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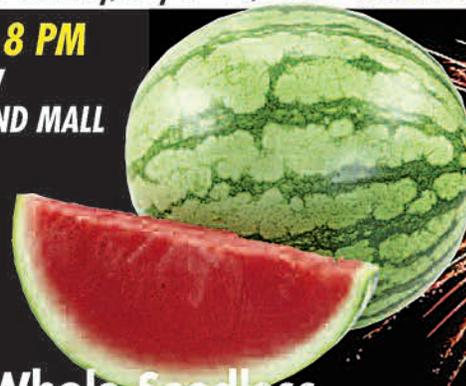
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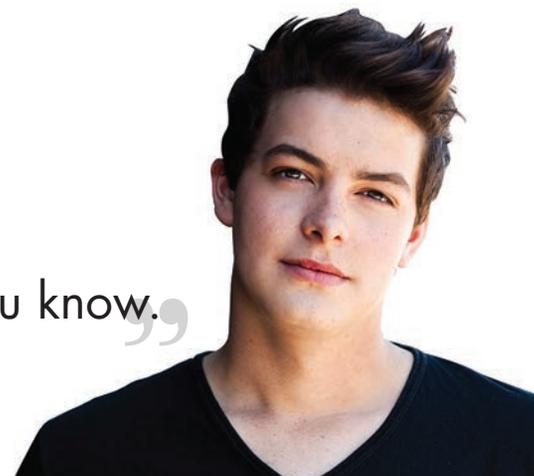
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BTL photo: Andrew Potter



“You don't have to have a **BIG COMING-OUT SCENE** in every movie with a gay character, you know.”

– Israel Broussard
of 'The Bling Ring,' pg. 18



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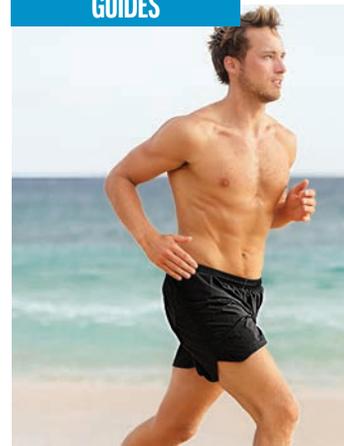
ONLINE EXCLUSIVE



In Focus: The Supreme Court's Opinion

Hours after BTL goes to print, the Supreme Court will announce its decision on both DOMA and Prop. 8. Head over to Pridesource.com this weekend for in-depth analysis of the court's decision and discussion of what's next for the LGBT movement.

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‘Test Me’ Digital Initiative Launches To Promote HIV Testing June 27

BY BTL STAFF

A group of LGBT and ally bloggers, activists and community leaders announced June 20 that they were launching a new digital initiative to encourage HIV testing in the U.S. The project is titled “Test Me,” and will encourage every American to be tested on June 27 and to share their experience on social media with the hashtag “TestMe.”

“AIDS can be over, in our lifetimes. But it’s only getting bigger now, and we need to change its trajectory: together and right now,” said Teddy Partridge who runs the PolicyBear.com website. “Be a part of this conversation over the next nine days, won’t you? Help us make this happen, please.”

“It is preposterous that for far too long our movement has neglected our responsibilities to lead by example and get tested,” said Gregory Varnum, development director at Equality Michigan and one of the testing initiative organizers. “The #TestMe initiative is a great example of a simple action LGBT and Ally leaders can take to show young people that we all need to know our status.”

Nationwide, the CDC estimates that 1.1 million Americans are infected with HIV, and 20 percent of those infected are unaware they harbor the virus.

The issue of particular concern in the LGBT and ally community because of recently released prevalence studies and predictions which show the current cohort of 20-year-old men who have sex with men has an overall prevalence of 10 percent, and the African American sub-cohort of 20-year-old men who have sex with men at 20 percent prevalence.

The prediction from the Office of National AIDS Policy is that at current transmission trends, in 30 years, half of all men who have sex with men will be infected with HIV, while 70 percent of all black men who have sex with men will be infected.

Additionally, a 2010 study found that one in five gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men in 21 U.S. cities was infected with HIV. Of those that were

See ‘Test Me’, page 9

Fresh From California: Ruth Ellis Welcomes New Executive Director

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

DETROIT - Excitement is in the air as Ruth Ellis Center announces the arrival of Jerry Peterson as the new executive director. Peterson comes with years of experience leading non-profit organizations, working with disadvantaged youth, and driving his passion influencing social systems to improve LGBTQ youth outcomes.

“When I learned about the position at the Ruth Ellis Center, I knew that I had to come to Detroit. I needed to serve these young people,” Peterson said. “Although I could have never anticipated it, all of the work I been doing for 30 years with non profit and LGBTQ-focused organizations was preparing me to work with the youth in Detroit and to break down barriers that are coming between them and their successful futures.”

Peterson most recently served as facilitator for the LGBTQ Youth Advocacy Collaborative in Concord, California. He managed an innovative collaboration with six nonprofits in Contra Costa County to reduce rejecting behaviors and increase accepting behaviors toward LGBTQ young people in families, schools, service providers and faith groups. The work took to heart the philosophies of Dr. Caitlin Ryan, who created the Family Acceptance Project to help families focus on how parental behaviors affect their children psychologically. (See BTL article on Dr. Ryan at <http://www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=57209>.)

“The emphasis is always on our families of choice. But we can do more to reach out to families. Sometimes you do need to be separated from family, but if we can help young people have some relationship with their family it can reduce harm, and reduce the feelings of rejection,” Peterson said. “It makes a difference. Most of these families really do love their kids and want to do what’s best for them. They try to protect them. They tell them: You can’t dress that way. You can’t be friends with those people. You can’t act that way, without realizing that lock-down attitude is harmful.”

“We use FAP materials and help them understand what behaviors cause harm to LGBTQ children and youth. Then we talk with family members about their willingness to stop some of those harmful behaviors. We have conversations that nurture the family. It’s more productive than passing judgment or saying ‘Your child is gay and you have to accept them.’ This helps them come around on their own terms, and helps them change the most harmful behaviors first.”



Peterson knows firsthand the struggles young people go through when they feel like they have to hide themselves. He also knows the additional struggles that families face in economically challenged areas, and places of racial and religious diversity.

Before moving to California, Peterson spent 14 years with the United Way of Allen County in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he served as its president and CEO for four years. In the 90s he was also a pastor there. “In Indiana I had direct connection to people who face many of the same challenges people in Detroit face. I worked on the south side of Fort Wayne, a place hit hard by the loss of manufacturing, fraught with redevelopment issues. I did work and training around white privilege, and tried to identify opportunities where young people could gain experience and develop positive identities.” In this position, he led the \$6 million, 30-person organization, nurtured community partnerships and launched a 10-year initiative to improve reading levels of children.

He’d never been to Detroit before, but felt drawn to the position by a desire to go where there is the most need. “I have an incredible amount of admiration for the strength people here have in spite of the challenges. Around the country, Detroit is known for its persevering spirit – that attitude of ‘we will make it work.’”

Ruth Ellis Center has a history of strong leadership as well. Peterson is carrying on work done by Laura Hughes, who was the executive director for three years, and Margaret Warner, who has been the interim

“I have an incredible amount of admiration for the strength people here have in spite of the challenges. Around the country, Detroit is known for its persevering spirit – that attitude of ‘we will make it work.’”

- Jerry Peterson

executive director for the past six months. The center’s reputation and array of services has been built up over the years by such strong leadership. Ruth Ellis now offers Ruth’s House, a full-time residential program that is a State of Michigan-licensed Child Caring Institution and Second Stories Drop-in Center, a facility that offers youth resources such as full meals, gender identity support groups, laundry facility and clothing, a cyber-center, and recreation, and Second Stories Outpatient Mental Health Services.

“It speaks to the strength of the Ruth Ellis Center that we were able to attract Jerry Peterson, an incredibly skilled leader in the LGBTQ community, to Detroit,” said Bill Greene, Ruth Ellis Center board chair. “Jerry’s nonprofit expertise, his experience collaborating with public and private entities, and his passion to change social systems to improve the outcomes of the youth we serve, make him a perfect fit for the Ruth Ellis Center. We are honored and thrilled to bring him to our organization and to Detroit.”

Joining Peterson in Detroit is his husband, Reverend Roland Stringfellow, who is well known in his own right as a worker for equality in the realm of religion. He works for the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA, and works with faith leaders in several states on a project to engage African American clergy in dialogue about becoming more affirming of LGBTQ folks in their ministries.

To learn more about Ruth Ellis Center, visit their website at www.ruthelliscenter.org.

See Related Story: It’s All In A Name: The Story of Emani Love, pg. 10

Local Agencies Seek LGBT Foster Parents

Security, Stability And Love Needed Most

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

While transitioning out of foster care is difficult for any young person regardless of sexual orientation, LGBTQ youth may face special difficulties and hardships.

This is according to the report “Economic Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth Transitioning out of Foster Care” released in January by the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The report, which resurfaced during Foster Care Awareness Month in May, compared LGB youth to their heterosexual peers who have aged out of the foster care system. (The report did not address transgender youth.) While the study found many similarities between the two groups, including high rates of pregnancy and temporary homelessness, there were also significant differences. LGB youth earned a lower hourly wage, were more likely to receive Supplemental Security Income and food stamps, and had more trouble paying their rent.

LGB youth were also significantly less likely to be “food secure.” Food insecurity is when an individual doesn’t have enough money to buy food, frequently skips meals, or relies on handouts to receive adequate nutrition.

“We are not unfamiliar with these findings. We know it happens and it is a really important issue,” said Margaret Warner, interim director for the Ruth Ellis Center where long and short-term safe space and support services are provided for runaway, homeless and at-risk LGBTQ youth in Detroit and Southeastern Michigan.

“Moving a lot and not having a place that feels like home is traumatic for kids. They’re changing schools, living with strangers, and some of those people are not good substitute parents,” said Warner. “I realize the tremendous problems, specifically within the school systems. It is a huge challenge to keep these youth connected with a school. After being placed in multiple foster homes, many LGBTQ kids develop serious emotional and behavioral issues. Schools don’t really understand and are not accepting of what these kids deal with when facing their problems.”

As a result, students feel threatened, and they are less likely to perform well in class or even attend class at all. Nearly one in every three LGBT students has skipped class or an

entire school day due to feeling unsafe. LGBT youth have higher rates of mental-health issues and substance abuse than their heterosexual peers because of discrimination and societal stigma.

Earlier this month, the Student Non-Discrimination Act was reintroduced in the House of Representatives. If passed, the law would ensure that public elementary and secondary schools would be held accountable for prohibiting discrimination against students on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Specifically, students who are bullied would be able to seek legal recourse, and the federal government could pull funding from public schools condoning this harassment.

The report continues to state that LGB youth are four times more likely to attempt suicide than their straight peers. Furthermore, each

other private child-placing and mental health agencies have been developing strategic plans and setting goals for the foster care community to meet the needs of youth who identify as LGBTQ in foster care.

A solution, according to Warner, is for private agencies to push harder to recruit LGBTQ-friendly families, and to focus their outreach on finding parents who are willing and ready to make children their priority.

“How fortunate most of us are to have families that encourage and accept us,” she said. “Organizations need to step up and help so our LGBTQ youth can experience the same.”

Spaulding for Children in Southfield is a private, non-profit foster care agency established in 1968 that recruits and licenses foster parents to care for abused and neglected

color of your skin, whether you’re short or large. If you can do a good job with another human being, everything else is irrelevant. All you have to be is ready and have the child’s best interest at heart.”

In collaboration with Affirmations in Ferndale, the agency previously held a fundraiser to collect new or gently used backpacks, duffel bags and suitcases to help foster children when they need to move, rather than having to stuff their belongings into plastic bags. “It was a terrific weekend. Around 150 pieces of luggage were donated. The gay community really pulled together. There is an amazing openness and willingness to support local agencies,” she said.

For prospective adoptive parents, Peixoto suggests talking to other folks who have adopted or fostered kids. “Parenting a child in the system is more difficult. There are so many other parties involved and there is less control over the outcome of what’s occurring there. Attend an orientation with the agency and visit with a support group or go to a training session. They can be invaluable.”

More importantly, Peixoto believes anyone interested in adopting should become a foster parent first. “Learn the ins and outs of the system. Learn the challenges. You may have the opportunity to meet the child’s birth parents, which will give you so much more information to help fill in some of the blanks. The fact that these kids are not growing up with their parents creates lots of fantasy in their mind and questions. They may want help identifying themselves. If they are traumatized by abuse or neglect, that is an additional challenge, so parents need a good understanding of trauma and discipline. Fostering will get your feet wet and give you a much better chance to succeed when adopting. We all want to make a positive impact. Exposure to a child in foster care will give prospective adoptive families an opportunity to do that.”

For more information, visit Michigan.gov and click on the Department of Health and Human Services, or call 855-MICHKIDS.

“*I don’t care about the color of your skin, whether you’re short or large. If you can do a good job with another human being, everything else is irrelevant. All you have to be is ready and have the child’s best interest at heart.*”

Cristina Peixoto, vice president of child and family services, Spaulding for Children in Southfield

episode of victimization such as harassment or assault increases the likelihood of self-harming behavior by an average of two and a half times. Youth subsequently attempt to cope with stress and discrimination through self-medication by way of tobacco, drug, and alcohol use.

LGBT youth are significantly over-represented in the juvenile justice system. Approximately 300,000 young LGBT people are arrested or detained each year. Though they represent five to seven percent of the overall youth population, they comprise 13 to 15 percent of those currently in the juvenile justice system.

“Without social skills or academics, they can’t find a job or become independent. We have served kids in the juvenile justice system. When coming to terms with their sexual orientation and also for income purposes, some have turned to sex work as a means to provide for their financial needs,” said Warner. “Achieving self-sufficiency as they transition to adulthood is often difficult without intervention.”

Professionals from the Ruth Ellis Center, DHS, Detroit-Wayne County CMH and

children who have been placed in the Child Welfare system.

“In my 20-some years with Spaulding, I think I’ve only worked with one youth that we know for sure is gay. At the age of 12, 13, and 14, many youth are not very clear and are still exploring their sexual orientation. But regardless of how the youth identify, that does not stop us from reaching out to the LGBT community to recruit families who want to foster a child regardless of their sexual orientation. We are simply looking for good people that can parent and provide a good home,” said Cristina Peixoto, vice president of child and family services. “The gay community is very understanding of our needs and what we are trying to accomplish. What I find most pleasing about our outreach effort is that people in the gay community try to find a way to be a part of the work we do in different ways whether they can parent or not.”

In the last couple of years, Spaulding has placed children for adoption with three couples that are gay or lesbian. According to Peixoto, the children are succeeding with no major problems to report. “I don’t care about the

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Survey: Quarter of San Francisco’s Homeless Identify As Gay

States Fight Discrimination Toward Gay Foster Kids

Student Wins Free-speech Lawsuit Against Teacher

BY COREY WILLIAMS

DETROIT (AP) – A Michigan teacher who kicked a student out of class after the teen made a comment against homosexuality during a high school anti-bullying day was ordered to pay \$1 for violating his free speech rights.

Daniel Glowacki told economics teacher Johnson “Jay” McDowell during the Oct. 20, 2010, anti-bullying observation at Howell High School that “his religion does not accept homosexuality and that he could not condone that behavior,” according to a lawsuit filed on behalf of Glowacki in federal court in Detroit.

The student and his family are Catholic.

Glowacki’s statement followed a question from McDowell on whether the student “supported” or “accepted gays.”

The lawsuit states that Glowacki was ordered to leave the classroom or face suspension.

Federal Judge Patrick Duggan ruled Wednesday that Glowacki’s comment was protected by the First Amendment.

McDowell was reprimanded by the Howell district, northwest of Detroit. Glowacki graduated in 2012.

“This had nothing to do with Mr. Glowacki’s religious beliefs,” McDowell’s attorney, Suzanne Bartos, told The Associated Press on Thursday. “(McDowell) did not believe Mr. Glowacki’s comments were appropriate and believed them to be against the school’s anti-bullying policy. Mr. McDowell was acting in a responsible fashion, trying to protect other students in the classroom from the bullying.”

Glowacki missed 20 minutes of class, Bartos added.

The Ann Arbor-based Thomas More Law Center, which filed the lawsuit in December 2012 against the teacher and district, said in a statement that McDowell claimed Glowacki caused a disturbance in class.

“The teacher’s claims were wholly unsupported by all of the other evidence in the case, including affidavits of students in the classroom and the teacher’s own earlier statements,” the law center said. “The teacher also tried to argue that Daniel’s religious statement was tantamount to bullying. The court dismissed that claim as well, holding that Daniel’s speech could not be silenced because the teacher did not like Daniel’s religious beliefs and viewpoint.”

The court dismissed claims against Howell Schools.

“The purpose of our lawsuit was to protect students’ constitutional rights to free speech, defend religious liberty and stop public schools from becoming indoctrination centers for the homosexual agenda,” said Richard Thompson, Thomas More’s president and chief counsel.

Republican Moves To Amend Elliott Larsen: Petoskey’s Frank Foster On LGBT Equality

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Rep. Frank Foster (R-Petoskey) is among a group of Republican legislators open to the idea of including protections for LGBT people in the state’s non-discrimination law, known as Elliott Larsen. Currently people in Michigan can be fired or denied housing because they are gay or perceived to be gay. Currently the law does protect people from discrimination based on age, race, religion, national origin, sex, weight, height, familial or marital status. A growing number of Republicans have come out in favor of equal rights for LGBT citizens and Republican legislators are taking notice.

In May, BTL reported www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=60351 on the growing number of LGBT Republicans and conservatives who support equality for the LGBT community. Polling showed, among other things, that 59.5 percent of Republicans said it should be illegal to fire someone or deny someone housing because they are gay. LGBT Republican groups have been growing. And when National Republican Committeeman from Michigan Dave Agema, posted anti-gay propaganda on his Facebook page, conservatives spoke out against him.

On June 13, State House Speaker Jase Bolger told WKAR-TV’s “Off the Record” that, “We ought to respect somebody if they’re gay. We shouldn’t discriminate against people. On the same point, we ought to respect people who have deeply held religious beliefs, and we shouldn’t discriminate against them. And we shouldn’t force them to violate their deeply held religious belief.” The statement raised eyebrows among some Republicans, but Foster is taking the sentiment even further.

Foster released the following statement to the media in response to questions about the possibility of amending Elliott Larson Civil Rights Act. “There’s been a lot of talk lately about LGBT legislation, but hate and discrimination aren’t just gay or lesbian issues; they are human rights issues. What I’ve heard from people is that probably nine out of 10 Michiganders believe this is already protected, when in fact it’s not under Michigan law. The response to adding a protection like this has been overwhelmingly positive so far, so we are taking a close look at how best to proceed. We’re not at the point where we’re ready to talk specific legislation or timelines, but it’s important to keep having these conversations with people back home and among our colleagues.”

No amendment has been introduced this



Rep. Frank Foster (R-Petoskey)

“It’s difficult to look at issues such as employment and housing as anything less than a basic civil rights issue.”

legislative cycle, but in the past it has been championed by Democrats and ignored by those across the aisle. Foster believes it is an idea whose time has come.

He spoke with BTL this week:

What kind of reaction have you gotten from the public about coming out in support of amending Elliott Larsen?

I think the reaction has been very positive. There has actually been a bit of surprise that this isn’t something that’s already protected here in Michigan, so there’s been a bit of an educational process involved in the early discussions on this issue. Even before we looked at any public polling, I felt like the support for an initiative like this was strong, and the numbers I’ve seen since then only seem to confirm that.

Why should Republicans support equality and protections for LGBT people?

Regardless of your personal or religious beliefs on issues such as gay marriage, it’s difficult to look at issues such as employment and housing as anything less than a basic civil rights issue. It’s time for us as a national community to raise the standard when we’re discussing equality and opportunity in this country, and this can be the obvious next step.

How did you become interested in this topic?

I ran for office because I thought we could do a better job as a state at supporting a healthy economy and getting people back to work and making a decent wage. When we’re talking about basic protections, however, I think it’s something that is easy to be interested in and certainly worth talking about.

Have you been working with the ACLU, Equality Michigan or other groups on this, and if so how?

I’ve had the opportunity to have some initial conversations with a few different groups,

and I look forward to continuing the positive working relationship we’ve started together. This is truly going to be a collaborative and bipartisan effort.

Have you gotten any flak from other Republicans on this, and if so what is your response?

Any issue that has the potential to touch on religious beliefs or personal values is going to raise some red flags. The goal is to educate people so they understand what we’re looking to accomplish, and then hope they re-evaluate their concern. Education and time are allies on this issue, and I think it’s possible we could see a lot of people get to ‘yes’ at the end of the day that maybe you wouldn’t have expected to when this started.

Do you have any personal connection with anyone in the LGBT community, such as someone you know being gay, or speaking with gay constituents?

Regardless of the community you live in, hate is going to exist, and even if it doesn’t affect you directly, it’s there and it’s hurting somebody. That’s a point worth making - there is probably someone every person in this state cares for that is affected by this issue, and it needs to be looked at from that perspective.

What is your response to those who say that recognizing the rights of LGBT people violates the religious rights of some?

I appreciate and respect the opinion of everyone involved in this issue, and I understand that there is going to be a diverse range of opinions. I simply don’t believe that basic civil rights should ever be ignored for any reason.

Do you plan on introducing or being part of introducing legislation to amend Elliott Larsen?

I’m certainly interested in being a part of the process. This is an important issue that affects people all across our state, so I look forward to having a role in whatever way I can help make a positive impact.

Anything else you think BTL readers should know?

Thank you for the opportunity to talk about this.



Emily Dievendorf of Equality Michigan is joined by State Representatives Sam Singh (D-East Lansing), Rudy Hobbs (D-Southfield), Jeff Irwin (D-Ann Arbor), Kate Segal (D-Battle Creek), community organizers Penny Gardner and Sandi Smith along with other community leaders June 24 to announce the introduction of a legislative package to legalize marriage equality in Michigan.

MI Lawmakers To Introduce Marriage Equality Bills

LANSING – State Representatives Sam Singh (D-East Lansing), Rudy Hobbs (D-Southfield), Jeff Irwin (D-Ann Arbor), and Kate Segal (D-Battle Creek) announced the upcoming introduction of a legislative package to legalize marriage equality in Michigan June 24. Their announcement comes before the United States Supreme Court is due to release their ruling early this week on Proposal 8 and the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), two cases dealing with marriage equality.

“The Democratic leaders who will introduce these marriage equality bills recognize the importance of Michigan standing on the right side of history in regards to the rights of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender citizens,” said Emily Dievendorf, managing director of Equality Michigan, who participated in the announcement. “Michigan’s voters will no longer tolerate second-class treatment of LGBT families. Enough is enough, and Representatives Singh, Hobbs, Irwin, and Segal deserve credit for helping lead the charge.”

“My colleagues and I believe that Michigan cannot wait any longer to recognize marriage equality and allow all people the equal rights and benefits that married couples currently enjoy,” said Singh.

“It’s time for Michigan to stop discriminating against the thousands of couples who want to marry and enjoy the same recognition and benefits for themselves and their children that come with marriage, and that my wife, Kathryn, and our kids enjoy,” said Irwin. “The legislation that we propose today represents the next step in the fight to ensure all citizens are equal in Michigan.”

The first piece in the legislative package

is a house joint resolution that would amend Michigan’s constitution to allow marriage equality. Same-sex marriage was banned in Michigan in 2004. The second bill amends the foreign marriage act by removing the prohibition against same-sex marriage allowing marriages solemnized in other states to be recognized in Michigan, while the third bill amends Michigan’s marriage laws authorizing who may marry. The final piece is a resolution calling on the U.S. Congress to repeal DOMA and respect equality for all U.S. citizens.

“Recent polls have shown that the tide is shifting and a majority of citizens support marriage equality. With or without those polls, supporting the love of our brothers, sisters, friends, and their partners in this fight for inclusiveness is the right move for Michigan and the right thing to do,” said Hobbs.

“Marriage is about protecting our families,” said Segal. “All children deserve security and stability at home, and all couples who are in a loving and committed relationship deserve the same legal protections that my husband and I enjoy. Marriage equality is a step forward that will have an incredibly positive impact on countless Michigan children and strengthen all of our families.”

“There is clear momentum across the country on this issue. Michigan cannot afford to lag behind as other states open their doors to all families. We need to attract the best and the brightest, and that means welcoming everyone. It is hard to encourage talented people and their families to move and work in Michigan when they’re denied the ability to take care of each other,” said Singh.

See more at www.equalitymi.org

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Ferndale Mayor's Reelection May Be Challenged

Mayor Dave Coulter May Face Craig Covey, Sherry Wells In November Race

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

FERNDALE - When City of Ferndale Mayor Dave Coulter heard he may not be the only one running for re-election this year, it didn't faze him.

"I'll campaign the same no matter who else runs," said Mayor Coulter, who was appointed mayor in Jan. 2011 after former mayor Craig Covey was elected to represent the 25th District on the Oakland County Commission, a seat Coulter had for four terms. Coulter won the Nov. mayoral election with nearly 85 percent of the vote.

The city's filing deadline for the primary election is not until Aug. 13, according to the Oakland County Clerk's Office, so there is still time for potential candidates to decide. Covey, another Democrat who was Ferndale's mayor from 2007-2011 after being on the city council for nine years, said recently that he is considering running again.

"I'm talking with residents and business owners, and will spend the next several weeks talking to them to find out what they think," said Covey, who lost re-election as Oakland County Commissioner in 2012. He was the first openly gay mayor in the state of Michigan. "Whenever I am at the grocery store or CVS or a restaurant, people come up to me and ask me to run again and get back on council. I plan on talking to many more folks about a run before a final decision in mid-July."

Covey works full-time for the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner, Jim Nash, where he set up a new not-for-profit called Pure Oakland Water.

"I talked briefly with Dave in February, and he said he was going to run again for mayor, and he encouraged me to run for a city council spot. I want to talk with him more, and many others, about how the city is doing and how I might best help. Dave is a good guy, and we have worked together for many years. We have similar backgrounds and viewpoints. If we compete in an election, it would be about specific issues and styles and methods."

Covey has several reasons for wanting to run again. "At 56 years old, I am grayer and mellow, but hopefully wiser and more mature. There is some feeling of discontent out there among residents about a number of issues, including a sense of a growing bureaucracy, a return to high city spending, and of course, the new parking system downtown. I think we have to be more sensitive to the economic pressures that many residents, both young and old, are dealing with. Ferndale has among the highest taxes in the region, and we must be more conservative with spending



BTL file photo of Craig Covey and Dave Coulter in January 2011 when they switched jobs. Coulter became Mayor of Ferndale and Covey went on to serve as an Oakland County Commissioner.

“I'm happy for all the support I've received, including from everyone on City Council. I've worked hard to be a mayor that brings people together and works on issues in a way that gives everyone a voice. And of course the LGBT community has played a major role not only in the success of Ferndale but in my own personal success, and I just hope I've made them proud.”

- Ferndale Mayor Dave Coulter

other people's money on high staff salaries, consultants, expensive and complicated parking systems, etc.," he said.

As far as Mayor Coulter is concerned, this is just not reality. "Yes, when I became mayor we faced a deficit of over a million dollars, and we had police and firefighters working without a contract. But today we have a balanced budget for the next two years, thanks to the new budgeting plan I requested. We have a healthy fund balance, or rainy day fund, and our credit rating is excellent. We've cut almost a million dollars in the last year alone. We have employee contracts in place early for the first time in decades. The economy is still a huge challenge, but under this council we're now on solid ground and in better financial shape than most cities. There won't be an emergency financial manager in Ferndale any time soon, I can tell you that," he said.

In moving forward, Mayor Coulter wants to continue to attract jobs by attracting and growing businesses in Ferndale. "That's why I created the Mayor's Business Council, and

it's already starting to produce results. We saw more than \$35 million in non-residential investment last year, and the vacancy rate in our industrial area has been cut in half since I've been mayor. That's also important because the more these businesses grow and pay taxes, the less the tax burden will be on residents," he said.

Pulling in residents and encouraging citizen involvement is important to Sherry Wells also. The lawyer, publisher, author, public speaker, and Ferndale volunteer is in the process of circulating nomination petitions. Wells assumed Mayor Coulter was going to run for State Senate again in 2014, so she became interested in running for mayor this year.

"Because I ran in 2010, a lot of people assumed I would run for the open House seat in 2014," said Coulter. "Many of them encouraged me and offered their support, which I greatly appreciate. And if I thought that's where I could make the biggest impact I may have done it. But the difference now is I'm the mayor, a job I love and where I feel

like I'm making a real difference to improve the city. In the end it was an easy decision."

By the time he made his decision, Wells already made hers. "If it's between he and I, there is no lesser of two evils. Ferndale is blessed," said Wells, a 23-year resident of Ferndale who was elected to the city's Charter Revision Commission in the '90s and was the commission's chair for two of its three-year existence. "I know he really enjoys what he is doing and that is good to hear. He is doing a fine job, but I believe I can do better," she said. As a self-employed individual, Wells said she is more flexible.

"Being mayor is not just an evenings and weekend job. I am able to spend more time listening, clarifying, and exploring possible solutions," she said.

Gay Non-Issue

Some attention has been paid to the fact that both Mayor Coulter and Covey are gay, and question whether this is a set-back or progress for Ferndale and the LGBT community. But Greg Pawlica, a candidate that is running for a council seat in November, said the current issues that face Ferndale have nothing to do with sexual orientation.

"Personally, I don't understand why this is an issue at all," he said.

Pawlica has had a much longer friendship with Covey, but has made the choice to endorse Mayor Coulter. "I will not be changing my support of Dave regardless of any candidate that decides to run for Mayor. I believe that Dave has done a great job since taking office. I am supporting Dave because he has the skills, experience, and knowledge to help get us through this economic recession and continue Ferndale on our path of progress. Craig and I have a lot of political history together, but it never outweighs our personal friendship with one another," he said.

"The gay issue is a non-issue in Ferndale, and I'm proud of that. I just want to make sure Ferndale stays a popular, livable, affordable town that is cutting edge and efficient, while still being friendly and middle-class," said Covey.

"I'm happy for all the support I've received, including from everyone on City Council. I've worked hard to be a mayor that brings people together and works on issues in a way that gives everyone a voice," said Mayor Coulter. "And of course the LGBT community has played a major role not only in the success of Ferndale but in my own personal success, and I just hope I've made them proud."

► 'Test Me'

Continued from p. 4

infected, 44 percent were unaware they were living with HIV.

A National Institutes of Health funded study has found that a person who is infected with HIV, but unaware of their infection, is 3.5 times more likely to transmit that infection.

"As part of a generation raised well after the HIV/AIDS crisis, I know that it's easy to get the false impression that the LGBT community is past that time in our history," said Adam Polaski, a NYC based writer and activist. "I'd like to see more organizations and media outlets prioritizing stories about HIV/AIDS and getting the facts out - one small part of that, maybe the first step toward this renewed community consciousness, is the #testme plan as part of National HIV Testing Day."

"HIV has never gone away, yet a whole generation - gay, bi and straight - is unaware of the consequences of infection," Lisa Derrick, a blogger with Firedoglake and the Huffington Post. "By participating in June 27th #TestMe National HIV Testing Day everyone, regardless of age or identification, can take the first step to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic. And in areas where HIV testing can carry a stigma, churches, labor unions and community groups getting tested can remove the stigma. Plus, let's face it HIV can affect

anyone--young, old, gay, straight or bi."

"I'm 21," says Eyad "Eddie" Alkurabi. "My generation should care about our health. Simple. Conversations about safer sex saves lives."

"#TestMe is something everyone should ask their partner to do for each other. Knowledge

is power," says Seth Kaye, a Washington DC based activist.

The movement grew out of a conversation held during the Netroots Connect LGBT pre-convention. The event, now in its fifth year brings leading LGBT and Ally bloggers, journalists, activists and leaders of LGBT organizations together to discuss issues related to the community. In previous years, the event has given birth to other organizing movements like Scouts for Equality.

"The most important part of Netroots Nation Connect is the collaborations that develop at the event," says Mike Rogers, director of the program as well as managing director of RawStory.com. "The TestMe Hashtag project continues the year tradition of frontline leaders gathering and creating change throughout the

country. I am particularly proud of this year's collaboration."

"We stand at a unique time in the history of the HIV epidemic," said Howard Dean, the former governor of Vermont and founder of Democracy for America. "We have the ability to stop the spread of this virus in its tracks, but

they are infected," said Rea Carey, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "On National HIV Testing Day we encourage everyone to help raise awareness by spreading the word with #testme and getting tested yourself."

Dean is not the only high profile individual who is supporting the initiative. Zach Wahls, an author and advocate for the LGBT community; as well as former Republican presidential candidate and openly gay man Fred Karger have endorsed the #TestMe project.

#TestMe National HIV Testing Day message for June 27.

Michigan Connection

In addition to Equality Michigan signing on, local politicians have also weighed in on the project. Chong-Anna Canfora, candidate for Lansing, Michigan's City Council seat in the Fourth Ward, has also announced her support for the initiative.

"We know that Ingham County has the highest rates of HIV in Michigan -- outside of metro Detroit," said Canfora. "We have the ability to stop the march of this virus, and end the epidemic today; but it starts with everyone getting tested and knowing their HIV status. Early diagnosis leads to better health outcomes and less transmission of the virus. This is wise public health policy, and important personal health decisions. I am getting tested because I want to show the community that it's easy, it's free and, if you choose, it can be anonymous."

the first step to doing that is getting people tested. I particularly encourage my friends who are gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, as well as transgender women, to get tested on June 27. Knowledge is power, but silence still equals death."

The #TestMe initiation encourages people to get tested on June 27 and to share photos and observations about the testing on various social media platforms, using the #TestMe hashtag. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended since 2005 that all Americans ages 13-64 be tested at least annually. Those Americans at high risk, particularly gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men including transgender women, should be tested every three months.

"Nearly 1 in 5 people with HIV do not know

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It's All In A Name: The Story of Emani Love

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

The world was tumultuous at 15. Emanuel Love, known as Eman to friends, had been expelled from school after an argument with a teacher over wearing lip-gloss. With a male name, male body parts, and a family full of brothers, it was hard having feminine features and the mind of a young woman. Eman was often mistaken for a butch lesbian rather than a young man.

"I didn't know there was 'transgender.' I knew in my heart and soul I was a woman," she explained. A friend told her about Ruth Ellis Center and one day she came in and discovered that she was not alone in the world.

"It helped me out in so many beautiful ways. Just to know there are other people around like me – it resonated with me so deeply."

Once she found the safe space to be herself, she began wearing women's clothes more often and experimenting with makeup. Shortly after, she was riding the bus through Detroit when she saw a run-down abandoned beauty shop called "Emani Solutions." She instantly claimed the name as her own.

"That was something totally designed by the universe for me," she said. "My mentor is faith. Emani means faith. It is one of the seven principles of Kwanza and I didn't think it was by chance that the universe chose that name for me. I always have faith that things will get better."

Evolving into Emani took patience, time and work. She is now 20 and is still struggling to gain her family's acceptance. "I come from a family that's predominantly Christians, a lot of old-fashioned family. Not only is LGB foreign to them, transgender is not even in their knowledge base," Love said.

Though she and her mother fight over her transitioning process, there are bright spots that fuel her faith in the future of their relationship. In 2011 Emani wore a dress for the first time. Her dress was coral colored, with hair and make-up that tied everything together. She was on her way to her first Pride ever - Motor City Pride 2011.

"That was the most empowering moment. I came down the stairs and my mom looked at me like she was in awe. She said 'If I had a biological daughter she couldn't have pulled it off better.' After that moment, nothing could stop me."

Pride itself went well for Love too. "I didn't know so many LGBT people existed," she said. "That empowerment was beautiful."

Caregiver

Step by step Love earned her GED and is now studying science at Wayne County Community College, hoping to become a nurse. In recent months she learned first-hand the pain and love of helping someone who had been ill.

"I recently lost a brother to cancer," Love said. "I was his nurse for the last four months of his life. He never told people he had cancer. Our history was not the best, but when he told me he had cancer I had to be there for him. He made his transition in March. He was 34. He was gay, so he was a member of the community. Those last months of

and at risk youth in the drop-in center. She's since been hired on as a Street Outreach Worker and Drop-in Center Staff. The most rewarding part of it all is being the facilitator of the Ruth Ellis Center group called Trans*Peace.

"In the group there are people who come who struggle with their ID or need affirmation," Love said. "I give them my personal experience in hopes it helps them in their struggle."

"There are people who understand and empathize. But no one can truly understand a transperson the way another transperson does. I teach them to always make decisions that are healthy for you – physically, mentally, spiritually. You



Emani Love: BTL photo Crystal Proxmire

"That was the most empowering moment. I came down the stairs and my mom looked at me like she was in awe. She said 'If I had a biological daughter she couldn't have pulled it off better.' After that moment, nothing could stop me."

me supporting him and him affirming me just made up for all the years of my family not supporting me. He took his last breaths calling me by my name and saying I would always be his sister. That meant so much."

Love is taking the gifts of faith and hope, and sharing them with the world. From June to December of last year, she took an internship at the Ruth Ellis Center where she helped with homeless

can't really progress until you are able to embrace yourself interpersonally. Trans folks vary from person to person. There are struggles that are similar but everyone has something different they are going through."

By helping other transgender people,

Emani also continues to help herself grow and keep a positive attitude of faith. "It's a pity we live in a society that is not beautiful enough to take on how beautiful we are," she said "You will live a miserable life trying to please other people."

For more information about Trans*Peace or other Ruth Ellis Center programs, visit their website at www.ruthelliscenter.org.

Transgender First-Grader Wins The Right To Use Girls' Restroom

BY ED PAYNE

(CNN) - A transgender first-grader who was born a boy but identifies as a girl has won the right to use the girls' restroom at her Colorado school.

The Colorado Rights Division ruled in favor of Coy Mathis in her fight against the Fountain-Fort Carson School District.

Coy's parents had taken her case to the commission after the district said she could no longer use the girls' bathroom at Eagleside Elementary.

In issuing its decision, the state's rights division said keeping the ban in place "creates an environment that is objectively and subjectively hostile, intimidating or offensive."

Coy's mother, Kathryn Mathis, said she's thrilled that Coy can return to school and put this behind her.

The first-grader has been home-schooled during the proceedings

"Schools should not discriminate against their students," Mathis said. "All we ever wanted was for Coy's school to treat her the same as other little girls. We are extremely happy that she now will be treated equally."

Mathis and her husband Jeremy will hold a noon (2 p.m. ET) news conference to discuss the case.

The Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund praised the ruling that was filled under Colorado's Anti-Discrimination Act.

"It is a victory for Coy and a triumph for fairness," said Michael Silverman, the group's executive director. "This ruling sends a loud and clear message that transgender students may not be targeted for discrimination and that they must be treated equally in school."

A Girl's Life

For most of the past year, Coy has dressed

as a girl.

Coy's passport and state-issued identification recognize her as female.

Mathis said she got a call "out of the blue" from the school in December saying that Coy could use the boys' bathroom, gender-neutral faculty bathrooms or the nurse's bathroom, but not the girls' facilities.

The district "took into account not only Coy, but other students in the building, their parents and the future impact a boy with male genitals using a girls' bathroom would have as Coy grew older," a letter the family's attorney received in December said.

"However, I'm certain you can appreciate that, as Coy grows older and his male genitals develop along with the rest of his body, at least some parents and students are likely to become uncomfortable with his continued use of the girls' restroom."

CNN was unable to reach the school district early Monday for comment on the ruling. But in February, the district's attorney, W. Kelly Dude, said: "The district firmly believes it has acted reasonably and fairly with respect to this issue."

A Little-studied Group

Transgender children experience a disconnect between their sex, which is based on their anatomy, and their gender, which includes behaviors, roles and activities, experts say.

For the general public, transgender identity may be a new concept, though many might recall Chaz Bono, the child of entertainers Sonny and Cher. Born female, Bono underwent a transition in his 40s to become a man. He wrote in his book "Transition" that, even as a child, he had been "aware of a part of me that did not fit."

He appeared last year as a man on

See First-Grader, page 13

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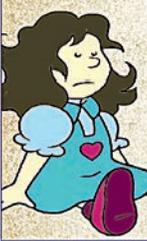


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Holland Pride, Herman Miller's Got Your Back

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

HOLLAND - As new pride events pop up across the state, one striking thing about them is the amount of corporate support that goes into making them happen. West Michigan-based Herman Miller is one of the leaders in this trend, sponsoring both West Michigan Pride and the upcoming Holland Pride on June 29.

Nicole Mayer is a 42 year old team leader in one of Herman Miller's chair manufacturing plants. She's also the leader of the LGBT Inclusive Resource Team for the company. Her pride as a lesbian is equaled by her pride in working for a company that puts equality first.

"I've been a participant since we began," she said about the group that started eight years ago. "It was our senior leadership, top down, that wanted to make resource teams happen. They came out and said we want to be more inclusive of everyone. We know we need help to improve the work conditions and environment, and find out what employees need to feel good on the job. What makes Herman Miller great to work at?"

Mayer explained that the company created several teams, including teams based on race, a team for veterans, one for employees with disabilities, and even a multi-generational team to encourage connections between age groups.

Being with the company since 1995, Mayer has seen the effect of cultivating an openly inclusive culture. "It's really changed a lot knowing that we have top down support that really believes in this. It's not just a 'let's try this out because

Herman Miller has scored 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index for the past six years. Nicole Mayer and her partner have taken advantage of domestic partner health benefits through the company in the past, and she says that partners are treated like any married spouse would be.



Herman Miller's LGBT Inclusive Resource Team at the 2012 Chicago Pride. Photo courtesy of Resource Group.

other people are doing it' thing. They believed these groups were important, and they made them a priority.

"I've been more comfortable with who I am. It's kind of a non-issue most of the time. I haven't heard anything negative in years. I don't think much about it anymore, except when we get involved with events and things where the public is. But even then, most people are accepting.

"When I first started, you didn't talk about it. You stayed behind the line and you let it go when you were at work. Now I can just be myself."

Herman Miller has scored 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index for the past six years. Mayer and her partner have taken advantage of domestic partner health benefits through the company in

the past, and she says that partners are treated like any married spouse would be at any company function or in regards to any company benefit.

When it came time to lobby for an inclusive human rights ordinance for the city, Herman Miller stepped in to help the Holland is Ready campaign. They have partnered with Grand Valley State University for programming on National Coming Out Day. They have provided furniture for The Network in Grand Rapids, and they've helped with both West Michigan Pride and Holland Pride.

Within the company, Mayer says, the LGBT Inclusive Resource Team "helps to educate and engage other members who may not understand what it means to be LGBT."

Find out more about Herman Miller's inclusive business practices at www.hermanmiller.com.

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INFO

Learn about Holland Pride at
>> <http://hollandareapride.com>.

“Dancing with the Stars,” in part, he said, to destigmatize being transgender.

Comprehensive data and studies about transgender children are rare. International studies have estimated that anywhere from 1 in 30,000 to 1 in 1,000 people are transgender.

Some children as young as age 3 show early signs of gender dysphoria or gender identity disorder, mental health experts who work with transgender children say.

These children are not intersex - they do not have a physical disorder or malformation of their sexual organs. The gender issue exists in the brain, though experts do not agree on whether it's psychologically or physiologically based.

Many transgender people report feeling discomfort with their gender as early as they can remember.

Gender identity is often confused with sexual orientation. The difference is that “gender identity is who you are, and sexual orientation is who you want to have sex with,” said Dr. Johanna Olson, a professor of clinical pediatrics at the University of Southern California, who treats transgender children.

Children around age 3 are probably not interested in sexual orientation, she said. But experts say some children who look like they will be transgender in early childhood turn out to be gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Differences In Schools

School policies toward transgender students vary across the United States.

In New York, for example, the law says students can't be discriminated against on the basis of their gender identity.

But in Maine, a court ruled in November that a school district did not violate a transgender student's rights when she was told she couldn't use the girls' bathroom.

Dude, the Colorado school district's attorney, has said there is nothing in that state requiring public schools to permit transgender students to use restrooms intended for the gender with which they identify.

At the time, he argued that the Fountain-Fort Carson School District adheres to the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act in all respects: “Coy attends class as all other students, is permitted to wear girls' clothes and is referred to as the parents have requested.”

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Viewpoint: Retired School Counselor Talks About What It Was Like Early On Helping LGBT Teens

Group Apologizes To Gay Community, Shuts Down ‘Cure’ Ministry

BY ED PAYNE

(CNN)- After 37 years, Exodus International, an organization whose mission was to “help” gay Christians become straight, is shutting down. But not before issuing an apology.

“We’re not negating the ways God used Exodus to positively affect thousands of people, but a new generation of Christians is looking for change -- and they want to be heard,” Tony Moore, an Exodus board member, said June 19.

The announcement comes less than a day after Exodus issued a wide-ranging apology to the gay community for “years of undue judgment by the organization and the Christian Church as a whole,” a statement from the group says.

“Exodus is an institution in the conservative Christian world, but we’ve ceased to be a living, breathing organism,” said Alan Chambers, the president of Exodus. “For quite some time, we’ve been imprisoned in a worldview that’s neither honoring toward our fellow human beings, nor biblical.”

Chambers, who has a wife and children and previously identified as gay, has acknowledged that he has “ongoing same-sex attractions.”

“It is strange to be someone who has both been hurt by the Church’s treatment of the LGBTQ community, and also to be someone who must apologize for being part of the very system of ignorance that perpetuated that hurt,” Chambers said. “Today it is as if I’ve just woken up to a greater sense of how painful it is to be a sinner in the hands of an angry church.”

New Focus On A Therapy

Exodus, which has promoted “freedom from homosexuality through the power of Jesus Christ,” has de-emphasized conversion

therapy in recent years as more of the counselors in its network have abandoned the practice.

The American Psychological Association defines conversion therapy as aimed at changing sexual orientation, but adopted a resolution in 2009 condemning the practice.

In it, the



“For quite some time, we’ve been imprisoned in a worldview that’s neither honoring toward our fellow human beings, nor biblical.”

Alan Chambers, the president of Exodus.

organization said “mental health professionals should avoid telling clients that they can change their sexual orientation through therapy or other treatments.”

But the same resolution also encouraged therapists to consider the religious beliefs of clients who say such beliefs are important to their views of homosexuality.

The APA removed homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in 1975.

But yet with the apology, some things have not changed, according to Chambers.

“I cannot apologize for my deeply held biblical beliefs about the boundaries I see in scripture surrounding sex, but I will exercise my beliefs with great care and respect for those who do not share them,” he said. “I cannot apologize for my beliefs about marriage. But I do not have any desire to fight you on your

beliefs or the rights that you seek.”

A New Ministry

With the closing of Exodus International, the board of directors voted to begin a new and separate ministry called Reduce Fear.

“This is a new season of ministry, to a new generation,” Chambers said. “Our goals are to reduce fear, and come alongside churches to become safe, welcoming and mutually transforming communities.”

It’s meant to align with Jesus’ New Testament message found in John 13:34 -- “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

“From a Judeo-Christian perspective, gay, straight or otherwise, we’re all prodigal sons and daughters,” Chambers said. “Exodus International is the prodigal’s older brother, trying to impose its will on God’s promises, and make judgments on who’s worthy of His Kingdom.”

“God is calling us to be the Father -- to welcome everyone, to love unhindered.”

NJ Lawmakers To Vote On ‘Conversion Therapy’ Bill

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) – Both chambers of the New Jersey Legislature are expected to vote on a bill that would ban licensed therapists from trying to convert gay minors into heterosexuals.

The idea of what is sometimes called “conversion therapy” has increasingly drawn criticism.

Gay rights groups say the practice is damaging to young people, but some social conservatives say the bill would infringe on the

rights of parents to do what they think is best.

The legislative votes are scheduled for Monday.

Last year, California became the first state to ban the practice. But a judge halted implementation amid arguments about the law’s constitutionality.

Last week, the leader of Orlando, Fla.-based Exodus International apologized to the gay community for years of providing the counseling.

Update: As BTL goes to press the NJ Assembly voted by a margin of 56-14, to ban harmful, predatory “ex-gay” therapy for minors. The state Senate is expected to adopt the bill on Thursday, which will make New Jersey the second state, after California, to recognize the threat posed to our youth by discredited, harmful “reparative therapy,” and to codify that recognition into law.

The historic 1965 Voting Rights Act was largely eviscerated by the Supreme Court. Here's what some are saying:

"I am deeply disappointed with the Supreme Court's decision today... Today's decision invalidating one of its core provisions upsets decades of well-established practices that help make sure voting is fair, especially in places where voting discrimination has been historically prevalent."

President Barack Obama.

"Discrimination at the ballot box is a real problem and causes real harm to our democracy. This ruling is a major step backwards in the ongoing fight for a truly free and fair democracy and democratic system."

Rea Carey, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

"The right to vote is one of our most important rights as Americans. We have come so far as a country, and it is very disappointing that a narrow majority in the Supreme Court wants to take us backwards. For five decades, the Voting Rights Act has protected the right of every American to vote, and we need to come together in Congress, as we have in the past, to continue this law."

U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)

"Damn, that citizenship thing was so great for awhile."

Melissa Harris-Perry, Tulane University Law Professor

"I am slightly surprised by how physically enraged I find myself."

Christopher Hayes, MSNBC

"Today's ruling by the Supreme Court striking down parts of this important law is more than a disappointment — it's an injustice. But we can't let it discourage us or force us out of this fight."

Donna Brazille, DNC vice chair

"My dad was born in Mississippi in 1933, more than 60 years after the 15th Amendment guaranteed black people the right to vote, but 32 years before the Voting Rights Act would make suffrage a reality... after the Supreme Court gutted enforcement of a key VRA provision, my father's story reminds me more of how much has been forgotten."

Stephen Henderson, Detroit Free Press columnist

We Wait, But Not For Long

BTL EDITORIAL

It is Tuesday at BTL's offices. As we go to press this afternoon all of us are awaiting the U.S. Supreme Court decisions in two pivotal cases, scheduled to be handed down tomorrow morning. Although we don't know how they will go yet, we do know that these two decisions will have an enormous impact on the rest of our lives.

As we wait, we reflect. We think back on this month's Pride celebrations all across Michigan. In Ferndale, at Motor City Pride, Kalamazoo Pride, West Michigan Pride, Tri-Cities Pride, the Ann Arbor Pride Picnic and this upcoming weekend in Flint and Holland. We have seen thousands of people come out, celebrate their lives and their loves and claim their space in the public sphere. This was a record Pride month for Michigan, with more celebrations, more participants and more political energy than ever before.

There will be more Pride celebrations later this summer. Hotter Than July kicks off July 21 with an impressive conference, hosted by the National Black Justice Coalition and the Small Business Administration. There will be high-level dignitaries from the Obama administration here to discuss engaging and supporting small businesses in Detroit, especially those owned and operated by LGBT people

of color. This historic gathering is the kickoff event of a 12 city tour of the SBA and NBJC. We have arrived — and we matter.

Then we have one final Pride event - the Michigan March, Rally and Festival in Lansing Aug. 24. Let's all commit to show up in Lansing that day to make our voices heard and to be counted as the full citizens of the State of Michigan. Together we can celebrate the progress we've made, we can insist that our legislators pass a bill to amend the Elliott Larsen Civil Rights Act so LGBT people can be protected from discrimination. Let's show our strength, and let's share our strength with each other.

By the time you read this, we will all know whether we are celebrating the U.S. Supreme Court decisions or not. But one thing we know for sure - Michigan's LGBT people are more visible and vocal than ever. Anyone who went to Arcadia Creek Festival Park in Kalamazoo, Calder Park in Grand Rapids, Hart Plaza in Detroit

By the time you read this, we will all know whether we are celebrating the U.S. Supreme Court decisions or not. But one thing we know for sure - Michigan's LGBT people are more visible and vocal than ever. Anyone who went to Arcadia Creek Festival Park in Kalamazoo, Calder Park in Grand Rapids, Hart Plaza in Detroit or downtown Ferndale saw huge crowds

or downtown Ferndale saw huge crowds — people with families, with dogs, with picnics, with partners and lovers — people like anyone else in Michigan out enjoying the festivities and the comradery.

We hope that the decisions handed down in the morning move us closer to full marriage equality. We ask that our elected officials do the right thing and make it illegal to discriminate against anyone in Michigan for jobs, housing and public accommodation. We know we have momentum and history on our side, and that it is just a matter of time, work and energy to finish this long race toward full equality.

We look forward to seeing everyone who was at a June Pride celebration with us in Lansing Aug. 24 to keep this incredible movement in high gear.

Correction

Oops on K'zoo city commission candidate

In last week's issue of BTL we reported that Tracy Hall is the first openly LGBT candidate for Kalamazoo city commissioner (Soaked Celebrations At K'zoo Pride, BTL June 20, 2013). We meant to say she is the first lesbian candidate. Of course, the late Terry Kuseske was the first openly gay city commissioner in Kalamazoo, elected in 2009.

In addition, we misspelled the late Gerry Crane's first name. Gerry was a school teacher from Byron Center who fought with the school board in 1996. He later died of a heart attack.



EX-GAY MINISTRY'S LAST RITES

How's Your Telomere, Mary?



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

This month's issue of Brain World (Humanity's New Frontier) carries articles of amatory, ecumenical interest for those of us fascinated and/or obsessed with sexuality preoccupation. Count me in.

In spite of my advanced years, I fancy that I still qualify to cut the Dijon Mustard, as Julia Child might say, preparing an appetizing Cordon Bleu for viewer delight but vicarious TV consumption.

Highlighted Brain World cover come-ons are, "Sex & Immortality," "The Brain's Pleasure Centers," Sexual Healing," "Unpredictable Love," and "The Orgasm." Perhaps to temper libidinous pandering to those of us somewhat more advanced in years, another cover highlight is "9 Tips for Aging Well".

As for aging, my first-hand experience of that unavoidable process of contrary adjustment is that one's sexual drive -- provided you know how to shift gears and parallel park -- persists well into your 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s if you don't abuse the speed limits getting from your lighted front porch to your dimly lit bedroom.

As incentive for those who qualify for being "over the hill" (or, at least standing cane in hand on the apex looking at the road behind and the sliding slope ahead) is an interview with "ageless" Jane Fonda, who is 75. (By the way, diva worshippers, Barbara Streisand is 71, Cher is 67, Joan Rivers is 80, Madonna, 54, and Betty White is, well, eternal.)

For those who are curious as to how much time remains to pursue ones polymorphous perverse and sex-happy delights, Brain World provides a system for tallying longevity, "What's Your Telomere Age?" The test, devised by three medical specialists, provides "clues about things you can do to start down the road to longevity."

Telomere is a biological term: "Like plastic sheaths on the ends of shoe laces that prevent the laces from fraying, telomere are disposable buffers blocking the ends of chromosomes." Good gay party banter.

Those taking the test start with 10,000 points, adding or subtracting accordingly, in response to questions such as, "Do you binge drink? Subtract 250 points." "Do you have a pet you care for or are bonded to? Add 100." "Do you take TA-65? Add 500 points."

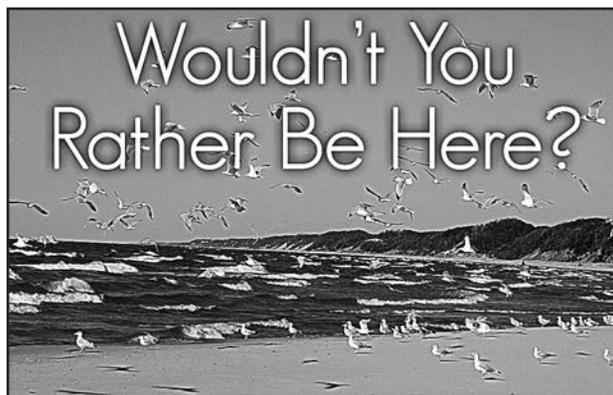
Parameters are: Less than 5,000 points, between 80 and 100 years. 8,001 and higher: "Eureka!" (Currently, in contrast to actual chronological age, you're holding at estimated age 35. Or, if you prefer, the standard, on-going 39.)

Here's one to try at home: "How long can you hold your breath? If you can't hold your breath longer than thirty seconds, subtract 200 points. If you can hold you breath longer than sixty seconds but less than ninety, add 150 points. If you can do ninety seconds or more, add 250 points." (PG advisory: Leave poppers alone for next 30 days.)

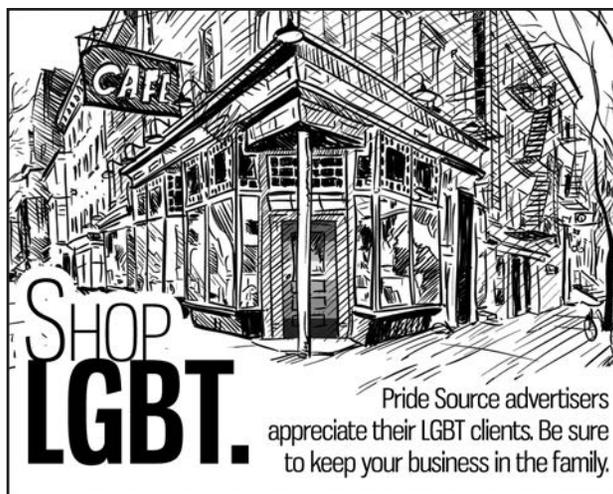
Having taken the test I'm pleased to tell my equally still-aging readership that I clock in at the 7,001 to 8,000 range ("between 25 and 47 years"). To be truthful I was short 200 points on the low end of the scale. I compensated by giving myself requisite points for being happily uncloseted, resolutely gay. A plus for sure.

Oh, yes! I don't take TA-65 for 500 points, and I haven't a clue what it is, does, or doesn't do.

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Creep of the Week

Jim Daly

When Exodus International President Alan Chambers announced June 19 that his group, one of the most well



Jim Daly

known ex-gay rackets in the country, was closing up shop people were stunned. More surprising still was Chambers' apology to LGBT people for, essentially, fucking up their lives by lying to them that they could pray the gay away. It was, Chambers said, all a sham.

And so the whole ex-gay movement shriveled up and died and everybody lived happily ever after, right?

Not quite. You see, the whole idea that being gay is a harmful lifestyle choice, akin to smoking cigarettes or alcoholism, that people can "fix" if only they work hard enough is the bedrock of the anti-gay right. Because if being gay is, well, normal, then being anti-gay is, well, a total dick move, as the kids say.

But have no fear. There are plenty of folks willing to pick up and run with the ex-gay banner. Take Focus on the Family President Jim Daly, for instance. Just two days after Chambers apologized for lying to and hurting so many people, Daly issued a statement reassuring everybody that he would make sure that gays would continue to be lied to and hurt.

"Exodus' closing is being hailed by some as a victory and indication that Christians are abandoning long-held convictions that living with God's design for sexuality is possible through the power of Jesus Christ – that change is possible," Daly said.

But Daly knows better. After all, he apparently has seen God's blueprints for sexuality. Although he couldn't possibly be referring to the Bible because as a sex-ed text, that book is all over the place. Seriously freaky stuff happening back in those olden days.

Daly continued, "The reality is that while Exodus will no longer

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

exist, there are numerous Christian ministries that continue to provide excellent help to those struggling with unwanted same-sex attraction."

Which is true, so long as you replace the word "excellent" with "bullshit." But there are plenty of "ministries" willing to "help" you pray the gay away, just as there are plenty of wealthy Nigerian "businessmen" emailing you about how you can get rich by sending them money.

"We believe there is hope for those who struggle sexually," Daly said. "Be it a struggle with lust, adultery,

Daly equates being gay with being a sex-crazed pervert incapable of fidelity. All the same thing in his book.

pornography addiction, pre-marital sex, same-sex attractions or issues related to identity – there is hope."

Aww, hope. Isn't that sweet and reassuring? Especially after Daly equates being gay with being a sex-crazed pervert incapable of fidelity. All the same thing in his book.

"The hope of a Christian is that our behavior becomes more in line with God and God's will," Daly continued. "He wants us to drink from His full cup of grace and truth – because it's through Him we can overcome lifelong struggles with sin."

And since Daly has appointed himself The Boss of God's Will, he knows what you need to drink: Jesus Dew: Code Grace (tagline: "Dew with a rush of Truthy flavor").

"God's help usually doesn't come as a 'fast fix.' It's often a long process," Daly said. "Many times it takes counseling, Bible study, prayer and community support – but it can be done."

At least Daly is willing to admit that becoming "ex-gay" doesn't happen quickly. It takes a lot of time and energy. Daly is right: immersing yourself in the ex-gay lifestyle, i.e. isolating yourself from anyone who would dare tell you that you are okay the way you are and that they love you anyway, is crucial to living a lie.

Waffle Fries With A Side of Hate: Chick-Fil-A Eyes West Michigan

Petition asks Chick-Fil-A To Stay Away

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

GRAND RAPIDS - The notoriously hateful Chick-fil-A chain of fast food restaurants is looking to move into West Michigan as early as 2015 according to published reports by the Grand Rapids Press. The move has some people salivating at the thought of southern fatty fast foods, but others are foaming at the mouth.

"I know they have some damn good waffle fries, but nobody wants waffle fries with a side of hate," said Brad Gorman who organized a petition on change.org called "Chick-fil-A No Way, Stay the Cluck Away from West Michigan."

The petition explains Gorman's position:

"Residents of West Michigan value diversity and care about the inclusion of our gay and lesbian residents. We welcome businesses to our communities that have a good reputation and solid values.

"But anti-gay businesses like Chick-fil-A have NO PLACE in West Michigan – no matter how delicious their waffle fries may be. Chick-fil-A has donated millions of dollars to organizations that undermine equality for gays and lesbians right here in our community. This type of discrimination has no place in our towns.

"The cities of Boston and Chicago, as well as college towns across the U.S. have asked Chick-fil-A to STAY AWAY and West Michigan needs to do the same.

"Tell the economic development organizations and elected officials: If you value diversity West Michigan, stand up for equality and sign this petition to say NO

WAY to Chick-fil-A." The petition also includes a sample note to the Chamber of Commerce and to Grand Rapids Mayor George Hartwell. Hartwell was on vacation and unavailable for comment at time of printing.

City Attorney Catherine Mish responded to inquiries, stating, "To the best of my knowledge, the City has not been contacted by Chick-Fil-A regarding the possibility that the company might wish to

open a location within the City of Grand Rapids. Although we have read about this possibility in the media, we have no official indication from Chick-Fil-A that this is actually in the company's plans. Likewise, the city has not received any official complaints regarding the possibility of Chick-Fil-A opening a location within the City.

"The City of Grand Rapids is a business-friendly community and welcomes new businesses that strengthen the local tax base, through the payment of real and personal property taxes and through providing jobs to local residents who in turn pay local income taxes. That being said, the City of Grand Rapids is also strongly committed to the values of equal treatment under the law for all persons, regardless of sexual orientation. The city will of course ensure that local ordinance provisions are

enforced."

Chick-fil-A made headlines last year after the company President Dan Cathy spoke against gay marriage based on "Biblical principles," sparking a boycott of the chain. In April a senior manager for the company, Mark Conklin, spoke at Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, telling students "Biblical principles just make great business principles," according to MLive. The chain is

Chick-fil-A made headlines last year after the company President Dan Cathy spoke against gay marriage based on "Biblical principles," sparking a boycott of the chain.

known for closing on Sundays so that employees can attend church.

Gorman, 32, started the petition, "because people in West Michigan value diversity and care about the inclusion of our gay and lesbian residents," he said. He complains of the positive news coverage the move is generating. "Grand Rapids news outlets have missed the mark on this. They are celebrating a new business that works to fund discrimination against residents of our communities. This shows that our region - and our media outlets - have a long way to go."

Gorman has been active in the fight for LGBT equality by creating G2H2 gay socials in West Michigan, supporting the OutCenter in Benton Harbor, serving as Whirlpool PRIDE Lead, and helping with the first PRIDE float in the Blossomtime Parade.

At press time, the petition had 286 signatures. Find the petition online at www.change.org/petitions/chick-fil-a-no-way-stay-the-cluck-away-from-west-michigan#.

TAKE ACTION

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On The Heels



Photo: A24

Of Fame

Newcomer Israel Broussard On Gay Role, Wearing Stilettos & Real-Life 'Bling Ring'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

In "The Bling Ring," Sofia Coppola's flashy zeitgeist neo-noir based on true events of teenaged Hollywood bandits, Israel Broussard takes lead-role reins as a gay L.A. transplant befriended by a chick clique of thieving punks. Marc, together with his four girlfriends (including one played by Emma Watson), loot the cribs of the rich and famous – Paris Hilton, Lindsay Lohan and Megan Fox – to get their own glam on.

In a recent chat, Broussard, 18, talked about Marc's homosexuality being a non-issue in the film, shooting in Paris Hilton's actual house and learning to walk in heels.

How did you react when you first read the Vanity Fair article, "The Suspects Wore Louboutins," an account of the San Fernando Valley teens who stole over \$3 million from celebrities?

A lot of people say they were shocked and surprised and maybe even disgusted, but what stood out to me was that they got caught through Facebook – and I thought that was pretty stupid.

What did your audition entail?

The audition process for this one took a couple months. It wasn't until after I booked it that the script was written, so I wasn't sure what exactly I was getting into.

(Laughs)

You must have known that Marc was gay, right?

Well, reading the sides you can kind of tell, and I talked to Sofia about it; I was like, "What's gonna come of this?" (Laughs) She said, "It is what it is. He's not flamboyant or anything like that; there's nothing over the top." So I trusted her with that, and I think Sofia does a good job at not explaining it in the movie. There's no scene where he's coming out, where they actually point it out – it's just accepted. It was refreshing to see that. You don't have to have a big coming-out scene in every movie with a

gay character, you know.

Especially if the boy has a thing for heels like Marc does.

Right, right. (Laughs)

What was wearing the stilettos like? Did you need practice?

Yeah, we'd have little fashion shows and I had to learn how to walk in them and do the little runway walk ... that was interesting. I'm not meant for heels. (Laughs) But it went well. Katie (Chang) and I would have competitions of who can walk better. She said I won; I said she won. We haven't come to an agreement on that yet.

It doesn't sound like wearing heels was that pleasant for you.

No, it wasn't. (Laughs) You know, I looked at this role as something to overcome personally. I didn't want to do a gay character or a Disney character or some sci-fi character because I didn't want to be typecast, so it was important to me that this was kind of brushed over. You can tell in the movie Marc's gay but, again, it's not pointed out. I think this was a personal battle I overcame and I became a new person, because I felt like I could expand and do more with my acting. Image is everything ... and I like to have control of that image.

Would you play gay roles in the future? And what would that depend on?

Maybe in the future, yeah. And it would depend on how extreme the character was. I definitely want to take a break for a second and do a couple of movies where I'm straight. You know, homosexuality is being accepted more and more into our society. And there's nothing wrong with it. The sooner people realize that, the better. But at the same time, I don't want a finger being pointed at me.

As the "gay actor"?

Right.

So were you at all worried about playing a real person? Are you more conscious of being as accurate as possible because of that?

It crossed my mind. I wouldn't say I was worried, though. Sofia was intent on making the movie a fictional film and yeah, there were a lot of true things that happened, but the storyline itself is completely fictional. We never met up with Nick Prugo or Alexis Neiers or any of the real Bling Ring ... and we had no intent to. Now, if I were to meet him, it'd be all right. Maybe a little awkward. (Laughs)

How much trash TV were you required to watch to prepare for this role?

I had to watch quite a bit of reality TV. "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" was one of them. I watched "Fashion Police." Mostly my focus was learning about fashion ... and learning how to walk in heels.

Do you have a favorite reality show?

You know, it was "Keeping Up with the Kardashians." Kim, Kourtney ... man! And then gosh, I forget his name, but Kourtney's husband - that dude is just like ... he's such a douche!

How were you able to relate to Marc?

In elementary school, I didn't have many friends. I wasn't feeling the attention and the acceptance that I felt I deserved, so I

just built the character up from that with his insecurities and lack of self-confidence.

Tell me about shooting the scene where it's just you dancing in front of a webcam, one of the more telling and haunting parts of the film.

Sofia came up to me a couple of days before we filmed that and said, "Hey, have you seen the video of Nick dancing in front of the webcam?" I said "no" and she showed me it and said, "I want you to do this." You can't really say no to Sofia Coppola. So I'm trying to figure out how I'm gonna pull this off, because a) I have no rhythm and b) I have no self-confidence - so now I'm gonna walk up to a webcam in front of a bunch of people and start dancing, pretty much half-stripping? I did it and I thought I was bombing it the entire time. Just completely destroying it. When I saw it, it was a little embarrassing, but people were saying it was real and vulnerable - and I don't mean to toot my own horn with that.

These days, it starts with social media. (People) get swept up and caught in the drifts of what's cool and what's not, and that's when they lose touch with themselves. That scene was the truth.

You get to wear some blingin' couture in the movie. What's the most expensive piece of clothing you own?

That I bought? (Laughs) Maybe Hanes. You know what, I've got a peacoat from H&M that I bought. I'm comfortable in Levi's and a T-shirt. It doesn't take much to make me happy.

What did you learn about fashion from this role?

I learned what lapels are on a suit! (Laughs) And I was surrounded by all these brand names, but it wasn't until recently actually - when we started doing all the press - that I really kind of dove into fashion and all its brand names. Now I talk to my stylist and I'm like, "How about we switch it from the Marni to the J Brand?"

Filming in Paris Hilton's house, the site of one of the robberies, were you surprised by how many of the belongings have her face on them?

You know, I was kind of expecting it. It was kind of overwhelming to be in her house. It was like the Garden of Eden, stepping into some place nobody else has really been. Rummaging through all her stuff, I kind of felt like I was part of the Paris Hilton family.

If you could legally break into a celebrity's house, whose would you break into?

I probably shouldn't say this, but I'd choose the White House. Think about how boss that would be. (Laughs)



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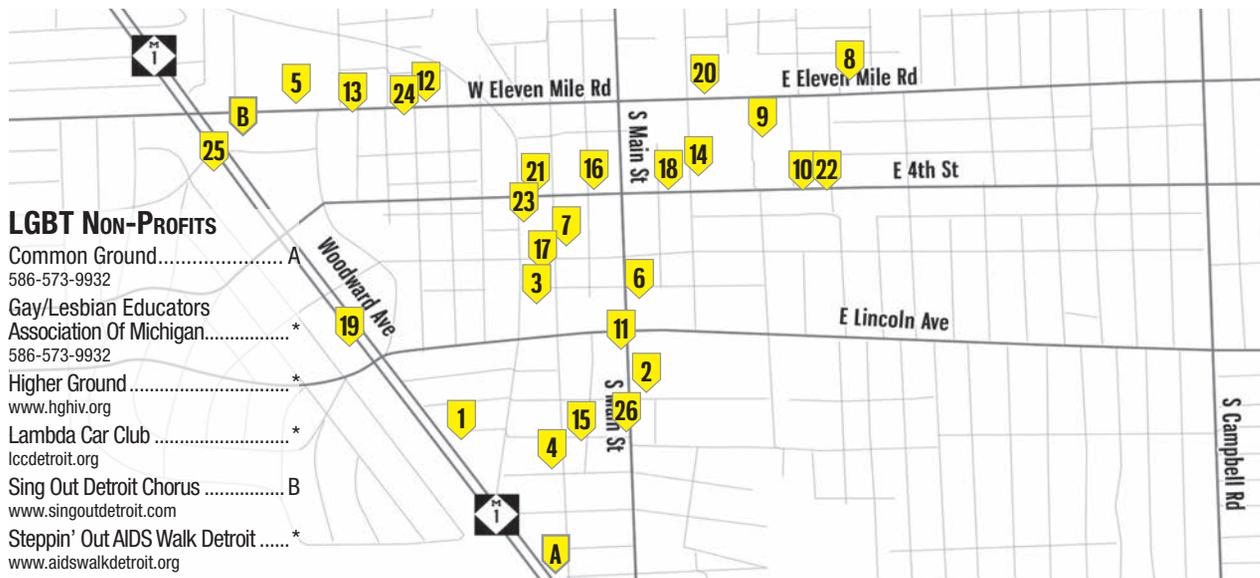
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PRIDESOURCE



'The Heat' Is On

Sandra Bullock and Melissa McCarthy in "The Heat." Photo: Gemma La Mana

Director, Star On Funny Females & Trans Jokes

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Melissa McCarthy was virtually unknown until she evacuated her bowels on a bathroom counter in "Bridesmaids," Paul Feig's mega-comedy that turned big box-office numbers and even bigger laughs. The director promotes McCarthy to lead in his gritty girl-power flick "The Heat," in which the comedian plays dirty-dealing Boston detective Shannon Mullins who's not so keen on her new by-the-book partner, Sarah Ashburn (Sandra Bullock).

During a visit to Feig's hometown of Royal Oak, the director – along with Joey McIntyre of New Kids on the Block, who also stars – chatted about working with women, Melissa's lesbian inspiration for her character and the man jokes that Sandra Bullock didn't mind.

Were you worried to make another

female buddy comedy after "Bridesmaids"?

Paul Feig: No, no. If I make movies only with funny women for the rest of my life, I will be very, very happy. I love working with strong, funny women. I think they haven't gotten their due in comedy for a long time. I really want it to get to a point where it's not about women or men in a movie and it's just about funny people. Break down the gender barrier.

The gay community is obviously drawn to strong females, and both Melissa and Sandra play them in this movie. They stand their ground, but they're also both outsiders. Why do those kinds of character appeal to you?

PF: I like to work with women. I like to do projects about women. I always look for the projects that have really strong women roles and aren't the "I'm looking for a man" types, so this was really exciting to have that. It

passed the Bechdel test.

They're two professional women whose biggest goal is to find a common friend, because they're both so dedicated to their careers and they don't want to compromise, and I love a movie about women who don't comprise. I grew up with a lot of women and all my friends were women and the funniest, most self-assured people I knew were women – and they were really able to make me laugh but in a really strong way. They were just cooler than the funny guys I knew. I'd see all these movies over the years with funny women stuck in really shitty roles and being like the bitchy girlfriend and they're just mean; it's like, "What's going on? Why can't they be funny?" So I wanted to do movies with strong, funny women and show the world what we all know: that those are very

See *The Heat*, page 24

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Joey McIntyre and Paul Feig at Emagine Royal Oak. Photo: Allied Integrated Marketing

► The Heat

Continued from p. 22

funny people.

Joey, how did you get involved?

Joey McIntyre: I play one of the crazy Mullins family characters.

So two of those characters – Jamie Denbo and Jessica Chaffin, great Boston actors and friends of Paul – we did this spoof of “Mad Men.” We called it “MA Men” – a filthy parody that was on Funny or Die. You never know in this business. You could do all these guest spots on TV shows, but I got more heat off of that ... no pun

intended.

PF: (Laughs) Nice plug! I saw that video and I was like, “Is that Joey McIntyre? He’s hilarious.” And it was a done deal. He was in the movie.

JM: When I got the call from the casting director, I said, “They probably saw that parody.” It was a blast to be involved (in “The Heat”). We just had so much fun being in my hometown with all these funny, funny people. Just great people.

PF: Yeah, no divas on the set.

What’s the most fun you had on set with Sandra and Melissa?

PF: I just really enjoyed how much they got along. You hire two great actresses but there’s no guarantee they’re gonna be friends. Sometimes you’re like ...

What if they don’t click?

PF: Yeah, totally. This is the first time where I did something where I didn’t audition the actors, because they’re

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two big stars. So we got them and we were so happy, and then when I was going to the first rehearsal, I was like, "What if they have no chemistry?" But fortunately, the minute they met, their chemistry just went through the roof.

But my favorite thing about doing this movie is just that I got to work with so many funny people. Melissa and Sandy, definitely, but we had an amazing supporting cast of people who just came in and killed it. We'd play around on the set and a lot of the time we'd improv; then somebody who had no lines or one line in the script will suddenly have a bunch. It's a meritocracy — whoever's funny is in the movie. (Laughs)

How much improv was happening?

PF: We had a really solid script. I never go into anything without making sure the script is rock solid, that all the emotional underpinnings are there, the character arcs are there. Sometimes the improv is just them playing with the written lines, other times it's just "go crazy" — and we had great scenes with the Mullins family. The whole thing where they're fighting in front of the house, when Gina (played by Chaffin) is coming down the stairs so slow, that was just great.

That was all improv?

JM: Yeah, a lot of that stuff was. It was just so much fun. We would do a scene and then Paul would come in with notes that he and Katie (Dippold, the writer) worked on. We would laugh at those ideas before we did them and then try not to laugh. I just tried to keep a straight face.

PF: Joey, who I've always been a fan of, is one of the best improvisers I've ever worked with. And I'm not just saying that 'cause he's sitting here.

JM: Get out!

There's the scene when Sandra's character first meets the Mullins family and they joke about her looking like a postop female. How did that come about?

PF: It started with Jamie Denbo. She's another improv genius and she will look for weird windows; for her, it's almost like she'll find a nonsensical thing. Sandra Bullock is one of the most beautiful women in the world, and so since she's wearing a suit, (Denbo) focuses on, "Are you a boy or a girl?" Then everybody starting riffing. Bill Burr came up with the "from the get-go / no operation?" line. But Sandra Bullock is so game. She just sat there and went with it. I've worked with plenty of people who will come over to me and be like, "Can you make them stop doing that?" But she was just having the best time.

How did Luther Vandross' "Dance with My Father" become part of the bar scene?

PF: That was Melissa's idea. I was like, "You should be dancing with two old guys from the place," and Melissa was

like, "We have to use 'Dance with My Father'; it has to be that." I had never heard that song. She knows it so well — that's why she's singing along to it.

What's the trick to directing Melissa?

PF: You get out of her way! (Laughs) With somebody like Melissa, both on "Bridesmaids" and on this, she came in and I just knew she'd be right for it. She's too big to audition. I let her create the look for the character with both of (the movies). Having been a character actor myself, you're so dependent on not only what's internal but also the external. She was like, "I want '80s woman rapper to be my style," but then she got these pictures of Patti Smith with her hair like that. It was fun to watch her build that character. With "Bridesmaids," she wanted to wear a wig and I didn't let her.

Yeah, she's pretty hardcore in "The Heat." Was she at all inspired by lesbians for this role?

PF: Well, I think some of that might've gone into it, too. (Laughs)

Do you know for sure?

PF: (Laughs) She has a lot of sources, let's just say that.

“ Sandra Bullock is so game. She just sat there and went with it. I've worked with plenty of people who will come over to me and be like, 'Can you make them stop doing that?' But she was just having the best time. ”

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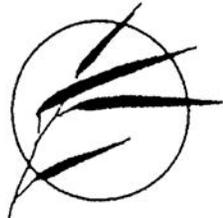
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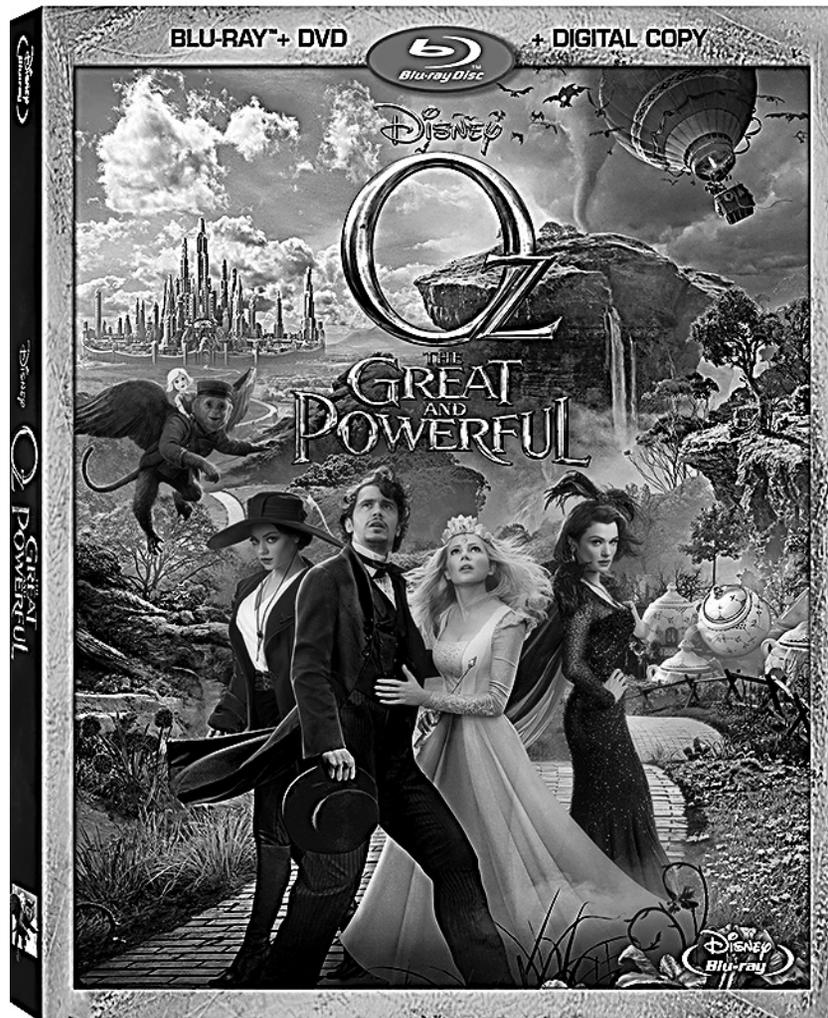
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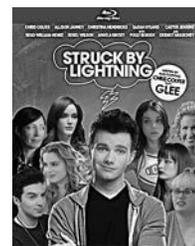
BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI



Oz The Great and Powerful

We're off to see the wizard (but not Dorothy) as filmmaker Sam Raimi gives top billing to the great man behind the smoke screen, a circus fraud who becomes the fated ruler of a land far, far away when he's swept up in a tornado and catapulted into gay heaven (so naturally he's played by James Franco). There are fairies, a cute monkey in a bell-captain costume, a talking china doll, some twists (Mila Kunis, Michelle Williams and Rachel Weisz play witches; one is wicked), enough CGI effects to make "The Wizard of Oz" look its age and even some sexy-time innuendo. Because everything Franco does is a little bit sexual. Even if it's for Disney. Taking cues from the original, Raimi's "Oz" knows its boundaries, honoring the 1939 classic with nostalgia, magic and the fantastical feel of transcending reality. The extras show China Girl's evolution from puppet to one of the most lovable animated dolls ever, the lavish art design and Kunis' makeup metamorphosis. The best, though, is a 22-minute filming doc seen

through James Franco's eyes. Because everything looks better through James Franco's eyes.



Struck by Lightning

Lightning didn't strike for the "Glee" gay, Chris Colfer, when his first cinema outing debuted last year at the Tribeca Film Festival to dismal reviews and a limited theatrical showing. Sure, the indie "comedy" seemed promising. Colfer is a funny firecracker with a charming presence as Kurt on "Glee." He managed to nab Rebel Wilson to do her Rebel Wilson thing. And the rest of the cast ain't too shabby either: Christina Hendricks, Dermot Mulroney and Allison Janney, perfect even in this mess as his mother. This catastrophic strikeout, however, is DOA as Colfer's unlikable high school narcissist, Carson, dies from a bolt of lightning in the opening scene,

forcing us to endure flashbacks of after-school-special teen angst and awkwardly shoehorned family drama. It's never funny. It's never engaging. It's only struck by awfulness. The extras have as little to say as the movie itself: a behind-the-scenes segment and interviews with Colfer and director Brian Koppelman clock in at just two minutes each. There's also 17 minutes of deleted scenes and bloopers that are even less funny than the movie, which seems almost impossible.



Any Day Now

When Rudy Donatello (Alan Cumming), a West Hollywood drag performer, stumbles upon a neglected child with Down syndrome in a neighboring apartment, he reacts as any person with a heart would: He does something about it. Rudy, together with new boyfriend Paul Fliger (Garret Dillahunt), gives the affectionate doll-adoring Marco (Isaac Leyva) the home he never had. But so what. A legal system clouded with moral biases doesn't look out for the best interest of this kid (is Marco really better off with his junkie mother?), and so his new family fights the court for custody of a child that everyone but them forgot about. "Any Day Now," set in the late '70s (which explains Cumming's mopy head of hair) and based on a true story, raises issues of prejudice, injustice, disability and stereotypes with Cumming in top form; as Rudy, he's compellingly passionate and stalwart as he rigorously fights the blatant homophobia keeping him from Marco. An emotional peak bursts open the floodgates in a dramatic turn that makes "Any Day Now" a tough film to watch — and an even tougher one to shake. Extras are short and sweet: Filmmaker Travis Fine reflects on his personal relationship with the script, and we meet first-time actor Isaac Leyva.



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See Screen Queen, page 34

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The Family & Friends Support Group 5:30 p.m. Support group for family and friends of people living with HIV. Community Health Awareness Group, 1300 W. Fort St., **Detroit**. 313-963-3434.

Marcus Brandon for Congress 6 p.m. Brandon is the first openly gay member of the NC House, and one of only five African-American openly gay elected officials in the country. Mayor David Coulter, President Charles Pugh, & Senator Buzz Thomas, 22646 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. 313-300-0296. Dsolomon@rosestrinity.com Secure.Actblue.com/page/mbdetroit

Ready 2 Grow 6 p.m. Featuring workshops ranging in topic from plant harvesting to media skill shares. The central focus of all the gatherings will be on achieving health through a healthy food system. East Michigan Environmental Action Council, 4605 Cass Ave., **Detroit**. Lottie@emeac.org Emeac.org

Gay Flash Mob in Royal Oak 7 p.m. Gay Flash Mobs, **Royal Oak**. Meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

Wings 7 p.m. A support and social group for people living with HIV. Self-Run, 2441 Pinecrest Dr., **Ferndale**. info@wingsmi.org

Friday, June 28

Help & Heal 6 p.m. A monthly support group for HIV-positive gay or same-gender-loving (SGL) men of color. KICK, 41 Burroughs St., Suite 109, **Detroit**. davidnelson@e-kick.org

Polyqueer Womens Group 7 p.m. Open meeting to lesbian, bisexual and transgendered women who are polyamorous or curious about women-centered polyamory. Meets the last Friday of the month. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. PolyLezzie@yahoo.com JimToyCenter.org

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: The Investigator - Helen Baxendale stars in the true story of Sgt. Caroline Meagher, a military policewoman charged with rooting out and questioning suspected lesbians in the armed forces. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, June 29

Flint Gay Pride in the Park Features vendors, information booths, food trucks, live entertainment, wrestling show, and children's activities. Flint Gay Pride Society, **Flint**. facebook.com/FLINTGAYPRIDE

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Men's Discussion Group 6 p.m. Lighthearted or in-depth discussion on a variety of topics. For gay, bi-affectional, and transgender men 18 and up. Affirmations,



Editor's Pick

Alternative rock band Jimmy Eat World comes to Royal Oak this Saturday. Known for their 2002 summer hit "The Middle" the group brings fresh material from their new, self-crafted album, "Chase This Light."

Singer, guitarist and songwriter Jim Adkins says, "Our goal has always been to get songs to a place that is accessible without being insulting." Their traditional alternative sound

blends with real emotion to reach anyone in the audience.

The all-ages show begins at 7:30 p.m. July 6 at Royal Oak Music Theatre. 318 W. Fourth St, Royal Oak. Tickets are \$28-30. For more information, call 248-399-2980 or visit www.royaloakmusictheatre.com.

290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Clawson Freedom Run 7:30 p.m. 5k. Route patrolled by 36 guards. Course follows Park, Washington, Elmwood, Selfridge, Choccolay, Broadacre, Webik, Elmwood, Kenilworth, Dreon, School, Custer, and ends at North edge of the City Park. Splits are read at the one and two mile marks. Finish times are announced and digitally recorded by overall position. Prizes include medals, trophies, and more. Admission: \$0-15. Clawson Fourth of July Committee, 14 Mile Road, **Clawson**. Clawsonruns.com/Freedom

Sunday, June 30

Get Out Bike/Shore to Shore Training - Stony Creek 10 a.m. GOAL, 4300 Main Park Dr., **Shelby Township**. Meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

Volleyball 1 p.m. With warm weather. Located north of the Lansing Mall. Lansing Association for Human Rights, **Lansing**. beachlerb@sbcglobal.net

Dog Hikes with Pro K9 2 p.m. GOAL, **Canton**. meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT/events

Monday, July 1

Higher Ground 6:30 p.m. Weekly support group meetings for people living with HIV/AIDS. Each meeting includes meditation and peer discussions. Self-Run, **Ferndale**. 586-427-1259. info@hghiv.org

One Voice Chorus 7 p.m. LGBT Choral group. Meets every Monday. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Sistrum, Lansing Women's Chorus 7 p.m. Lansing Association for Human Rights, 1020 S. Harrison Road, **Lansing**. haston@lcc.edu lahronline.org

Tuesday, July 2

Stars & Stripes 7:30 a.m. This tour will stop at the Kalamazoo Air Zoo where a pilot who flew planes over Korea will give us a tour. Other activities include taking a ride in a flight simulator and much more! We have pick up destinations in Novi & Wixom. Tickets: \$69. Step On Bus Tours, 215 W. Troy, Suite 2046, **Ferndale**. 248-619-6692. steponbustours@gmail.com Steponbustours.com

Talk Tuesdays 6 p.m. Free. KICK, 41 Burroughs St. 109, **Detroit**. 313-285-9733. e-kick.org

Euchre at Esquire Club 6:30 p.m. Lansing Association for Human Rights, 1250 Turner

St., **Lansing**. 517-487-5338. lahronline.org

Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus Rehearsal 6:45 p.m. Lansing Association for Human Rights, 510 W. Ottawa St., **Lansing**. info@glgmc.org

Tea & Talk 8 p.m. Open discussion with free tea and treats. Triple Goddess New Age Bookstore, 1824 E. Michigan Ave., **Lansing**. 517-347-2112. Triplegoddessbookstore.net

Wednesday, July 3

Beloved Hearts Grief Support Group 6:30 p.m. We cannot change what has happened, but we can support and walk beside you as you grieve. We can give you hugs, help you cry and be the soft place for you to fall when you feel like you cannot take another step. For LGBT and allies grieving the death of a loved one (including pets). GOAL, 515 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. getoutandlive.me

Dykes on Bikes - Monthly Planning Meeting 6:30 p.m. Monthly meeting to plan rides and socialize. A great group of women who welcome new members with all levels of experience. Get Out And Live!, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

Arcus Youth Group 7 p.m. This is for middle and high school age youth who enjoy socializing with people their own age, going through the same issues as them. Some of the topics covered are current events, families, communication, and decision making. No one over the age of 20 please. The Network, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, **Grand Rapids**. 616-458-3511. Grlgbt.org

Karaoke Night 9 p.m. Lansing Association for Human Rights, 1250 Turner St., **Lansing**. 517-487-5338. lahronline.org

Thursday, July 4

Clawson Firecracker Mile 9 a.m. A run on the newly-paved straight, legally-flat, five-lane-wide 14 Mile Road, immediately before Clawsons Annual 4th of July Day Parade. Race will be chip-timed. Splits read at each quarter mile. Official finish times provided for first five men and women. Large digital clock will display finish times while PA system announces times. Prizes of up to \$1000, trophies, and more. Admission: \$12-20. Clawson Fourth of July Committee, 14 Mile Road, **Clawson**. info@clawsonruns.com Clawsonruns.com/Firecracker

Bike Pelee Island plus optional Wine Tour 10 a.m. Be sure to have a passport or enhanced driver license. GOAL, 500 Erie St., **Leamington**.

Moms in Motion 11 a.m. Bi-weekly support

group for parents living with HIV. DMC/AIDS Partnership Michigan, 471 St. Antoine, **Detroit**. 313-993-3444.

Lansing Community College Gay Straight Alliance 5:30 p.m. Bingo after at Esquire. Lansing Association for Human Rights, **Lansing**. spennyj@lcc.edu lahronline.org

Beautiful-Monthly Social 7 p.m. A monthly get-together for people living with HIV and their families and friends. Beautiful, 1415 Glynn Ct., Number 111, **Detroit**. 313-733-8183.

MUSIC & MORE

COMEDY

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Dobie Maxwell" Never at a loss for words, Dobie Maxwell packs a wallop in his comedy show. He speaks in guests, prowls the stage, and combines emotions and opinions to his amazing stories. Many fans come to see him over and over again because with his many experiences he never does exactly the same show twice. Tickets: \$10+. Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. June 28 - June 29. 734-996-9080. aacomedy.com

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Bill Cosby" Tickets: \$35+. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. June 29 - June 29. 313-576-5111. dso.org

CONCERTS

Blind Pig "Hung Up" With Signals and The Threads. 18+. Tickets: \$5-8. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9:30 p.m. June 27. 734-996-8555. Blindpig.com

Chelsea Alehouse Brewery "Merck and Fritz" Live jazz featuring guitar and violin. Suggested Donation: \$5. All ages. Chelsea Alehouse Brewery, 420 N. Main, Suite 100, Chelsea. 8:30 p.m. June 27. chelseaaalehouse.com

DTE Energy Music Theatre "Rascal Flatts with The Band Perry and Cassadee Pope" Tickets: \$29. 75+. DTE Energy Music Theatre, 7774 Sashabaw Road, **Clarkston**. 7 p.m. June 27. 248-377-0100. palacenet.com

Kerrytown Concert House "Jazz Master Series featuring Shahida Nurullah" Shahida Nurullah, vocals. Tad Weed, piano. Kurt Krahnke, bass. Sean Dobbins, drums. Tickets: \$5-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. June 29. 734-763-4186. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

See Happenings, page 32



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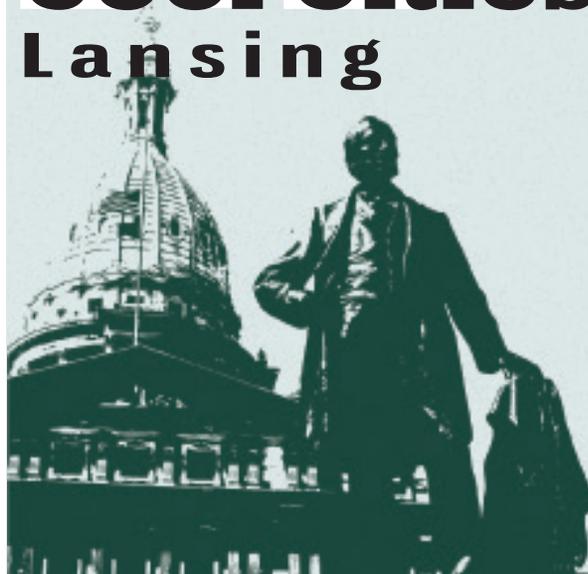


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'Camp' It Up

BY JOHN QUINN

Summer crept in on little cat feet at 1:04 EDT Friday. Go Comedy! in Ferndale got an early start with the Thursday debut of an original sketch comedy, "S'more Money, S'more Problems," a theatrical amusement park with something for everyone.

Sketch comedy is all about collaboration. At Go Comedy! the actors develop their own material, relying heavily on improvisational techniques, to arrive at a final script. It is an intense, emotionally vulnerable experience to open one's self to his fellow artists for the creative process. The strong bond forged among the performers reaches out to include their audience; it's an intimate experience for everyone. Directed by Pj Jacokes, with assistance from Travis Pelto, "S'more Money, S'more Problems" is written by and features Rj Cach, Christa Coulter, Erik Heilner, Suzie Jacokes, Tim Kay and Dez Walker.

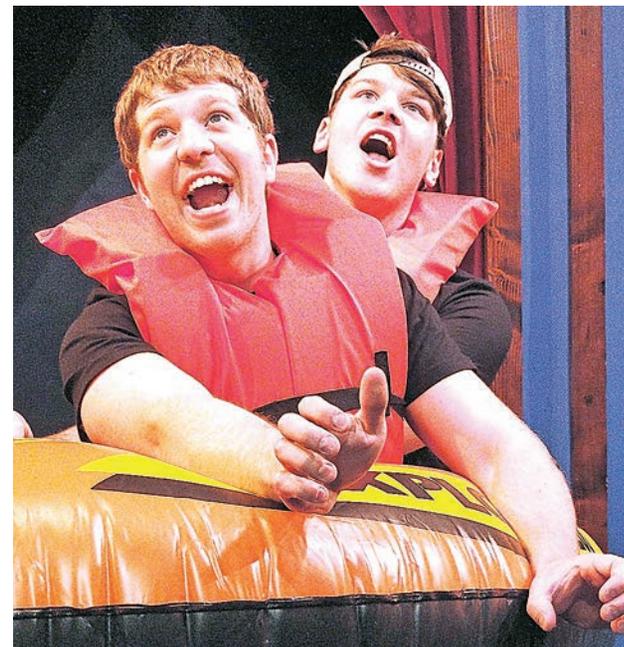
Camp Wikipedia is open for the summer, and a flock of young screwballs arrives to meet their equally odd counselors and staff. As the season progresses, we meet hormonally driven boys, girls on the make, a creepy groundskeeper, a boozy nurse and professional "babysitters" barely mature enough to handle their charges. As an added bonus, we get an idea of how parents play when the kids are away.

I'll quote an old gag, allegedly inspired by the last words of English actor Edmund Gwenn: "Dying is easy. Comedy is difficult." Sketch comedy is even more difficult, because no one can expect all the scenes to be equally successful, so dying onstage is easy. "S'more Money, S'more Problems" has an acceptable ratio of hits to misses, but the extremes are farther apart than usual. The sketch that provides the show title

is one of the best, as four sexually-obsessed boys sit around a campfire demonstrating how little they know about the birds and bees. Tim Kay's dizzy slide show of activities available at Camp Wikipedia is smashing. Less successful is a whitewater rafting trip by Heilner and Cach that is ambitiously staged but almost unintelligible.

With six artists creating a figurative cast of thousands, it's hard to keep track of who's who, especially when the costume change may be merely an added neckerchief. Here the ensemble does a decent job with altered vocal tone and inflection, coupled with subtle changes in body language. Yet there is danger in some vocal acrobatics; pitching a nasal voice at the top of one's volume and range risks an incomprehensible delivery.

Now, class, I know school's out for summer, but I have some vocabulary study for you. Our word is "claque." Hiring people, "claqueurs," to applaud performances was common in theater history. In the French theater, a producer could go to an organization, the claque, and hire as many audience plants as he thought he needed. The convention is gone, but not forgotten. That is, not forgotten as long as opening nights are "friends and family" nights. Then the



"S'more Money, S'more Problems" takes audiences to Camp Wikipedia this summer at Go Comedy! The show features Erik Heilner and Rj Cach Thursday and Friday nights at 8 p.m. through Aug. 2. Photo: SMyers.

REVIEW

S'more Money, S'more Problems

Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 8 p.m. Thursday-Friday through Aug. 2. 80 minutes; no intermission. \$15. 248-327-0575.
>> www.gocomedy.net

natural desire to boost the performers' confidence can be as disrupting as a ringing cell phone mid-performance.

In the case of "S'more Money, S'more Problems," the unnatural response served as a recurring reminder that the material wasn't strong enough to warrant it. I know you, my gentle patrons, are too sophisticated to annoy an audience with maniacal laughter, but perhaps you know someone still a little rough around the edges? Gently suggest they take a cue from Larry David - "Curb Your Enthusiasm."

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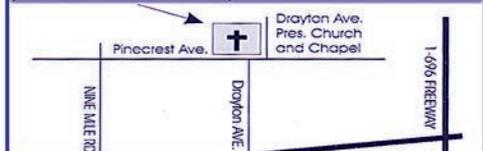


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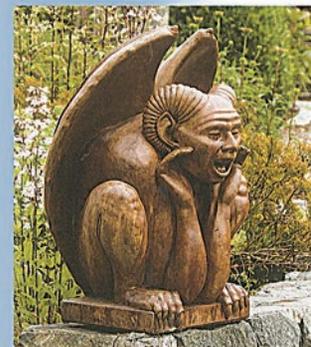
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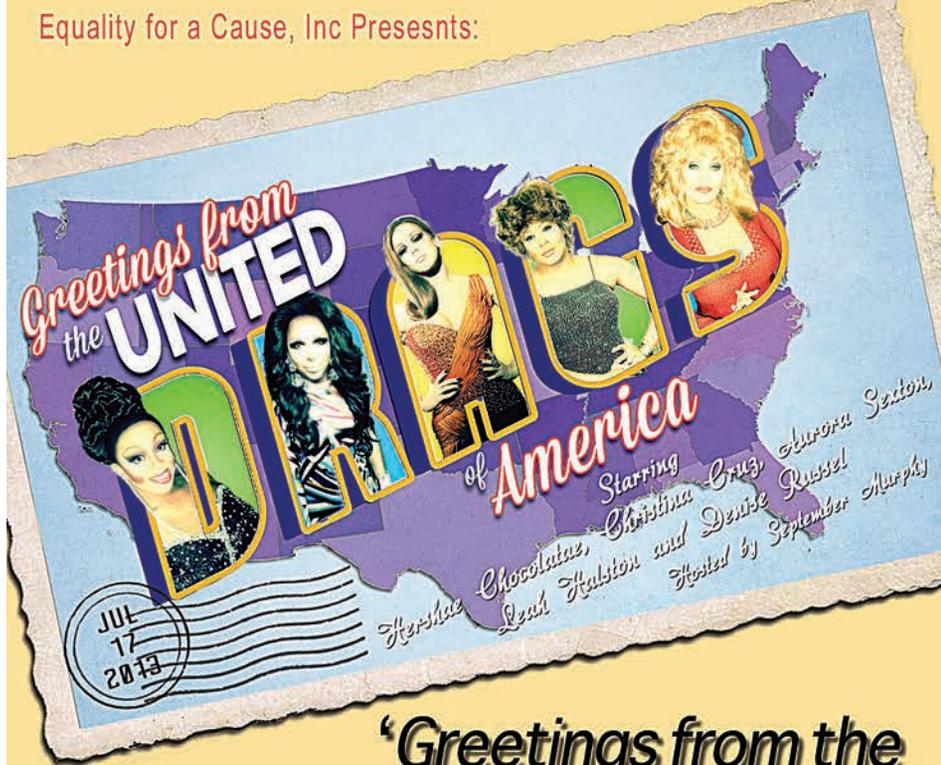
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▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 28

Meadow Brook Music Festival "George Benson" Inspiration: A Tribute to Nat King Cole with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Tickets: \$20, 35-86, 65. Meadow Brook Music Festival, 3554 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills. 8 p.m. June 27. 248-377-0100. Palacenet.com

Michigan Philharmonic "Michigan Philharmonic Summer in the Park". Kellogg Park, Plymouth. 7:30 p.m. June 29. michigaphil.org

Oakland University's Music Preparatory Division "OU Summer Strings Camp" Different topics, theories, rehearsals, and workshops covered each day. Ages: 12-17. Tuition: \$375. Oakland University, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. June 24 - June 28. 248-370-2030. oakland.edu/summerstrings

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Jimmy Eat World" All ages. Tickets: \$28-30. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. 7:30 p.m. July 6. 248-399-2980. www.royaloakmusictheatre.com

Stars in the Park "The Groove Council" Free. Heritage Park Amphitheatre, Farmington Road, Farmington Hills. 7 p.m. June 27. 248-473-1848.

The Ark "Marcia Ball" Tickets: \$30. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. June 30. 734-761-1800. TheArk.org

The Magic Bag "The Hounds Below" With Big Mess & The Barrettes. Tickets: \$5. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 7 p.m. June 29. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

The Majestic "CSS & lo Echo" All ages. Tickets: \$15. The Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. June 27. 313-833-9700. majesticdetroit.com

The Village Theater at Cherry Hill "Daniel D" Contemporary Violinist Daniel D comes to metro Detroit and brings his infectious melodies and rhythms from a variety of Jazz, Hip Hop and R & B sounds. Tickets: \$20. The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. 7:30 p.m. June 29. 734-394-5300. canton-mi.org/villagetheater

THEATER

Fools \$11-12. The Twin City Junior Players at The Twin City Players Playhouse, 600 W. Glenford Road, St. Joseph. July 12 - 21. 269-429-0400. www.Twincityplayers.org

Little Me \$7-10. Ann Arbors Penny Seats Theatre Company at West Park Band Shell, 215 Chapin St., Ann Arbor. July 11 - 27. 734-276-2832. www.Pennyseats.org

Little Shop of Horrors \$15. The Twin City Players, 600 W. Glenford Rd., St. Joseph. Through June 30. 269-429-0400. www.twincityplayers.org

The Play's the Thing Free. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at A2CT Studio Theater, 322 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor. June 28 - 29. 734-971-2228. www.A2ct.org

PROFESSIONAL

1964...The Tribute The number one Beatles tribute show in the world, with Cliff Erickson. \$15.25-25.45. Meadow Brook Music Festival, 3554 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills. 8 p.m. July 11. 248-377-0100. www.Palacenet.com

All Shook Up \$25-60. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, DeWitt Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. June 21 - Aug. 10. 616-395-7890. www.Hope.edu/hstr

Andronicus Bound \$15-18. Threefold Productions at The MIX Studio Theatre, 8 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti. July 12 - 28. 734-968-8717. www.Threefoldproductions.org

Cinderella or It's Okay to Be Different \$8 adult, \$5 child. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through June 30. 313-577-2972. www.hilberry.com

Company \$15. Great Escape Stage Company, 155 W. Michigan Ave., Marshall. Through June 30. 269-781-2700. www.Greatescapestagecompany.com

Cymbeline \$15-\$20. Blackbird Theatre at West Park Band Shell, 300 N. Seventh Avenue, Ann Arbor. Through June 29. www.facebook.com/events/164478397059560

Ernie \$20-\$25. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Through Aug. 11. 800-745-3000. www.olympiaentertainment.com

I Am Woman \$12-20. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre at Park Theatre, 248 S. River Ave., Holland. July 2 - 31. 616-395-7890. www.Hope.edu/hstr

I Hate Hamlet \$27-32. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Through June 30. 248-347-0003. www.tippingpointtheatre.com

Les Miserables Previews July 11. \$22-\$32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. July 11 - Aug. 18. 734-268-6200. www.theencoretheatre.org

Magic Rocks \$7. Tibbits Popcorn Theatre at Tibbits Summer Theatre, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. July 5 - 13. 517-278-6029. www.Tibbits.org

Measure for Measure \$7-14. Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company at Dog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. Through June 30. www.dogstorytheater.com

Next to Normal \$27-\$31. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Through June 30. 269-343-2727. www.farmersalleytheatre.com

Next to Normal \$18-\$23 in advance; \$2 more at the door. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes & Noble Booksellers Theatre, 6800 Orchard Lake Rd., West Bloomfield. Through June 30. 248-850-9919. www.twomusetheatre.org

Opera at the Acorn \$25. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. June 29. 269-756-3879. www.Acorntheater.com

Peter Pan \$35. Barn Theatre, 13351 M-96, Augusta. June 25 - July 7. 269-731-4121. www.barntheatre.com

Sandbox Play Festival \$10-\$12. Tipping Point Theatre at Genitti's Hole-In-The-Wall, 108 E. Main St., Northville. June 28 - 30. 248-347-0003. www.tippingpointtheatre.com

Sleeping Beauty \$10 adult, \$5 child. PuppetART at Detroit Puppet Theatre, 25 E. Grand River, Detroit. Through June 29. 313-967-0999. www.puppetart.org

The 39 Steps \$12-21. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre at Knickerbocker Theatre, 86 E. Eighth St., Holland. Through July 6. 616-395-7890. www.Hope.edu/hstr

The Selfish Giant \$15. Three Oaks Theater Festival at The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 1 p.m. July 6. 269-756-3879. www.Threeoaksfestival.com

Editor's Pick



In keeping with their "Summer Camp" theme, The Ringwald presents the mother of all campy comedies, "Mommie Queerest." The production is by Jamie Morris, the author of another Summer Camp extravaganza, "The Facts of Life: The Lost Episode," which played The Ringwald for two summers.

"Mommie Queerest," an all-male tribute to and teardown of "Mommie Dearest," the terrible-wonderful 1981 biopic of Hollywood legend Joan Crawford, based on her daughter Christina's bestselling, mom-blasting memoir. "Dearest" is a stupendously awful movie, and "Queerest"

does to it what its Crawford did to those rose bushes – whack away madly, maniacally, hilariously, not only at the glamour monster herself but at Faye Dunaway's career-quelling performance.

The cast for "Mommie Queerest" is Joe Bailey as Joan Crawford and Joe Plambeck as Christina Crawford. Rounding out the cast are Dan Morrison and Richard Payton as Greg Savitt and Carol Anne and everyone else. Dyan Bailey makes her directorial debut with Vince Kelley on costumes.

"Mommie Queerest" runs July 12-Aug. 5 and plays at 8 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Monday with 3 p.m. Sunday matinees. Ticket prices are \$20 for Friday and Saturday performances, \$15 for Sunday shows, and Monday nights are half off the original price at only \$10 a ticket. Tickets can be purchased at theringwald.com or at the theatre box office. The Ringwald box office opens 45 minutes before performances and tickets can be purchased with cash or Visa/Mastercard.



Editor's Pick

Join Hope Summer Repertory Theatre at Holland's historic Park Theatre for "I Am Woman," a cabaret that celebrates great female songwriters, soloists and vocal groups of our time. With tunes ranging from the musical theater repertoire to pop and rock classics, the song selection for this revue is sure to entertain. Spanning from the 1950s to the present day, the numbers reflect different points in women's lives as well as their relationships with their friends and family.

The entire show is performed by five lovely and talented women: Sierra White, Katie Drinkard, Alyssa Magarian

(who was seen last season in "Pride and Prejudice" and "Songs for a New World"), Olivia Puckett and Grace Stockdale.

Drinks will be available for purchase during the performance. Created by Fred Tessler and Brad Landers, "I Am Woman" runs at the Park Theatre (248 S. River Ave., Holland) at 8:30 p.m. July 2, 3, 8, 9, 18, 23, 31. For tickets, call 616-395-7890.

The Tortoise and the Hare & Other Fables by Aesop \$7, which includes popcorn and juice at intermission. Tibbits Summer Theatre, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. Through June 29. 517-278-6029. www.tibbits.org

Tuna Does Vegas Previews July 11-14 & 18 (\$15). \$20-25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. July 11 - Aug. 18. 517-655-SHOW. www.williamstontheatre.org

Xanadu \$29-42. Mason Street Warehouse at Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. June 21 - July 14. 269-857-2399. www.sc4a.org

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown \$12. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre at Studio Theatre in DeWitt Center, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Through Aug. 9. 616-395-7890. www.Hope.edu/HSRT

ART 'N' AROUND

Anton Art Center "Opening Reception for Aglow" Aglow is an exhibition that aims to fuse art, science and technology by exploring the use of light as inspiration, subject matter or material. Exhibiting artwork by Joe Ferraro, Doug LaFerie, David Lambert, Teresa Peterson, Rachel Reynolds, Christine Welch and more. Anton Art Center, 125 Macomb Place, Mount Clemens. June 15 - July 14. 586-469-8666. theartcenter.org

Chelsea River Gallery "2D3D" Michael Thoresen and Joan Painter Jones pair new sculptures and paintings. Chelsea River Gallery, 120 S. Main St., Chelsea. May 25 - June 28. 734-433-0826.

chelsearivergallery.com

Cranbrook Art Museum "From the Archives: Teaching and Exhibiting Painting at Cranbrook, 1930 - 1970" Drawing entirely from the collections of the Cranbrook Archives, this exhibition is comprised of selections of historic photographs, exhibition announcements and catalogs, press releases, and artists' correspondence, showcasing how instrumental Cranbrook Academy of Art was in shaping art as we know it today. Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. June 14 - Sep. 29. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookartmuseum.org

Detroit Artists Market "EDGE" A group exhibition of twelve artists reconfiguring established thinking and current perceptions of art. Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. June 7 - July 13. 313-832-8540. Detroitartistsmarket.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Printmaking: Sandpaper Monoprints" Use wax crayons, sandpaper, and your imagination to create one-of-a-kind prints on fabric. All ages. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. June 7 - June 28. 313-833-7900. dia.org

Downriver Council for the Arts "Adult Acrylic Class" Facilitated by Ken Barbb. Drop-in. Open to beginners to advanced. Students bring own supplies. Admission: \$15. Downriver Council for the Arts, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. May 4 - Oct. 26. 734-720-0671. Downriverarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Around the World with 80 Objects" Rarely seen selections from the four points of the compass and across millennia have been drawn from the FIA's vault and assembled into this provocative and stimulating exhibition.

While many objects were born out of necessity - vessels, weaponry, tools, and apparel - they have been collected here for their fascinating artistic designs, from simple to the most elaborate. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. March 3 - June 30. Flintarts.org

Fourteen East "Abstract Art by Jan Brown" Jan Brown's acrylic paintings, done in the past three years, display an emotional excitement that lures viewers into their depths. Fourteen East, 15 E. Kirby, Detroit. April 30 - July 26.

Grand Rapids Art Museum "Friday Night Conversations" Unique collaborations with artists and organizations in the community. Programs have included performances, gallery talks, activities, presentations, and more. Grand Rapids Art Museum, 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. April 5 - Sep. 27. 616-831-1000. artmuseumgr.org

Krasl Art Center "Philosophy of Art" If you have ever wondered why something in a museum was considered art, felt like you just didn't understand what was happening in the art world today, or wondered why art is the way it is, then this class is for you. However, be prepared to read, think and critically discuss; this class is run like a graduate school seminar. Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph. May 23 - Sep. 26. 269-983-0271. krasl.org

Lawrence Street Gallery "Palette and Brush Club". Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave., Suite A, Ferndale. June 5 - June 28. 248-544-0394. lawrenchstreetgallery.com

Michigan State University Museum "Michigan and the Civil War" Exhibit highlights Michigan connections in the Civil War. Michigan State University Museum, 409

W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. May 1 - Oct. 31. 517-355-7474. museum.msu.edu

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit "(in)Habitation" The sculptural works featured are both serious and playful. They engage through movement, flashing lights and the spectacular, but ultimately lead us to question our existing biases and assumptions about what the idea of "home" really means. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. June 7 - July 28. 313-832-6622. mocaadetroit.org

Riverside Arts Center "Mary Bachman: Retrospective Exhibit" Will contain Bachman's work in Oils, Pastels, Casein, Watercolor, Sculpture, Pottery, Weaving, Colored Pencil and Graphite. Riverside Arts Center, 76 North Huron Street, Ypsilanti. May 31 - June 29. 734-483-7345. Riversidearts.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Land & Sky" Featuring paintings by noted Chicago artist Frank Dudley, this exhibition reveals how art - from paintings and photographs to music and theatrical presentations - played a pivotal role in our nation's first dune preservation movement in Northwest Indiana. Free. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. May 30 - Aug. 9. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

The Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit "Let My People GO!" The Soviet Jewry Movement 1967-1989" Features the exclusive Midwest engagement of a collection of posters, photographs and film clips on loan from the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv, as well as portraits from Detroit's Russian-Jewish community, lectures, performances, a Russian Tea Room party and more. Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. June 9 - July 25. 248-661-1900. jccdet.org

The Scarab Club "Blooms, Bugs, Beasts Exhibition" The purpose of the Blooms, Bugs, Beasts exhibition is to recognize the diversity and achievement of artists whose work show creativity of concept, excellence of design and expertise of media; to display these works to regional audiences and to be an educational opportunity for students. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. May 15 - June 29. 313-831-1250. scarabclub.org

University Of Michigan Museum Of Art "Laurie Anderson: From the Air" Located between and within performance, visual arts, film, and beyond, Laurie Anderson's unconstrained and multidisciplinary practice is perhaps most enduringly rooted in her attention to exceptional storytelling. In any genre, she is an unquestionably provocative, poignant, political, and personal teller of tales. University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. April 6 - Aug. 11. 734-763-4186. umich.edu

Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts "CHROMA" Features artwork that focuses on color, or the lack of color, as the central element of expression. Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, Two Fulton West, Grand Rapids. May 31 - Aug. 18. Uica.org

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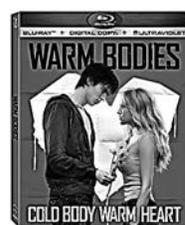
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► Screen Queen

Continued from p. 26

characters – among them, a tragically affecting gay couple living closeted in 1931 – that transcend earth, space and the hereafter. The complexity of this Rubik's Cube drama – with romance, comedy and suspense tearing through each story – is philosophically challenging, even off-putting at first, with its eternal love, time continuum and freedom ideologies, but it's also a marvel to relish: actors bend genders and race (You're seeing right; that's Susan Sarandon as a man and Hugo Weaving as a female nurse), and time-shifting scenes fall into each other like magic. And there is, of course, just the grand ambition of trans co-writer Lana Wachowski, who with the other creators has obviously put her heart and soul into this rich, enveloping and deeply moving adaptation of the also-dense novel. This confounding and emotionally effective mind bender calls for an in-depth look, but the special features only offer short featurettes – several featuring Wachowski – that barely fill in the blanks.

Also Out



Warm Bodies

When you think zombies, you don't think heart. You think brains. And "Warm Bodies" doesn't skimp on head jelly as the walking dead take on mankind in this post-apocalyptic comedy. But there's an unexpected romantic crux a la "Romeo and Juliet" ... if Romeo ate people. Nicholas Hoult is "R," a zombie who falls for Julie (Teresa Palmer) after he devours the brains of her boyfriend (Dave Franco). As they run from an even greater threat – and he from the humans, she from the bad zombies – they forge a romantic relationship rarely seen in a movie with organ eating. It's adorable, hilarious and gross, but above all, it cleverly eats zombie stereotypes and finds new life in undead mythology. Packed with special features, owning "Warm Bodies" is a no-brainer.



Side Effects

The first shot in "Side Effects" is of blood streaked across a hardwood floor. We then backtrack three months, the story twisting and turning as it has you wondering what you got yourself into: a PSA on antidepressants? An intense,

crazy, manipulative thriller? Both? Steven Soderbergh directs a sexy cast of Hollywood hotness – Jude Law, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Channing Tatum and "Dragon Tattoo" badass Rooney Mara – in a wicked nail biter that's as out of control as its shady protagonist, Emily Taylor (Mara), who goes mental when she's put on a new experimental drug. And because Soderbergh has decided to queer up his career with "Behind the Candelabra" and "Magic Mike," the lesbians get some girl-on-girl action when Jones and Mara make out. What we don't get are many extras.



Identity Thief

Looking very much like a '90s drag queen who raided her grandma's Florida condo closet, Melissa McCarthy plays a woman with no friends but lots of stuff. Stuff she bought on someone else's dime. That someone is family man Sandy Patterson (Jason Bateman), who tracks the scammer down. McCarthy lives up to the "Bridesmaids" hype with a comic powerhouse performance hinging on crazy caricature. Sometimes stooping low – fat jokes and derogatory name-calling abound – the comedy from "Horrible Bosses" director Seth Gordon requires a high tolerance for exploitative political incorrectness. Still, the critical bashing is overblown – it's not a perfect comedy, but is it knee-slapping funny? Yes. Very. Is Melissa a riot? Duh. Bonus features include an extended cut of the film and alternate scene takes.



Mama

A horror movie that's kind of ... precious? It's true that the Guillermo del Toro-produced fright flick starring Jessica Chastain – rocking the Pat Benatar look – is a chilling, sometimes amusingly silly tale (see: the end) with spooks, jumps and bumps in the night. But "mama" doesn't just snatch a couple girls and turn them into gnarly-looking roadrunner-fast kooks because she can. Chastain is solid – when is she not? – as a gothed-up mom figure who goes from self-centered caretaker to full-on guardian (aww). The role, like the awesomely absurd film, surprises by taking the road less traveled: What, character development in horror? A monster reveal early on? You know what they say: "Mama" knows best. The short that inspired the full feature is included among generous extras.

Classifieds

101-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AA MEETINGS

Ann Arbor-Friday

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

Bloomfield Hills-Thurs- day

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

Detroit-Tuesday / Friday

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

Farmington Hills- Monday

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

Ferndale-Monday / Wednesday / Friday

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

Ferndale-Wednesday

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

Ferndale-Saturday

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

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

Livonia-Friday

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

Warren-Monday

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

106 ANNOUNCEMENTS - GROUPS

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Solution to puzzle from page 36

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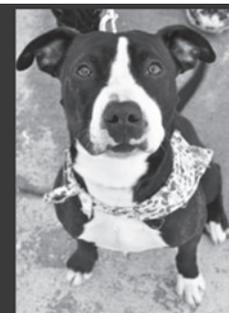
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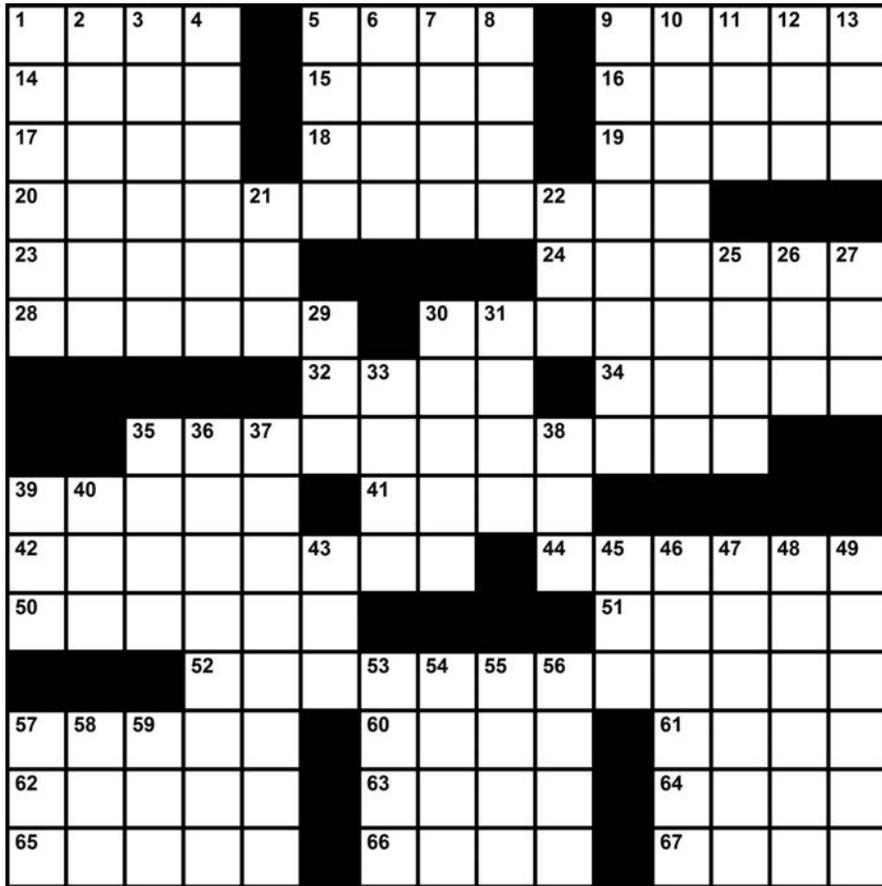
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Across

- 1 It can help you hold your liquor
 5 "I ___ Andy Warhol"
 9 Orlando group that plays with balls
 14 Michelangelo's David, and such
 15 Prefix meaning "half"
 16 You must remember this
 17 British carbine
 18 Persian Gulf land
 19 Story of Greeks and Trojans
 20 Start of the answer to "Why can't we give 35-Across to LGBT people?"
 23 12-inch stick
 24 Pastoral pieces
 28 Threat words
 30 Think tank output
 32 Big part
 34 When repeated, a "Funny Girl" song
 35 Freedoms that all should enjoy
 39 She had her hand up Lamb Chop
 41 Sultry Horne
 42 Dean Cain's Clark Kent, for one
 44 Part for a Singer
 50 Species of Mr. Squarepants
 51 Fire, to Frida
 52 End of the answer

- 57 Dallas dweller
 60 Skye on screens
 61 "Catch you later"
 62 Funny Cheri
 63 Admit openly
 64 Latin poet
 65 Greek sorceress
 66 Part of YMCA
 67 The L.A. Sparks strip them

Down

- 1 Milk neighborhood
 2 Bea of "The Golden Girls"
 3 "Remington ___"
 4 Where bitches hang out
 5 It might poke you in prison
 6 On the spot
 7 Poet Khayy-m
 8 Like Tim
 9 Principle course at Star Canyon
 10 Urban pussy
 11 Queer in Quebec
 12 "___ Yankee Doodle Dandy"
 13 Provincetown's Cape
 21 Hesitation sounds
 22 Lubricant
 25 Jar tops
 26 Island necklace
 27 U-turn from NNW

- 29 Cotton gin inventor Whitney
 30 Fruit peeler
 31 Top Norse deity
 33 Woods of "Legally Blonde"
 35 Melissa may attach one to her neck
 36 Pots and pans, e.g.
 37 State named for a queen who wasn't sexually active
 38 Gift of Ellen DeGeneres
 39 June grads
 40 Like cool cats
 43 Address book no.
 45 Frequently, to Shakespeare
 46 Place where you often see the slogan of this puzzle's theme
 47 Mind one's manners
 48 "No need to explain"
 49 Rootless types
 53 Neeson of "Kinsey"
 54 Didn't go straight
 55 Source of this puzzle's quote (abbr.)
 56 Randy Shilts' area
 57 Hulce of "Amadeus"
 58 Season abroad
 59 Crossed through, with "out"

See Solution pg. 35

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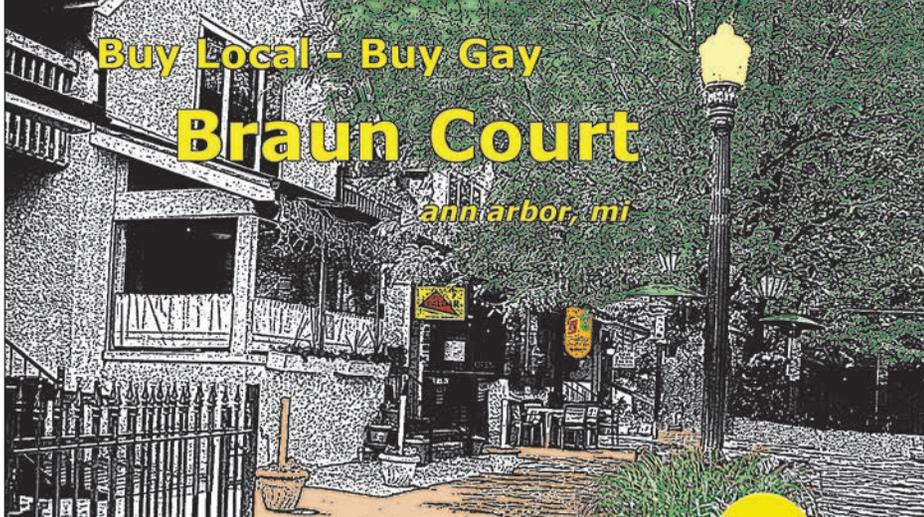
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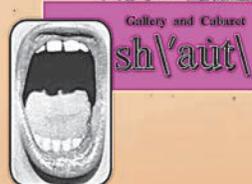


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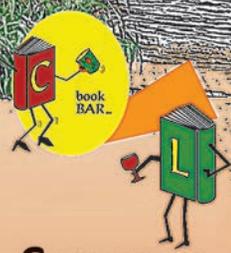


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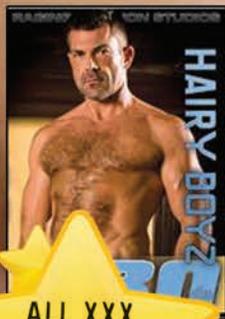
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Dating Diet

BY ANTHONY PAULL

I need to stop going to parties where people think Heineken is high-end beer. That's how I met a 30-year-old ginger named Ron who's confused about his sexuality. I know. I don't have enough to deal with. Now, I have to contend with an ambiguous hetero who wants to know how often I clean my ass.

"Aw. You should be flattered," my friend Chuck says. "He wants you to teach him. It's like having an apprentice."

"Really? And what does he get when he graduates. A career in anal?"

I know. I'm not supposed to talk about my ass in the column. But every time I try to change the topic, someone brings it back. It's bad enough when it happens at the dinner table. But when I'm attending a social event? No. Just. No. There are rules to follow. Etiquette.

"Dude," Ron says. For the second time this month he finds me at a kegger for college students. Apparently, we're buds. "Remember me?" He glows with a grin, his red hair matching his freckles.

"I wish I didn't."

"I don't want to bother you, but can I ask you a question?" He speaks before I reply. "Do you take it in the ass every night? That's gotta hurt, right?" I gasp, choking down my beer. "Whoa man. My bad. Is that rude?"

"No. It's normal for an opener. It goes hand-in-hand with 'hello, my name is.'"

He eyes me with genuine naivety. "Sorry. I don't mean to be a dick. I just don't know what's going on with me." He offers to fill my cup. "See, I'm straight, right? But I've been hanging out with this gay dude." He stalls, struggling to admit he's been playing tongue hockey with the guy for the last month. It takes two more trips to the keg before the big reveal. "I want to take it to the next level, but I don't know if I can do..." He points to his ass. "...you know...that."

"Um. That's not the only thing we do."

"I know. You blow each other too but..."

I groan. "Really?"

His gay love interest arrives, and he becomes jittery. "Shit. He's here." We both turn to look, and the guy walks off in a huff. "He's pissed because I told him I'm straight," Ron explains. "He doesn't believe me."

"Why?"

"Because I had my hand on his dick when

I said it."

"Wow. Just wow." I walk off, and he tries to explain himself.

"Look man. I like spending time with him. Seriously. I think about him when he's not around. I want to lie in bed with him. Be next to him. It's not about sex." He laughs. "Ooh, that sounds gay." He catches himself. "No offense."

I stand on my tongue. "I really have to go."

"No. Wait," he says, his gay lover approaching. "Just chill. He's coming. I don't want this to be awkward."

"Too late," I say.

Ron makes introductions, trying to include me in the conversation while they begin to argue about who's been avoiding who. It seems Ron hasn't been replying to text messages. Hurt, his guy eyes me like I'm the reason. To calm him, I make it clear that I have a boyfriend. I bring it up, over and over. Boyfriend. Boyfriend. Boyfriend.

"Yeah," Ron confirms. "And get this, they do more than bang each other in the ass."

I turn white, and his lover flushes, excusing himself.

"I thought you didn't want this to be awkward," I say.

"What? I thought it would be a good icebreaker. So he and I could talk about, you know, our problem."

"Not in the middle of a party."

He smacks himself in the head. "Right. Damn. Stupid. I'm supposed to treat him like a girl."

My chest burns. "No, you're supposed to treat him with respect." I mimic his behavior, smacking myself. "Oh. I forgot. You can't like him. You're straight."

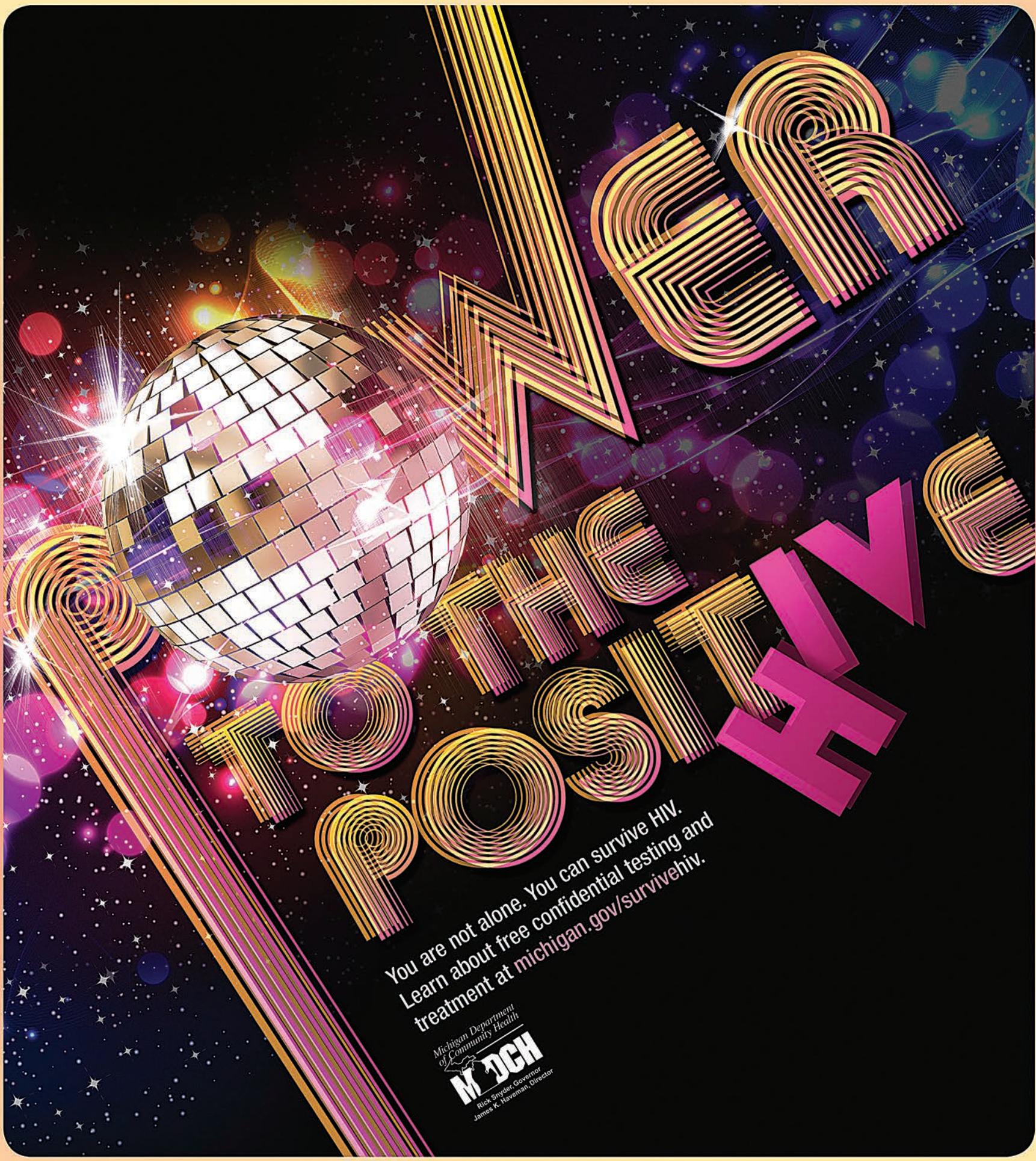
I dodge Ron for the rest of the night, stepping outside to get a closer look at the indie band playing in the shed. From time to time, I see him smoking and playing with a stray dog. I tell myself to be nice; he's struggling with a feeling that contradicts the way he defines himself. It's not easy. He's no different from my other friends caught up with labels. I'm Gay. Queer. Two-Spirited. I'm LGBTQ-RSTUVWXYZ. Some people don't understand that, in the end, there are more important things that describe our character than whom we love. For Ron, loving a man doesn't fit in the right box, so he has to think outside of it, pondering how it shapes him as a man.

"Look. I'm sorry. Will you just listen?" he says, finding me as I leave. "I'm new to this."

"To what?" I ask. "You've never been in love?"

"Yeah, but not with a dude." He lingers, shaking his head. "I don't know where to start."

"It's easy. You admit it."



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