diabetics get fast passes to the front of the line. Ten percent of the day’s sales and funds raised in a raffle will benefit the American Diabetes Association.

Leon & Lulu’s seventh birthday and Let Them Eat Cake contest is open to the public from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, April 7. Tastings will be offered throughout the event and winners will be announced at 4 p.m.

Desserts will be judged on three criteria, including taste, attractiveness

and diabetic friendliness. Participants in the Let Them Eat Cake Baking Pro-Am Extravaganza will be asked to serve 100 small tastings of his or her dessert, plus provide an additional full dessert for judging. Applications will be accepted through March 30, 2013, and must include a list of ingredients.

Located in the historic Ambassador Roller Rink in Clawson, Leon & Lulu offers 15,000-square feet of fabulous shopping, with a new 7,800-square feet expansion into the neighboring Old Clawson Theatre slated to open this spring. Locally owned and family run, Leon & Lulu prides itself in providing a fun, welcoming atmosphere, serving hot coffee, cookies and popcorn – often via roller skates – to visiting patrons.

Visit www.leonandlulu.com for more information and for entry details.

► Mission Possible

Continued from p. 27

welcoming and affirming.

“There’s a trust when people come here,” Nelson said. “They feel comfortable because they see us sponsoring events like this or the same-sex wedding expo.”

Nelson also explained that donating items and sponsoring events like the Spring Bash are rewarding in two ways. “Community involvement is important for a local business. Business reciprocation is noted, and I’m sharing in the growth of the organization.”

McMillan has worked at Affirmations

for the past year, after volunteering for the preceding two. For him, events like this mean more than just a good time. They are the means to supporting an organization that he values deeply.

“I’ve always had a relationship with Affirmations. I was a volunteer at the old building and it was instrumental in helping me get sober. My first recovery meetings were over there and I needed to be in an environment where I felt welcomed and safe,” he said.

“After I moved into the new building, I believed in their mission and the new environment. In 2009 I lost the retail job I had. I was working part time and I wanted to stay busy and to use my time to give back, so I volunteered in my free time.”

After working up to being a lead volunteer, McMillan went through the hiring process and was selected as event coordinator. “It’s the best job I’ve had,” he said. “I love doing something that is rewarding and helps so many people.”

He is particularly excited to work on the Spring Bash, especially with the Mission Possible theme. “Mission Possible is to continue to highlight the direction of the center. Everything we accomplish is possible, because of our donors. They’re like the secret agents behind the scenes, and this is our chance to debrief them on what they help Affirmations do.”

To find out more about Affirmations or to buy tickets online, visit www.goaffirmations.org.

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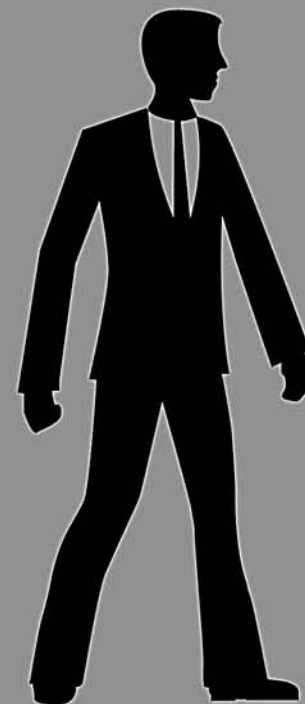
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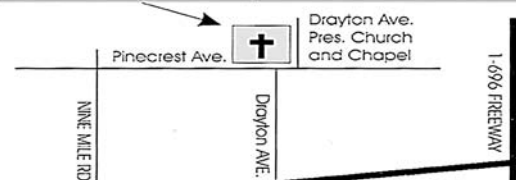
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The Wizardry Of 'Oz'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Somewhere over the rainbow exists fantastical fairies, diva witches and flying monkeys (oh my!), but friends of Dorothy will have to do without the optimistic dreamer and her dog. Neither follow Sam Raimi's yellow-brick road in this sort-of prequel, based on L. Frank Baum's iconic books, to the great landmark classic "The Wizard of Oz."

In Raimi's "Oz the Great and Powerful," perpetual gay-tease James Franco stars as the mischievous magician Oscar Diggs ("Oz" for short), a charming trickster who's as sly with the ladies as he is with the circus act he runs in Kansas. (His grandma story is priceless.) When folks start doubting his wizardry, the not-so-great illusionist flees. In comes the iconic hot air balloon; out goes Oscar – much like Dorothy – in a vehement tornado that eventually lands him in Oz.

The black-and-white Kansas (hey, this looks a lot like that other "Oz" movie) expands into a vibrantly lush and perfect CGI fantasy-world of a treasured childhood destination – not Pontiac, where this was filmed nearly two years ago (the cast shot at Raleigh Michigan Studios during the summer of 2011), but Oz, of course. It's there, after his balloon tumbles down a raging waterfall, that he's greeted by the stunning Theodora (Mila Kunis), a witch who guides him into the Emerald City because she believes he's come to fulfill a local prophecy of a great wizard who's dropped down from the heavens to defeat the witch and lead the

land's people to freedom. No pressure.

Oscar's journey brings him to her scheming sister, Evanora (Rachel Weisz), and the angelic beauty Glinda (Michelle Williams, who also appears pre-Oz as an old flame). Who's up to no good? The big reveal comes later in the movie,

The black-and-white Kansas (hey, this looks a lot like that other "Oz" movie) expands into a vibrantly lush and perfect CGI fantasy-world of a treasured childhood destination – not Pontiac, but Oz, of course.

after screenwriters Mitchell Kapner and David Lindsay-Abaire tease out who's the wickedest, wicked and not-at-all-wicked witch.

Just like Dorothy had her chummy sidekicks, Oscar's got his: Finley the flying monkey (voiced by Zach Braff, also playing Oscar's put-upon assistant during the intro) and China Doll (voiced by Joey King), a victim of the witch's wrath and her creepy baboon minions. (For the record, I adored these characters and am now in search of a talking monkey in a bellhop getup.) Oz now is their protector, a saintly figure who descended from the sky like a beacon of hope. In the mind of a practicing Catholic, or even a non-practicing one like myself, Oz could be Jesus. Got a broken leg? He'll heal you with his ... glue. Warding off witches? Don't worry. He's got you.

Oz, however, isn't a perfect man. And he knows this. So do the people around him. Glinda calls him "weak, selfish, slightly

egotistical and a fibber," but he at least aspires to a better version of himself.

Was Franco the right wizard for the job? Despite some of the harshest buzz – critics ripping on the actor for being not at all as great and powerful as we're led to believe – this "Wizard of Oz" loyalist was enamored with his delightful mystique and just about every sneaky smirk on Franco's face. The less-interesting witches don't do much with their roles except what's expected of them: be mean, be nice, be over-the-top crazy. This isn't "Wicked," people.

This is Raimi's world, and he's a kid in a candy store with regard to the special effects (because, as we've established, Pontiac's no Oz). In 3D, you're plummeting down a waterfall, riding alongside Glinda's bubble and coming face-to-face with river fairies. China Doll and especially the monkey (I want a monkey, dammit) move and act – and sometimes even look – like real people; it's incredible. The opening credits alone, with their depth-of-field submersion, are some of the best uses of the technology ever committed to film. I'm talking "Avatar" good. This is one movie that shouldn't be seen unless it's enveloping you.

Is "Oz the Great and Powerful" better than the 1939 classic that's kept our kid-selves alive after all these years? That's still inspiring new generations of kids? That's influenced Dorothy drag queens everywhere? It can't be. No version will ever be the great and gay "Wizard of Oz." But this one is a perfectly respectable tribute that loves the classic as much as we do.



"The Best of Go Comedy!" continues every Friday through March 29. Photo: Go Comedy!

Go's Look Back Moves Full Speed Ahead

BY CAROLYN HAYES

Go Comedy! Improv Theater has been slinging drinks and off-the-cuff improvised comedy for well over four years, but it has also been making continuous strides in scripted content. By its count, the company has mounted a staggering 42 original productions since late 2008, from sketch revues to one-act plays to fully realized musicals. Now, the fruits of these labors have been culled into a roaring retrospective, aptly titled "The Best of Go Comedy!"

Directed by artistic director Chris DiAngelo and starring a magic-number cast of six (Joey Dombrowski, Michelle Giorlando, Suzie Jacokes, Matt Naas, Jeremy St. Martin, and Alison Tomak), the show is energetically celebratory without being self-congratulatory. Pumped-up interstitial lighting and music cues do their part to invigorate the audience and performers, but the production correctly guesses that the theater's achievements will speak for themselves.

Nearly all of the content is cherry-picked from Go's vast sketch comedy oeuvre; although a fair number of other original productions are thus excluded, the choice is a wise one in terms of flow and function. The longer sketches and hiccup-quick blackout scenes draw

PREVIEW

The Best of Go Comedy!

Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 8 p.m. Friday through March 29. 80 minutes; no intermission. \$15. 248-327-0575.
www.gocomedy.net

their humor from precise word play, impeccable premises, self-mockery, and innovative use of pantomime. As dictated by years of stalwart holiday shows, a fair number of Christmas-y references wind their way through the production, but not enough to fully overtake the clean and crisp sketch machinery. In fact, if there's any informative theme in this assortment, it's the preponderance of Michigan-centric humor – be it euchre vehemence or an ode to Jobbie Nooner, it appears the most enduring and amusing material hits closest to home.

DiAngelo inserts his new team in these established scenes with a fine sense of both fit and equal distribution. He also hews decidedly close to the sketches' original staging and interpretations. In some cases, the performances primarily serve to showcase unimpeachably brilliant writing; in others, indomitably memorable characters are resurrected as a

sort of homage rather than taking on new life. Even with a baseline as consistently solid as this superb material, the show's high points of humor come when the performers make it their own, such as Jacokes's ever-ready outsized reactions and editorializing delivery. In a few cases, the players bring the same spark to work that they originated, such as a musical number rendered incongruously compelling by its composer (Naas).

Notably, the performance this reviewer attended was unique in that one cast member had fallen ill, his various roles filled by no less than three Go regulars with a few hours' notice. Yet not only did the substitutions go off with scarcely a hitch, the impromptu changes and challenges bested shone with the collaborative spirit of improvisation, the art upon which this company has built its empire. Instead of merely averting catastrophe, the show exposed the best of Go Comedy! in another way altogether.

During the course of the show, the players informally follow "The Best of Go Comedy!" with the ambitious appendix "Volume I." And indeed, that's what this quick look back feels like: not the final word on the theater's legacy, but a way station en route to the laughter and new bests to come.



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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, March 14

Free HIV Testing 5 p.m. Free, anonymous HIV testing is available at S3 Safe Sex Store every other Thursday until 9 p.m. Testing is performed by HARC staff. Call to schedule an appointment, but walk-ins are more than welcome. S3 Safe Sex Store and HIV/AIDS Resource Center, 1209 S. University, **Ann Arbor**. 734-741-1434. Info@bak-inc.com S3safesexstore.com

Support Group Forum 2013 6 p.m. An introduction to your community mental health support networks. Featuring short presentations from representatives of the tri-county area mental and behavioral health support groups. Community Mental Health Authority, 812 E. Jolly Road, **Lansing**. 517-346-8238. Hazle@CEICMH.org

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

Friday, March 15

Bisexual Peer Group 7 p.m. Our group meets monthly on the third Friday and discussion relates to bisexual identity. Building is handicap accessible using ramp to rear entrance. Bisexual Peer Group, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-678-2478. Biprideannarbor@gmail.com Facebook.com/groups/110918256984/

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: A Love to Keep; Teachers Pilar and Elvira fall in love during the final years of Francisco Franco's despotic reign, but their happiness is short-lived in this moving Spanish import. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. GoAffirmations.org

Saturday, March 16

Clinical Issues and Sexual Orientation Training Opportunity 8:30 a.m. Register to receive training on social development, legal and health issues, coming out, clinical considerations and more. This event is aimed toward social workers, addictions counselor, psychologists, school counselors, physicians and students. Register via e-mail. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Klatosch@GoAffirmations.org Www.GoAffirmations.org

Sunday, March 17

PFLAG Ann Arbor Meeting 2 p.m. Third Sunday of every month. Attendees may park in the back of St. Andrews Episcopal Church. Support group and monthly speaker at each meeting. PFLAG Ann Arbor, 306 N. Division St., **Ann Arbor**. President@PFLAGAA.org Pflagaa.org

PFLAG Tri-Cities Meeting 2 p.m. Midland, Bay City and Saginaw area PFLAG. Meets the third Sunday of every month. Offering support, education and advocacy for LGBT individuals and families with group and monthly speaker at each meeting. PFLAG Tri-Cities, 2525 Hemmeter Road, **Saginaw**. 989-941-1458. Pflag@pflag-mbs.org Pflag-mbs.org

Conversation Station 5 p.m. Discussion group with facilitator. LGBTQI (and allies) 35 and over - join GOAL each week for discussion, food and fun. Topic: If Life had a do-over button, what would you do over and how would you do it differently? Get Out And Live!, 714 S. Washington St., **Royal Oak**. 248-981-4227. MarciWilliams@yahoo.com GetOutAndLive.me

Tuesday, March 19

SWEAT 6 p.m. A weekly support/social group to encourage those of us who need to achieve wellness and or weight loss. The Network, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, **Grand Rapids**. 616-458-3511. Grlgibt.org/

PFLAG Family Reunion Detroit Chapter 7 p.m. PFLAG Family Reunion Detroit Chapter for People of Color meets the third Tuesday of every month. PFLAG Family Reunion Detroit Chapter, 7707 West Outer Dr., **Detroit**. 313-286-8572. Info@pflag-fr-detroit.org Pflag-fr-detroit.org

youth in a safe environment. Dedicated to Make a Change, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-657-1792. Gail@Dedicatedtomakeachange.com

Beloved Hearts 6:30 p.m. Grief Support Group for those who are grieving the death of a loved one Get Out And Live!, **Royal Oak**. 248-981-4227. MarciWilliams@yahoo.comorbillyray92@comcast.net GetOutAndLive.me

PL.U.S. Youth Group 9 p.m. For Middle and High school age youth who enjoy socializing with people their own age, going through the same issues as they. Meets



Editor's Pick

Perceptions and PFLAG Tri-Cities' Equality Chocolate Party returns this year to the Saginaw Castle Museum. Taste chocolate desserts, socialize and tour the beautiful museum while raising funds for the equality-focused programming of these non-profit community organizations.

Designed by William Martin Aiken, the Supervising Architect of the US Treasury, the museum was built in 1898 as a U.S. Post Office. Threatened by demolition in both the '30s and '70s, the Castle Museum was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Today it houses a variety of exhibits, nearly all with a Saginaw-related connection.

The Equality Chocolate Party begins at 5 p.m. March 16 at the Saginaw Castle Museum, 500 Federal Ave., Saginaw. Donations for PFLAG Tri-Cities and Perceptions will be collected at the door. For more info, go to www.PerceptionsSV.org or call 989-891-1429.

St Mary's Lesbian and Gay Outreach Ministry 7 p.m. Affirming ministry teaching LGBT Catholics to reconcile faith with orientation. Meets the third Tuesday of every month. St. Mary's Student Parish, 331 Thompson St., **Ann Arbor**. Thies@Umich.edu

Transgender Life Support 7 p.m. Offering support, education, resources and a social structure for Transgender individuals. Facilitated by Arlene Kish, Lorraine Brown, Jessica Manko, Tracy Hoover, Marty Howland and Colt F. McIssac. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Transgenderlifesupport.org

Wednesday, March 20

Senior Koffee Klatch 1 p.m. A lively, discussion and social group for LGBT adults over 45. Senior Koffee Klatch, 290 W. Road Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 586-573-9932. Www.GoAffirmations.org

Co-Gender Rap Discussion 6 p.m. Light refreshments and good fellowship between men and women, young and seasoned. Meets every third Wednesday of the month. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. GoAffirmations.org/

KGLRC Walk/Jog/Run Group 6 p.m. The Resource Center's Health and Wellness Committee group devoted to walking, jogging, and/or running. Everyone is welcome, regardless of physical ability and/or sexual orientation. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 4143 N. 10th St., **Kalamazoo**. KGLRC.org

Wild Wednesday 6 p.m. A group for youth ages 12-18 interested in hanging out with other kind and supportive

every Wednesday. 343 Atlas Ave. SE, **Grand Rapids**. 616-458-3511. Grlgibt.org/calendar/

Thursday, March 21

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

Livingston County PFLAG Meeting 7 p.m. Meets the third Thursday of every month. Livingston County PFLAG, 400 E. Grand River Ave., **Brighton**. 517-548-0839. LivingstonPFLAG@aol.com Facebook.com/pages/Livingston-County-PFLAG

Men's Film Group 7 p.m. Meets every Thursday at Affirmations. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. GoAffirmations.org

Polyamory Network 7:30 p.m. Open and inclusive community of people living polyamorously, people interested in polyamory and people of, friendly to and curious about polyamory. Welcomes diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity. Meets the third Thursday of every month. Polyamory Network, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. jimtoycenter.org

Friday, March 22

Youth Only HIV Testing 6 p.m. Free anonymous testing for individuals 21 and under. Available the second and fourth Friday of every month. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Www.GoAffirmations.org

Saturday, March 23

T.A.F.F.Y. 2 p.m. Transgender Allies, Families And Friends Youth Support Group. A new support group for Transgendered individuals, their allies, family, friends and young people. Talk about problems one might have, jobs, legal issue or any issue to know about or want help with. Son of a Witch Craftings, 3600 S. Dort Hwy STE 28, **Flint**. 810-336-5589. Taffy_group@yahoo.com Facebook.com/groups/511946272181648/

PURIM Party and Pot-Luck 5:15 p.m. Bring a box of pasta or can of nuts to shake as a grogger. They will be donated after to Yad Ezra. Costumes encouraged. There will be a costume contest and parade for the kids. Purim Spiel, singing, games and Purim Bingo. Megillah reading by See-My Enchilada. Congregation

MUSIC & MORE

Perceptions and PFLAG Tri-Cities' Equality Chocolate Party returns this year to the Saginaw Castle Museum. Taste chocolate desserts, socialize and tour the beautiful museum while raising funds for the equality-focused programming of these non-profit community organizations.

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Tchayah (Reconstructionist), 15000 W. 10 Mile Road, **Oak Park**. 248 542-0900. Tchayah@tchayah.org Tchayah.org

Peace Prom 2013 8 p.m. Jackson High School's Gay Straight Alliance, 801 S. Mechanic St., **Jackson**. PFLAG. Jackson2011@gmail.com

MUSIC & MORE

CLASSICAL

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Mozart Flute Quartet" Haydn Trio No. 1 in C Major, Villa-Lobos Assabio a Jato, Bach Selections from Suite No. 1 and Mozart Quartet for Flute, Violin, Viola and Cello. Tickets: \$15-+. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. March 19. 313-576-5111. DSO.org

Kerrytown Concert House "Yehonatan Berick and Pauline Martin" Berick and Martin perform an all Beethoven program consisting of two of his most famous sonatas; the "Kreutzer" and the "Spring". Tickets: \$5-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., **Ann Arbor**. 7:30 p.m. March 17. 734-763-4186. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Palmer Woods Association and Creative Arts Collective "Beethoven and Beyond with Berick-Martin Duo, Palmer Woods Music in Homes" Dynamic and dazzling, Israeli-born violinist Yehonatan Berick and pianist Pauline Martin will perform in an art-filled home; delicious food and wine included. Tickets: \$40. Enjoy jazz, classical and world music each month in historic homes in Palmer Woods. Address of concert provided with ticket purchase. Palmer Woods Music in Homes, Private Palmer Woods Residence, **Detroit**. 8 p.m. March 16. 313-891-2514.

CONCERTS

Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings "All Strings Considered" In great demand as a recitalist and chamber musician, harpist Naoko Yoshino is a frequent guest with the worlds top orchestras and festivals. Ms. Yoshino will make her debut performance with Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings in a concert of solo and combined works with DCWS string and wind musicians. Tickets: \$25 regular, \$22 senior, \$10 students (All tickets \$5 more at the door). Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church, 1340 W. Long Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills. 3 p.m. March 17. 248-559-2095. Detroitchamberwinds.org

Kerrytown Concert House "Naima Shamborquer" KCH welcomes this Detroit jazz heroine to its stage. Celebrate her KCH debut with a glass of cheer served at a cash bar provided by sponsor SEMJA. Tickets: \$5-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 15. 734-763-4186. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kerrytown Concert House "All About The Trio" Take a behind-the-scenes look at the foundations of jazz with the Ellen Rowe Trio. This month the trio will celebrate the life and music of the legendary pianist Dave Brubeck. Tickets: \$5-25. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 2 p.m. March 17. 734-763-4186. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Animal Collective" Tickets: \$25-45. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. 8 p.m. March 15. 248-399-2980. RoyalOakMusicTheatre.com

The Ark "Rocky Lawrence" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 18. 734-761-1800. TheArk.org

The Ark "Anais Mitchell" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 16. 734-761-1800. TheArk.com

THEATER

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

Almost, Maine! \$18-20. St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild of Cranbrook, 400 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills. Through March 23. 1-888-71-TICKETS. www.StDunstansTheatre.com

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof \$11-22. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin Ave., Ann Arbor. March 14 - 17. 734-971-2228. www.A2CT.org

Compulsion, or the House Behind \$10-15. Peppermint Creek Theatre Company at Miller Performing Arts Center, 6025 Curry Lane, Lansing. March 21 - 24. 517-372-0945. www.PeppermintCreek.org

Dreamgirls \$18-30. Park Players at North Rosedale Park Community House, 18445 Scarsdale, Detroit. March 15 - April 6. http://ParkPlayers.WordPress.com

Little Shop of Horrors \$19. Village Players, 34660 Woodward Ave., Birmingham. Through March 17. 248-644-2075. www.birminghamvillageplayers.com

My First Time \$10. Fancy Pants Theater at Studio 246, 246 N. Kalamazoo Mall, Kalamazoo. March 15 - 24. 269-599-6437.

Return Engagements \$15. The Players Guild of Dearborn, 21730 Madison, Dearborn. Through March 17. 313-561-TKTS. www.PlayersGuildOfDearborn.org

The 39 Steps \$8-14. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. March 14 - 24. 517-482-5700. www.Riverwalktheatre.com

The Kitchen Witches \$22-25. The Crowell, 129 E. Maumee St., Adrian. Through March 17. 517-264-SHOW. www.Crowell.org

The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley, Jr. \$7+. Kalamazoo Civic Youth Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Through March 14. 269-343-1313. www.

The Sound of Music \$15. Spotlight on Youth at The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. March 14 - 17. 734-394-5300. www.Canton-Mi.org/village theater

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY THEATER

Dead Man's Cell Phone \$8-14. Oakland University Theatre at Varner Studio Theatre, Varner Hall, Rochester. March 14 - 24. 248-370-2030. www.Oakland.edu/Theatreseason

Sweet Mercy \$13. Michigan State University Department of Theatre at Arena Theatre, located in the basement of the Auditorium Building, 542 Auditorium Rd., East Lansing. March 19 - 24. 800-WHARTON. www.whartoncenter.com

The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later \$5-10. Lansing Community College at Dart Auditorium, 500 N. Capitol Avenue, Lansing. Through March 23. 517-372-0945. http://www.lcc.edu/cma/events/

PROFESSIONAL

Action Sports News \$20; \$10 March 26 only. Planet Art Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. Through March 30. 313-365-4948. www.planetart.com

All The King's Women \$12-18. Detroit Ensemble Theatre at Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. Through March 24. 877-636-3320. www.DetroitEnsembleTheatre.org

Dare to Dream \$18-65. The Palace of Auburn Hills, 6 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills. March 14 - 17. 248-377-0100. www.Palacenet.com

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

Ella Mentry and the Case of the Missing Scientist \$10 adult, \$7 child. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. 1 p.m. March 23. 734-663-0696. www.PerformanceNetwork.org

End Days \$38-45. Jewish Ensemble Theatre at Aaron DeRoy Theatre on the campus of the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Through March 24. 248-788-2900. www.JETTheatre.org

Fertile Beach \$7-10. Crawlspace Eviction, Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. March 15 - 16. 269-599-7390. www.CrawlspaceTheatre.com

Good People \$27-41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through March 31. 734-663-0681. www.PerformanceNetwork.org

Hooray For Hollywood \$50-55. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. March 16 - March 16. 586-286-2222. www.MacombCenter.com

How The Other Half Loves \$18. Broadway Onstage, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Through March 23. 586-771-6333. www.BroadwayOnStage.com

Making Porn \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through March 18. www.TheRingwald.com

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

Momix: Botanica \$25-45. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 3 p.m. March 17. 800-WHARTON. www.WhartonCenter.com

Of Mice and Men \$42. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. March 22 - March 23. 800-WHARTON. www.WhartonCenter.com

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

Potted Potter: The Unauthorized Harry

Experience - A Parody by Dan and Jeff \$35-75. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Through March 17. 313-471-6611. www.olympiaentertainment.com

Shipwrecked! \$10-15. Wild Swan Theater at Towsley Auditorium at Morris Lawrence Building, 4800 E. Huron River Dr., Ann Arbor. March 14 - 16. 734-995-0530. www.WildSwanTheater.org

Shirley Valentine Previews March 21-24 & 28 (\$15-\$25). \$15-25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. March 21 - April 21. 517-655-SHOW. www.WilliamstonTheatre.org

The Book of Mormon \$49+. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. March 12 - 24. 313-872-1000. www.BroadwayinDetroit.com

The Constant Wife Previews March 20-22 (\$25-\$31). \$31-\$40. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. March 20 - April 14. 248-377-3300. www.mbtheatre.com

The Garden of Joy \$10-25. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. March 15 - 16. 800-WHARTON. www.WhartonCenter.com

The Weir Free; pay-what-you-can. The Abreact, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. March 15 - April 6. www.Theabreact.com

ART'N'AROUND

Ann Arbor Art Center "Ruth Gilmore Langs: The MOCEAN Paintings" 117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. March 8 - April 7. 734-994-8004. AnnArborArtCenter.org

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

Cranbrook Art Museum "Soo Sunny Park: Vapor Slide" 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Dec. 1 - March 17. 877-462-7262. CranbrookArtMuseum.org

Detroit Artists Market "2013 Annual Detroit Artists Market Scholarship and Exhibition Program" 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 1 - April 6. 313-832-8540. DetroitArtistsMarket.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Motor City Muse: Detroit Photographs, Then and Now" , 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1 - June 16. 313-833-7900. DIA.org

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

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Sight and Feeling: Photographs by Ansel Adams" 314 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Jan. 27 - May 19. 269-349-7775. Kglrc.org

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

Motown Museum "Girl Groups: The Grit, The Glamour, The Glory" 2648 W. Grand Blvd, Detroit. March 1 - April 30. 313-875-2264. MotownMuseum.org

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit "Voice of the City" 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 1 - March 31. 313-832-6622. MOCADetroit.org

Riverside Arts Center "Comics, Cartoons and Caricatures" 76 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti. March 1 - March 23. 734-483-7345. Riversidearts.org

The Gallery Project "First Contact" 215 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Feb. 14 - March 24. 734-997-7012. TheGalleryProject.com

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

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The University does not necessarily endorse speakers' views

Zach Wahls

On January 31, 2011, Wahls addressed the Iowa House Judiciary Committee on a proposed constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage in Iowa. His book, *My Two Moms*, describes the mundane impact of growing up in a household headed by two lesbians. Wahls continues to make an impact as an activist in the LGBT community!

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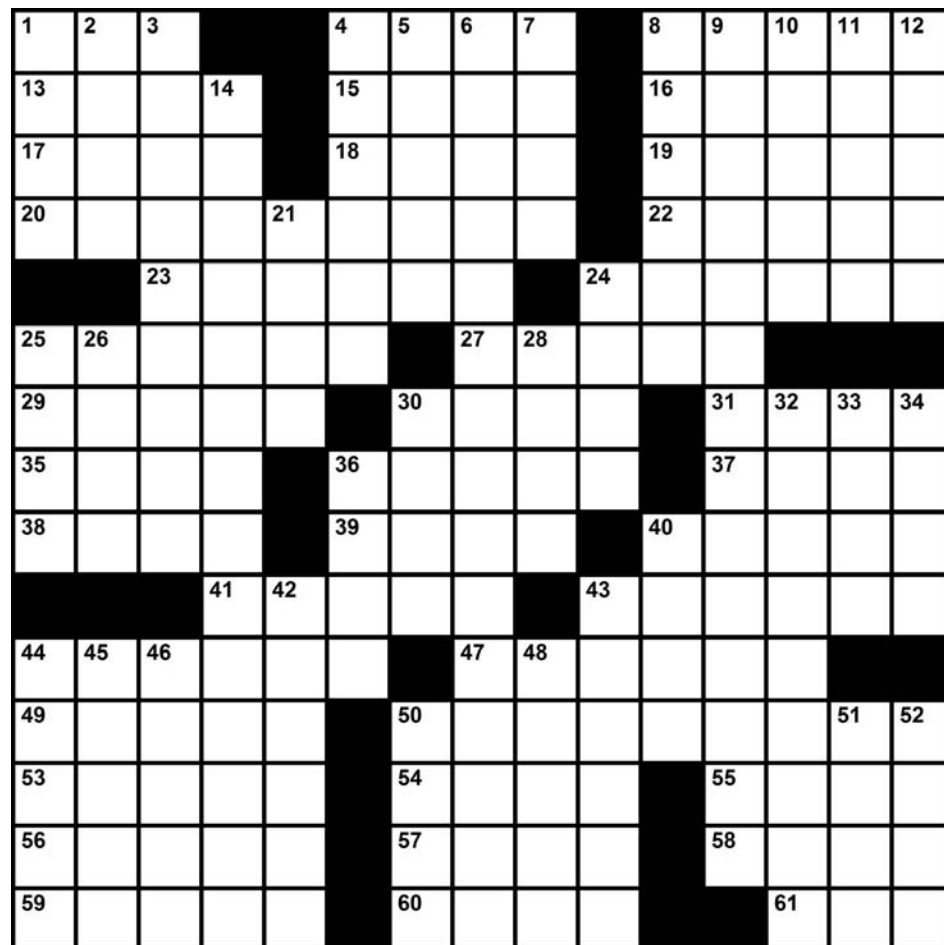
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Across

- 1 Package container?
- 4 Start of an online view
- 8 Addis ____, Ethiopia
- 13 Early AIDS play
- 15 Jordanian queen
- 16 Puts to sleep
- 17 Garr of "Tootsie"
- 18 Adjust the guitar strings
- 19 Charles, who could make you a man
- 20 76 in a Broadway musical
- 22 What the boastful blow
- 23 Flips
- 24 Emulates Dick Button
- 25 Threatening words
- 27 Adjust slightly
- 29 Sondheim's staff members
- 30 Daughters of Bilitis co-founder Phyllis
- 31 Supply-and-demand subj.
- 35 "Toodles"
- 36 Decimal dot
- 37 All het up
- 38 Shooting star, maybe
- 39 Right on a map
- 40 YMCA and others
- 41 Stage offering
- 43 Keen longing
- 44 Sport of Robbie Rogers
- 47 Stripped (of)
- 49 Face-to-face tests

- 50 Pitchout from a quarterback that swings both ways?
- 53 "Hollywood Squares" choice
- 54 Not much
- 55 Opera queen's delight
- 56 Druid, for one
- 57 Face defacer
- 58 "Sorry about that"
- 59 Stallion's sound
- 60 Swimmer you can eat
- 61 One of The Three Stooges

Down

- 1 Colleague of Anthony
- 2 Person with a PC
- 3 Ballet spin
- 4 Chant
- 5 Pudendum
- 6 Start of a quote about coming out by Robbie Rogers
- 7 Bauxite and borax
- 8 State of polar bears
- 9 More of the quote
- 10 Divvy up
- 11 "The Pink Panther" director Edwards
- 12 Boobs or butts
- 14 End of the quote
- 21 Porgy's lady
- 24 Really moved
- 25 Atop
- 26 Have itchy feet

- 28 "I ___ Grow Up"
- 30 Topsoil
- 32 Perry Mason milieu
- 33 Crystal balls, e.g.
- 34 Hatching place
- 36 Bartlett fruit
- 40 Guitarist Atkins
- 42 Take offense at
- 43 Bought and sold
- 44 "Desperate Housewives," and others
- 45 "Put roses on the piano and tulips on the ___"
- 46 Sailor's load
- 48 Writer Dykewomon
- 50 Meadow sounds
- 51 Food on the floor, maybe
- 52 Give the slip to

Solution on pg. 36

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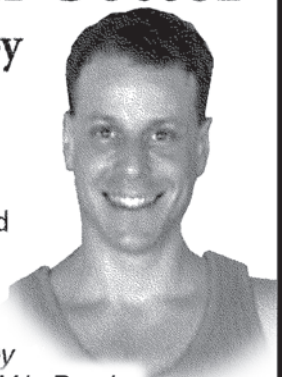
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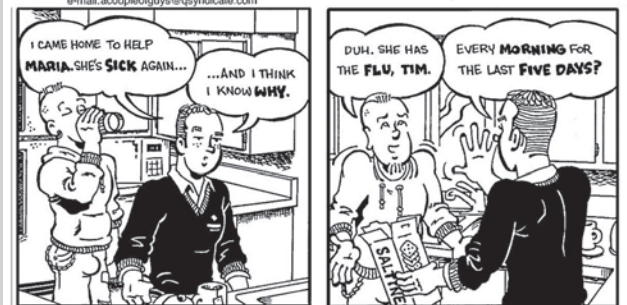
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Solution to puzzle from page 34

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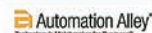
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Cocktail Chatter

The Bitter Orange

BY ED SIKOV

"What about 'The Burnt Orange?'" Dan was trying to be helpful, but I bit his head off. "That's the ugliest Crayola color ever!" I shouted. "Readers will think I'm either color blind or have no taste." "Well," Dan drawled, indicating his belief that two can play at whatever wretched mind game I was instigating. "Watch it!" I snapped. "You're inching perilously close to the edge of..." "Of what?" he demanded, getting in my face and throwing his shoulders back as though preparing for combat. "Of *this!*" I cried as I jabbed at his waist with my fingertips and began to tickle him mercilessly.

"Stop!" he begged, but I refused his order. Tickling Dan is one of my favorite pastimes, never so much as when I'm slightly irritated with him. He tried to pry my poking fingers away from his midsection, but I was in for the kill. Why was I so annoyed with him? He'd been perfectly pleasant all afternoon. He was heaving great, helpless breaths by this point, and he looked so totally beaten that I began to feel sorry for him and suddenly quit. "OK, I win," I said in a desultory manner and turned around toward the counter, where my drink ingredients were still standing. I immediately felt two forefingers plunging into my ribs and my knees getting suddenly weak. "No!" I yelled vainly. "I won. You can't do this. It's not fair." I was laughing in that desperate, mirthlessly tickled way. "All's fair in love and war," Dan said with a commanding edge to his voice. I was immediately turned on, went limp and fell back against him.

We resumed our cocktail naming contest

after about 20 minutes, by which point we were each wearing only our briefs, which we had picked up from the hall floor on the way back to the kitchen. I wasn't annoyed with him anymore, nor he with me. No sireee, not at all.

"What about 'The Bitter Orange?'" This was my make-nice suggestion, and it was genuine. After his winner-take-all performance in the sack, he'd earned my obedience.

"That's not bad," he acknowledged, nuzzling my neck from behind.

"OK, then. It's settled. We're dubbing this 'The Bitter Orange.'" I poured one for him and one for me, we clinked glasses, took our sips and finished off with a kiss.

"What," you are no doubt fuming, "is the frigging drink?" It's simple and easy and elegant, and if you go ahead and make a couple of them, you'll forgive my coy introduction.

It's an Aperol and Absolut cocktail I made up after realizing that I didn't want to spend my entire bottle of Aperol on "I Sorpassi," or "Above and Beyonds," the subject of my last column. The "Above and Beyond" is a marvelous drink, but sometimes one is in the mood for a less complex cocktail.

I reasoned that the addition of Aperol to a fine glass of Absolut would benefit both: the Absolut would be faintly flavored, and the Aperol would be fortified. Boy was I ever right! And the color is phenomenal! You can make this drink with Campari, too, with much the same result, only redder.

The Bitter Orange

3 parts Absolut premium vodka

1 part Aperol, an Italian bitter orange aperitif, or Campari, a similar Italian herbal concoction

Pour both ingredients into a glass filled with ice and stir. It doesn't get any easier

than this.


Ed Sikov is the author of the e-book, "The Boys' and Girls' Little Book of Alcohol," a novel with recipes based on his Cocktail Chatter column.



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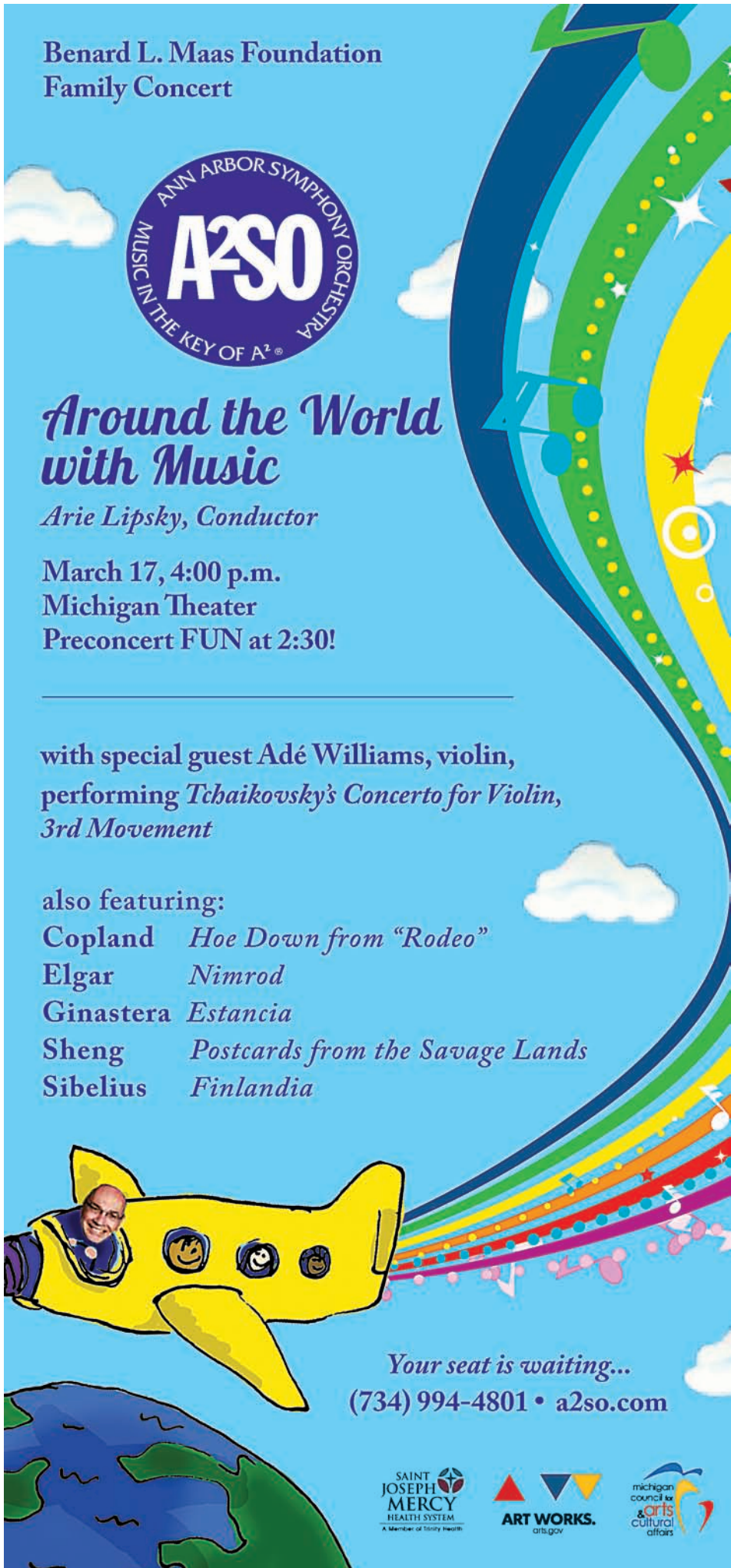
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