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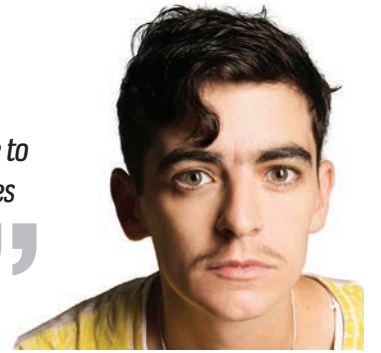


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-JD Samson, pg. 16



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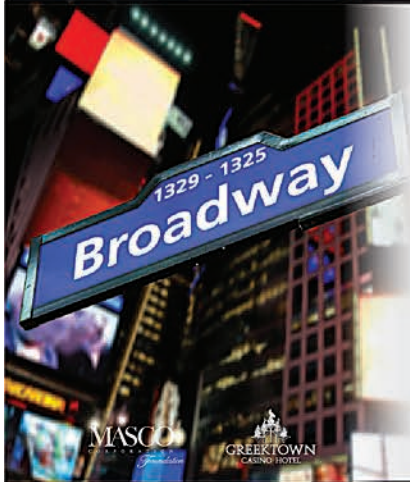
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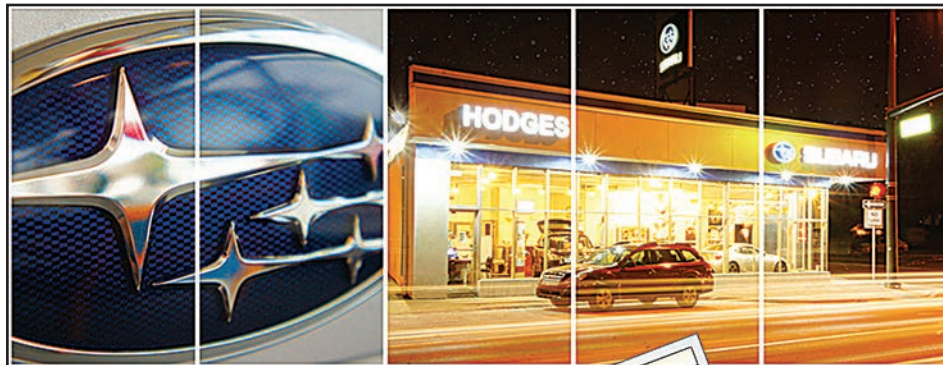
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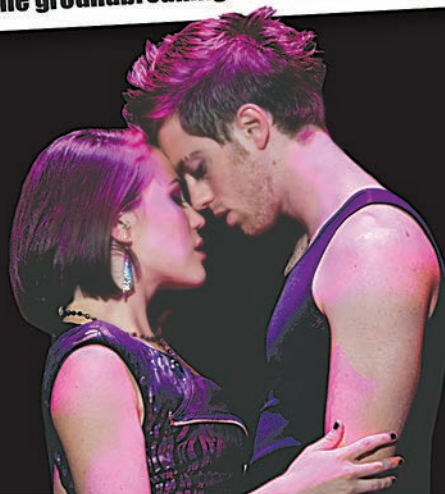
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COVER

18 Patti for president



“The homelessness problem among **LGBTQ youth** in this country is nothing short of an epidemic, and **the city of Detroit is in particular need of support right now.**”

— fun. bandmembers and Rachel Antonoff, pg. 6



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SAVE THE DATE



Save The Date: BTL's Ultimate LGBT Wedding & Anniversary Expo Returns For A Fourth Year

BTL's Ultimate LGBT Wedding & Anniversary Expo will be bigger and better than ever this year with a new location, fantastic food and great vendors. Mark your calendars: April 12 at the Southfield Civic Pavilion!

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A Trial Full Of Experts: Incredible And Not So Credible, In Hazel Park Case

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Judge Bernard Friedman is going to hear a lot of expert testimony as he faces the decision of whether a Hazel Park lesbian couple should be allowed to get married and allowed to jointly adopt each other's children.

April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse sued the State of Michigan and Oakland County for the right to second parent adoption, and later amended their suit to include same gender marriage. The case will go to trial beginning Feb. 25, with both sides bringing in expert witnesses.

The issue is not about whether the women, who are both nurses, are good parents. What is at issue is whether the state has an interest in banning second parent adoption and same gender marriage.

For The State

Although most research shows that there are no significant differences in children raised in homes with two parents of opposite gender parents and those with same gender parents, the State is relying on four experts who have made names for themselves by claiming otherwise.

In addition to conducting their work at the same time and citing each other, another thing the four witnesses for the State have in common is that conservatives have latched onto their work and used it as evidence that same-sex parenting is bad. Each of these State witnesses has also sought the limelight by being part of trials to suppress LGBT equality around the country.

Loren Marks works for the Louisiana State University School of Social Work, and he is best known for his criticism of the many studies that look at same gender parenting. He claims that the American Psychological Association is wrong for citing studies with less than 100 participants, although this is not uncommon in the world of research. Marks pre-released his study in order for it to be included in the 2013 U.S. Supreme Court trial over the Defense of Marriage Act, and though he was scheduled to testify in favor of Prop. 8, he was not called because he had undermined his own testimony. Marks admitted that he had not read the studies that he cited in his own study, and he had written about those unread studies as "proof" that biological parents were better, when in fact the studies had actually included adoptive parents too. He did not look at any studies of gay and lesbian parents according to disposition transcripts.



In late October several hundred people gathered outside the courthouse in Detroit to await Judge Bernard Friedman's ruling. Judge Friedman decided to hear expert witnesses instead of ruling in a summary judgement which the state and the family were asking for. The trial begins on Feb. 25 with witnesses for both sides presenting. The State's witnesses have been largely discredited. They have often appeared in other marriage trials around the country with no success in convincing the court to rule against same sex marriage. BTL photo: Crystal Proxmire.

Mark Regnerus is a sociologist at the University of Texas who conducted widely-criticized research called "New Family Structures Study" that looked at children in stable, long-term two parent homes compared to those in less-stable homes. Among the many flaws cited in his work is the fact that only two participants had been raised by same sex parents from birth, and that many of the children were raised in homes with a failed heterosexual relationship.

Douglas Allen is an economist at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia who also makes ties between same sex parenting and childhood instability by looking at couples from unstable homes and comparing them to those who have been raised consistently by two heterosexual parents. The problem with his work stems from the fact that he did not find same sex parents in long-term relationships to use in his own research. Instead, Allen takes a 2010 study

by Michael Rosenfeld, which was based off the U.S. Census, and re-examine it by adding in the outliers. "We re-examine Rosenfeld's (2010) study on the association between child outcomes and same-sex family structure. Using the same data set, we replicate and generalize Rosenfeld's findings and show that the implications of his study are different when using either alternative comparison groups or alternative sample restrictions. Compared with traditional married households, we find that children being raised by same-sex couples are 35 percent less likely to make normal progress through school; this difference is statistically significant at the one percent level," states the brief for Allen's report.

Joseph Price is also closely tied to the other three State witnesses. The economics professor from Brigham Young University worked with Price to re-hash Rosenfeld's work. Price also did his own study that refutes the generally-accepted estimates about the

number of people who are gay or bisexual.

Rosenfeld has spoken out against the misconstruing of his work, and is in fact going to testify as an expert for the plaintiffs in the DeBoer case.

For The Family

To counter the State's witnesses, the plaintiffs are bringing in a slate of experts from around the country, as well as Michigan residents who grew up in same-gender parent households, to show that a loving home with two moms or two dads is just as good of an environment for children.

Dr. David Brodzinsky is a psychologist in the San Francisco Bay area. His research and scholarly writings have focused on psychological issues in gay and lesbian parenting and adoption, adoption and foster care, stress and coping in children, non-

See Hazel Park next page

► Hazel Park

Continued from p. 4

traditional family life, child custody issues, and children's cognitive development. He was a founding director of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute in New York and currently serves as the Research Director of the Institute's West Coast Office. He has testified in a number of nationally prominent cases, including the Baby M contested adoption case in New Jersey, the Baby Jessica contested adoption case in Michigan, the Woody Allen and Mia Farrow contested adoption and custody case in New York, and the gay marriage trial in Hawaii.

Dr. Nancy Cott is a Professor of American History at Harvard University. She specializes in the history of gender and sexuality. Dr. Cott is one of the nation's foremost experts on the institution of marriage, having testified for the plaintiffs in the Prop 8 trial and also in the DOMA case. She will testify to the evolution of marital law, both nationally and in the state of Michigan and how traditional gender roles have changed over time. Her testimony will be used to counter the state's contention that the purpose behind marriage is procreation. She will discuss the trend towards inclusion and gender-neutral laws pertaining to marriage and marital property as well as the important differences between a civil and religious marriage.

Dr. Gary J. Gates serves as the Williams Distinguished Scholar at the Charles R. Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy at the UCLA School of Law. His doctoral dissertation included the first significant research study using U.S. Census data to explore characteristics of same-sex couples. Dr. Gates has become a nationally recognized expert witness in several high-profile cases involving LGBT issues. He wrote a brief in support of

the plaintiffs in the DOMA case in February 2013. He has also testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee on repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and before the U.S. Senate on LGBT inclusion in federal immigration law reforms. Dr. Gates will be testifying regarding various demographic trends involving LGBT individuals and couples and their families in Michigan. He will discuss the number of same-sex couples currently estimated to be raising children in Michigan, and the income discrepancies of these families as a result of denial of benefits.

Dr. George Chauncey is a Professor of History & American Studies at Yale University and co-director of the Yale Research Initiative on the History of Sexualities. He has testified for the plaintiffs in the Prop. 8 trial and in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which successfully challenged that state's sodomy ban. He also testified in *Romer v. Evans* which successfully challenged a 1992 referendum approved by voters in Colorado to deny homosexuals the protected class status granted to other minority groups.

Dr. Gregory Herek is a Professor of Psychology at the University of California-Davis. He has become an internationally recognized authority on prejudice against lesbians and gay men, anti-gay violence, and AIDS-related stigma. Dr. Herek gave seven hours of testimony in the Prop. 8 trial.

Michael Rosenfeld is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Stanford University. He is a social demographer who studies race, ethnicity, and family structure, the family's effect on children, and the history of the family. Dr. Rosenfeld has extensively studied and dissected the Regnerus study, upon which the state predominantly relies, in order to sustain its contention that gays and lesbians make inferior parents compared to opposite-sex couples. Dr. Rosenfeld intends to refute every facet of what he considers to be this severely

flawed and pernicious report.

Jennifer Sanderson is an Adjunct Professor of Accounting at Walsh College in Troy, Michigan. She has over twenty years of experience in public accounting, having most recently served as a Tax Principal at Rehmann, a full-service financial and accounting firm in Troy. Sanderson will be testifying as to the economic burdens imposed on same-sex couples who are unable to marry, including tax, insurance, pensions and other benefits burdens.

Kathi Nelson is a Licensed Master Social Worker and Executive Director of Hands Across The Water (HATW), a licensed, not-profit adoption, foster care, and social service agency. Nelson will testify about the process of placing children into adoptive homes. She will indicate that, in her experience, gays and lesbians are just as fit to parent as their heterosexual counterparts

Jane A. Bassett is an attorney in private practice in Ann Arbor. Her practice, founded in 1994, focuses on probate, elder law and domestic partnership family issues, including estate planning, second parent adoption, probate administration, special needs trusts, nursing home and Medicaid issues and elder abuse and exploitation. She is a founding member of Coalition of Adoption Rights Equality and a charter member of the National Family Law Advisory Committee of the National Center for Lesbian Rights. Bassett will testify to costs same-sex couples must bear in order to obtain the unequal protections that are available to them.

Dr. Vivek Sankaran is a clinical professor of law at the University of Michigan in the Child Advocacy Law Clinic, and Director of the Detroit Center for Family Advocacy. Dr. Sankaran has litigated numerous cases before the Michigan Supreme Court on behalf of parents. He also was appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to the Child Abuse Prevention Board. Dr. Sankaran will be testifying to the issues faced by the Michigan foster care system and children who are wards of the state, including addressing the many difficulties the Department of Health and Human Services has in placing children, particularly special needs children, like April's and Jayne's children, and how the burdens placed on the system and these children would be eased by permitting second-parent adoptions in Michigan.

Luke Feltz is the 23 year-old son of a lesbian couple from Williamston, Michigan. Feltz excelled in soccer while at Williamston High School and graduated from Gettysburg College with a double major in Political Science

See Hazel Park, page 13

RESOURCES

Michigan Marriage Center Prepares State For The Possibility

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

With the potential for same sex marriages to be permitted in Michigan, couples who want to tie the knot should be ready. But what clerks and clergy are ready for them? Equality Michigan has launched their Marriage Center section of their website to help connect couples with the resources they need to efficiently tie the knot should there be a small window of opportunity to do so once Judge Friedman rules in late February.

The site lists all 83 counties in Michigan, with the goal of learning the position of the clerk in each. Some clerks, like those in Washtenaw and Oakland County, are eager to recognize couples' commitments to each other. But some counties are more likely to refuse. Additionally, not all those capable of officiating weddings are welcome to the idea.

But by identifying clergy that want to perform marriages equally, Equality Michigan is making it easier for LGBT couples in the state. Over 80 clergy from multiple faiths, including nondenominational groups, have signed up on the site so far.

"Commitment is good for people, both individually and collectively," said Rabbi Robert Levy of Temple Beth Emeth in Ann Arbor. Rabbi Levy has been doing commitment ceremonies for over a decade, stating the importance of "ritually helping people express their loving commitment," and calling the need for it "obvious."

"Marriage is a societally acknowledged committed relationship. It demonstrates community support of personal decisions. It is a structure for further human growth," he said.

On the west side of the state, Rev. Bill Freeman serves couples out of three churches: All Spirits Soul Center in Holland, Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Muskegon and United Church of Christ in Muskegon. His photo on the Equality Michigan Marriage Center page stands out because it shows Rev. Freeman holding up numbers like in a mug shot.

"The photo is of me, made to look like a mug shot, because I was arrested and convicted in Holland, Michigan for civil disobedience (trespassing) for 'occupying' Holland City Hall after it closed, to draw attention to the unequal treatment of the LGBT community there," Rev. Freeman said.

"For five years I've been performing same-sex weddings. I do weddings, not civil unions or commitment ceremonies," Rev. Freeman said. "It's not my fault, and certainly not the couple's fault, that they can't get a marriage certificate in Michigan."

To Rev. Freeman, "Marriage is the coming together of two sacred souls who love each other and desire to be one family. Families, according to conservative groups, are the backbone of society. When two people love each other and want to spend their lives together, it's not just good, it's sensational (and not sinful). People should get married: if they can't live without each other, if they finish each other's sentences (and sandwiches) and if not doing so would leave a hole in their heart that nothing else could fill."

"The train of history is heading for same-sex marriage rights in America in the near future; I just hope Michigan isn't that train's caboose," Rev. Freeman said.

For more information go to www.equalitymi.org/marriage.

Trial Information

The trial scheduled to begin 9 a.m. Feb. 25 at the United States District Court, Eastern District Of Michigan Southern Division, Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse

231 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226

Case: Deboer v. Snyder

Presiding Judge: Judge Bernard A. Friedman, Case Number: 12-CV-10285

Financial Support

The trial is expected to cost between \$555,000 - \$767,000. You can support this effort by visiting www.MichiganMarriageChallenge.com. See more on page 13 for upcoming fundraisers.

MCCD Senior Pastor Candidate Rev. Stringfellow To Preach This Sunday

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

FERNDALE – The pastoral search committee of Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit has introduced their candidate for senior pastor of the church. Rev. Roland Stringfellow, will be



Rev. Stringfellow

presented to the church on Sunday, Jan. 26 when he will preach the first of two sermons he is scheduled to deliver, before the general membership

of the church votes on his candidacy.

Stringfellow moved to Detroit in July from Oakland, California when his partner, Jerry Peterson, accepted the position of executive director of the Ruth Ellis Center. Their adjustment to their new hometown has been swift.

“I’m originally from Fort Wayne, Ind. so I’m not a California boy,” he said. “So we’ve had a very smooth transition and have really embraced the community. We’re happy to be here.”

Stringfellow earned a bachelor’s degree in education and a master’s in counseling from Indiana University. It was in college that he first felt a call toward ministry. In 1990, Stringfellow became a licensed minister in the Baptist church. He was a minister with the denomination for 10 years.

“I first went to theological school at Grace Seminary in Indiana and it was during that time, while I was still a Baptist minister, that I accepted my sexuality,” Stringfellow said. “I had been denying it prior to that. So when I came out to myself, and to the church, I left the Baptist church. I heard about Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, Calif. so I moved there and it was during that time that I became affiliated with MCC.”

In 2005, Stringfellow was ordained with MCC, and in 2006 he earned his master’s degree in divinity. In California, Stringfellow was very active in the LGBT community. Creating dialogue

on the topic of LGBT equality with church congregations and in religious institutions was an important part of his role as coordinator of the Coalition of Welcoming Congregations in the Bay Area with the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Sexuality on the campus of the Pacific School of Religion. While working with California Faith for Equality, he wrote an adult Bible study to address theological and scriptural rationales for LGBT inclusion in faith communities. His work for LGBT human rights included overseeing the California statewide effort for faith community organizing post Prop. 8.

It was in Chicago this past summer at the MCC General Conference, that Stringfellow learned of the opening at MCC-D.

“Several people there informed me that the pulpit was available, that they were going to be interviewing soon,” he said.

Among those he spoke to was MCC-D Board Vice-Moderator Jackie Walker.

“I had a conversation with her and I definitely considered it,” he said. “She and I talked a second time and then I applied.”

Many are anxious to hear Stringfellow preach on Sunday. So what should they expect from a Rev. Roland sermon?

“I am a preacher teacher, so if people are expecting this kind of ... there’s a stereotypical way that people think African-American ministers, like they sort of sing while they teach,” he said. “I’m a very down to earth Biblical teacher who feels that there is good news in the Bible for all people, particularly LGBT people. Recognizing that many of us have been hurt and damaged by people’s interpretations of the Bible, I believe the type of liberation theology that I’ve been taught and preach and teach is really the good news for the community.”

If voted in as senior pastor, Stringfellow will succeed Rev. Mark Bidwell, who departed the church in Sept. 2011. Rev. Jim Lynch stepped in as interim pastor in 2012 and served in that capacity until the end of 2013.

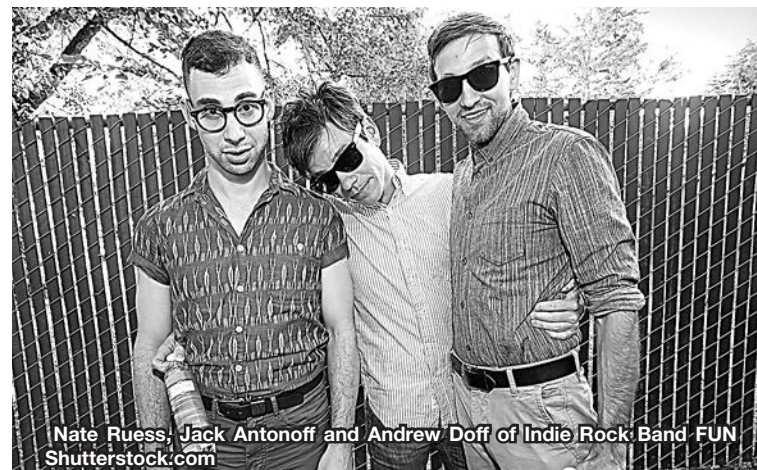
Visit www.mccdetroit.org

Band Fun. To Raise \$250,000 For Ruth Ellis Center

The Ally Coalition, the LGBTQ advocacy organization founded by the pop-rock trio fun. (Jack Antonoff, Andrew Dost, and Nate Ruess) and designer Rachel Antonoff, announced the launch of an initiative to raise funds in support of the Ruth Ellis Center, the social services agency serving the needs of Detroit’s homeless, runaway and at-risk LGBTQ youth. An estimated 800 LGBTQ youth live on the streets of Detroit, and, last year, the Ruth Ellis Center provided hot meals, clothing, medical services and life skills training to more than half. The funds raised by TAC will benefit REC’s capital campaign to build a new Community Health Center, which will increase its capacity to help by 25 percent.

“The homelessness problem among LGBTQ youth in this country is nothing short of an epidemic, and the city of Detroit is in particular need of support right now. This campaign will be The Ally Coalition’s primary focus until the project is fully funded,” TAC co-founders Rachel Antonoff, Jack Antonoff, Andrew Dost and Nate Ruess said in a joint statement.

While LGBTQ comprise 5-7 percent of the general population, they represent up to 40 percent of the overall homeless youth population.



Nate Ruess, Jack Antonoff and Andrew Dost of Indie Rock Band FUN
Shutterstock.com

These vulnerable youth are also far more likely than straight peers to be victims of depression, violence, bullying and suicide.

Dost, a Detroit native, added, “The Ruth Ellis Center is an incredible organization, and what they’re doing in my hometown fills me with hope. It’s a place where people can get a good meal, can be among friends, and are welcome and safe no matter what.”

In an interview with *Between The Lines* last year the “We Are Young” band’s guitarist, Jack Antonoff, was very vocal about the group’s passion for gay issues: “Being someone who others presume wouldn’t care, or even opposes gay rights, gives you

an even greater power in speaking up for gay rights.”

The total cost of the project is expected to reach \$250,000. A private donor is funding design and initial construction costs, and the goal of REC’s capital campaign is to secure the remaining funds.

Throughout its last three tours, fun. has donated \$1 of each ticket sold to The Ally Coalition and TAC distributes these funds at the discretion of the band. The band has elected to use up to \$50,000 of these funds to match the gifts of TAC donors to support the Ruth Ellis Center’s capital campaign.

To support this campaign, please visit www.theallycoalition.org/detroit.

LGBT Older Adult Coalition Grows With \$50,000 Hope Fund Grant

The LGBT Older Adult Coalition is reaching out to do specific training and development with three local Area Agencies on Aging thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the Hope Fund. The Fund has supported the Coalition through their first two years, granting them \$25,000 per year for 2012 and 2013. The extended grant will help them get nondiscrimination policies in place for staff, vendors and referrals of the area agencies. It will also help them train call center operators for three area agencies, who take a combined total of 150,000 calls per year. The training will ensure that those who answer the phone are culturally competent and sensitive

to the needs of LGBT older adults. There is also a media component to the grant, which will help spread the word about the available of LGBT-friendly agencies.

“We see 100-150 older adults at events like our Older Adult Summit,” said Kathleen LaTosch. “But we know there are up to 45,000 LGBT older adults in the Detroit area. By providing training to agencies that serve all older adults, we can reach more of those in our community to ensure they are treated fairly and feel safe receiving services.”

Area Agencies on Aging are responsible for most of the funding that comes from state and federal sources, with some of that funding

earmarked to reach vulnerable populations. The agencies work with care providers and nonprofits to help connect seniors with services they need.

The collaboration between the LGBT Older Adult Coalition and the three local Area Agencies on Aging could become a model for agencies statewide. This year the coalition will be working with the Senior Alliance (serving Wayne County, but not Detroit), Detroit Area Agency on Aging, and Area Agency on Aging 1B (serving Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw counties).

The Michigan GOP Gay Conundrum

DeVos Calls For Agema To Step Down, Snyder Avoids Confrontation

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING – GOP National Committeeman Dave Agema, the former state representative who loves to post vile slanders against the LGBT community and Muslims on his Facebook page, is the center of controversy again.

But this time the controversy has produced two very different responses from leading voices in the Michigan and national Republican parties. Here in Michigan, Gov. Rick Snyder was praised for what many saw as a public rebuke of Agema during his State of the State speech Jan. 16.

“In recent days and recent months in the state of Michigan, we’ve had people make comments that were derogatory, that were negative towards other people,” Snyder said. “Publicly tonight, I’d like to make a call to all citizens of Michigan to ask us have a greater degree of civility and respect to others of different backgrounds and different views.”

Snyder’s spokesperson, Sara Wurfel, told the Detroit News that evening that the comment was directed at Agema and others

who exhibit “discriminatory behavior and talk.”

Even as conservatives were applauding Snyder for this move - including Kathy Hoekstra at the Detroit News - as an act of leadership, Snyder himself was distancing himself in an interview with Chad Selweski at Macomb Politics Politically Speaking. “This is the State of the Union address so I’m not going to aim my comments at one individual,” Snyder said.

Then on Sunday, Nolan Finley at the Detroit News ran a piece in which he interviewed former GOP Michigan Chair Betsy DeVos. In that interview, DeVos slammed Agema and demanded he resign from his post as GOP National Committeeman.

Finley reports DeVos says she has withdrawn from partisan politics because of the move to the extreme right. Here’s what he wrote:

“DeVos is convinced a majority of Republicans feel as she does about the pull to the extremes on issues such as gay rights. But that tiny faction is gaining disproportionate influence.

“There is a fear, untested and unfounded,

that standing up to a small minority in the party will have a tremendous backlash,” she says. “Instead, I believe they are going to continue to drive more and more people away from our party and our viewpoints.”

That declaration mirrors an announcement last week by Jimmy LaSalvia. LaSalvia was the former executive director of the Log Cabin Republicans and co-founder of the right wing gay rights group GOProud. He announced he was leaving the party in part because of its “tolerance of bigotry.”

DeVos and her family have deep pockets that have funded the Michigan and national GOP for years. She’s married to Dick DeVos, the former Republican candidate for governor. A family foundation donated \$500,000 to the National Organization for Marriage which has spurred LGBT activist Fred Karger to run a boycott of both Amway - which the DeVos family co-created - and the Orlando Magic which is currently owned by a DeVos family member.

The question becomes:

See GOP, page 13

Why is there such a distance between Snyder’s weak response to Agema’s bigotry and DeVos’ hardline comments? The answer may lie in a pitch battle for the Lt. Gov’s post for the upcoming gubernatorial election. Snyder is widely seen as safe in his seat, but current Lt. Gov. Brian Calley has become the scapegoat for Snyder’s support of issues anathema to the hardline right wing of the Tea Party in Michigan.



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What is STRIBILD?

STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. It combines 4 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. STRIBILD is a complete single-tablet regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS. To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking STRIBILD. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

STRIBILD can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark "tea-colored" urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking STRIBILD, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. STRIBILD is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

Who should not take STRIBILD?

Do not take STRIBILD if you:

- **Take a medicine that contains:** alfuzosin, dihydroergotamine, ergotamine, methylergonovine, cisapride, lovastatin, simvastatin, pimozide, sildenafil when used for lung problems (Revatio®), triazolam, oral midazolam, rifampin or the herb St. John's wort.
- **For a list of brand names for these medicines,** please see the Brief Summary on the following pages.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection,** or the medicine adefovir (Hepsera®).

What are the other possible side effects of STRIBILD?

Serious side effects of STRIBILD may also include:

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do regular blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with STRIBILD. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD.
- **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking STRIBILD.

The most common side effects of STRIBILD include nausea and diarrhea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don't go away.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take hormone-based birth control** (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc).
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in STRIBILD can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with **important warnings** on the following pages.





STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used as a complete single-tablet regimen to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.

I started my personal revolution

Talk to your healthcare provider about starting treatment.

STRIBILD is a complete HIV-1 treatment in **1 pill**, once a day.

Ask if it's right for you.

STRIBILD[™] 

elvitegravir 150mg/ cobicistat 150mg/ emtricitabine 200mg/ tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets

Patient Information

STRIBILD™ (STRY-bild)

(elvitegravir 150 mg/cobicistat 150 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

What is STRIBILD?

- **STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before.** STRIBILD is a complete regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.
- **STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

STRIBILD can cause serious side effects, including:

- 1. Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take STRIBILD or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**
 - feel very weak or tired
 - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
 - have trouble breathing
 - have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
 - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
 - feel dizzy or lightheaded
 - have a fast or irregular heartbeat
- 2. Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take STRIBILD. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**
 - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
 - dark “tea-colored” urine
 - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
 - loss of appetite for several days or longer
 - nausea
 - stomach pain

You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time.
- 3. Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take STRIBILD, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking STRIBILD. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.
 - Do not run out of STRIBILD. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your STRIBILD is all gone

- Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider
- If you stop taking STRIBILD, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking STRIBILD

Who should not take STRIBILD?

Do not take STRIBILD if you also take a medicine that contains:

- adefovir (Hepsera®)
- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- oral midazolam
- pimozide (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John’s wort

Do not take STRIBILD if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain tenofovir (Atripla®, Complera®, Viread®, Truvada®)
- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine, lamivudine, or ritonavir (Combivir®, Emtriva®, Epivir® or Epivir-HBV®, Epzicom®, Kaletra®, Norvir®, Trizivir®)

STRIBILD is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.

What are the possible side effects of STRIBILD?

STRIBILD may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?”**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking STRIBILD. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take STRIBILD. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system** (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

The most common side effects of STRIBILD include:

- Nausea
- Diarrhea

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

- These are not all the possible side effects of STRIBILD. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?

Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:

- If you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B infection
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
 - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take STRIBILD.
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - Two of the medicines in STRIBILD can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in STRIBILD can pass into your breast milk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:

- STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
 - Hormone-based birth control (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc)
 - Antacid medicines that contains aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD
 - Medicines to treat depression, organ transplant rejection, or high blood pressure
 - amiodarone (Cordarone®, Pacerone®)
 - atorvastatin (Lipitor®, Caduet®)
 - bepridil hydrochloric (Vasacor®, Bepadin®)
 - bosentan (Tracleer®)
 - buspirone
 - carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Eptol®, Equetro®, Tegreto®)
 - clarithromycin (Biaxin®, Prevpac®)
 - clonazepam (Klonopin®)
 - clorazepate (Gen-xene®, Tranxene®)
 - colchicine (Colcrys®)
 - medicines that contain dexamethasone
 - diazepam (Valium®)

- digoxin (Lanoxin®)
- disopyramide (Norpace®)
- estazolam
- ethosuximide (Zarontin®)
- flecainide (Tambocor®)
- flurazepam
- fluticasone (Flovent®, Flonase®, Flovent® Diskus, Flovent® HFA, Veramyst®)
- itraconazole (Sporanox®)
- ketoconazole (Nizoral®)
- lidocaine (Xylocaine®)
- mexiletine
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®)
- perphenazine
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- propafenone (Rythmol®)
- quinidine (Neudexta®)
- rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
- rifapentine (Priftin®)
- risperidone (Risperdal®, Risperdal Consta®)
- salmeterol (Serevent®) or salmeterol when taken in combination with fluticasone (Advair Diskus®, Advair HFA®)
- sildenafil (Viagra®), tadalafil (Cialis®) or vardenafil (Levitra®, Staxyn®), for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). If you get dizzy or faint (low blood pressure), have vision changes or have an erection that last longer than 4 hours, call your healthcare provider or get medical help right away.
- tadalafil (Adcirca®), for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension
- telithromycin (Ketek®)
- thioridazine
- voriconazole (Vfend®)
- warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®)
- zolpidem (Ambien®, Edlular®, Intermezzo®, Zolpimist®)

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.

Keep STRIBILD and all medicines out of reach of children.

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about STRIBILD. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about STRIBILD that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to www.STRIBILD.com.

Issued: August 2012



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Well, Buzz My Blowhole!



Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Britain's popular *New Scientist* magazine offers an eye-opener about animal kink. Headline: "(Animals) participate in kissing, hugging, oral sex, masturbation and every kind of penetrative intercourse imaginable."

This it would seem explains a lot about the behavior of us bivouacking bipeds and our eons-old, evolutionary penchant for having a good time with whatever materials or orifices happen to be handy, either in cave, pup tent, or condo.

Whether such carnal activities – animal and/or human – began in the Garden of Eden or after Noah's Ark began leaking on or about Mt. Ararat is not referenced. One thing's clear. Like humankind, animals hump not only for offspring but for unadulterated pleasure, warm-fuzzy groupie canoodling.

Animals have it over us on one score. They don't feel guilty about copulating. As Mark Twain puts it, "Humans are the only animals that blush. Or need to." (Blushing makes my mascara run.)

Writes Amanda Geftner, *New Scientist* sexuality editor, "Lionesses perform oral sex on lions, male grey-headed flying foxes perform oral sex on females, and Livingston's fruit bats and male kangaroos perform fellatio on themselves. Spinner dolphins emit cries that vibrate the surrounding water and, in turn, one another's genitals – a practice known as 'buzzing.'"

"...there is the notion that heterosexuality rules the animal world. This is not true. Homosexuality has been documented in lions, giraffes, African elephants, American bison, to name a few. Male Amazon river dolphins engage in anal, genital and blowhole penetration, and an activity known as 'penis fencing.'" (Well-built fences make good neighbors.)

Geftner covers another long-standing myth: "the idea that organisms are either male or female. In as many as half of all animals species, individuals can be both at the same or different

times during their lives. Take the blue-banded goby, a fish that lives in harems with one male to every four to six females. "If the male leaves or dies, the highest-ranking female develops male gonads and genitalia to take his place."

The *New Scientist* article was prompted by a visit to the Museum of Sex in New York City (Where else?). It's staffed by prominent biologists, curators, artists, including transgendered Stanford University biologist Joan Roughgarden.

Featured there are photos, videos, text and life-sized sculptures of animals in the act of a frig or a fondle by Brooklyn-based artist Rune Olsen (One wonders if Rune and Roughgarden got hired on the basis of exotic species name recognition?).

The museum's main sculpture highlights a threesome. A male deer is humping a doe, while said buck is getting a vigorous royal four flushing from behind by another male. The polymorphous perverse posturing is tastefully rendered in sterling silver by the artist.

T-biologist Roughgarden disagrees with Darwin's time-honored sexual selection theory: top males competing for choosy bottom females. She promotes social selection. Sex to strengthen group bonding, "be it for pleasure, including same-sex encounters, or procreation."

Having read these words of amatory inspiration and sharing same with BTL homosapiens, I'm just a tad horny. So, don't be surprised if you see the following ad under the fetish category in a weekly tabloid. It's me.

"Adventuresome, spunky, sexy, gregarious, intelligent, charming, vivacious, courtly – and very modest – gentleman, having been around the sexual block so many times it has no overlooked corners, seeks new thrills! If you're into buzzing, have an Olympic-sized, er, pool, let's skinny dip. No breaststroking, dog paddling, or spread eagle routines, please."

Signed: Rune Roughgarden-Phelps.

LGBT Older Adult Housing In Detroit?

Viewpoint

This month the John C. Anderson Apartment building opened up in Philadelphia, PA. It marks the third city in the country to have designated affordable housing for LGBT elders, joining Los Angeles and Minneapolis. The buzz around the country is that our sister city, Chicago, will soon open a fourth affordable housing apartment for LGBT elders.

In the past, housing for LGBT older adults was spearheaded mostly by profit-oriented real estate developers with largely unsuccessful results related to the recent struggles of our economy. Among these efforts, affordable housing was often left out of the conversation and I applaud the efforts of these cities to create a safe space for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults to continue to thrive into their golden years, regardless of income level.

But is it serving the need? At the LGBT Older Adult Coalition, we use the low end of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's LGBT population estimate. Accordingly, roughly five percent of the population is LGB and/or T. Based on Michigan's 2010 Census Bureau statistics and figuring the population at five percent, that means there are currently 68,077 LGBT people aged 65 and better living in Michigan. Another 62,600 are 55-64 years old and will join the retirement age by 2020, for a total of 130,677 LGBT older adults. Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties typically make up about 30 percent of the state's population, which means we're looking at 43,559 people.

The three apartment buildings now available nationally to LGBT older adults offer a combined total of 200 units. Even if we worked on creating a single complex in Detroit, it would literally be a drop in the bucket. We'd have to build over 400 more buildings. In the article about the John C. Anderson apartments, the author follows a new tenant, mentioning that he "landed a coveted spot..." His application must have stood out, but I wonder who decides who gets one of the coveted spots? LA's Triangle Square has such a long waiting list that folks expect to have to wait 10 years to get in. Some folks joke that they'll probably be dead before their name comes up on the list.

At the LGBT Older Adult Coalition, we're concerned about housing too, but we also want to create a solution that reaches as many LGBT elders as possible,



BY KAT LATOSCH

and as affordably as possible. So we're doing it differently. In January, we formed the Village Network Committee. Chaired by long-time community member Jim Whipple, Village Networks offer people access to safe, friendly referrals for any kind of service you can imagine, services that allow a person to age comfortably in his/her own home. They also provide social activities and social connection among members. Members often contribute their own time and talents in support of other members. A professional plumber may offer free services to another member, a seamstress may offer to reupholster a piece of furniture, an IT tech may offer up their computer skills. Bartering for service provides a cost savings to members.

Forbes Magazine recently named Village Networks as a cost-effective way to "age in community." It's much more cost effective for people than living in a retirement community and also allows people to stay in their own communities and neighborhoods where they have formed a lifetime of relationships. In fact, the research shows, straight or gay, 90 percent of older adults would prefer to stay in their own homes, as long as it's safe and they can afford it.

A Village Network has the potential to provide supportive services to an unlimited number of LGBT older adults. A local Rainbow Village Network would ensure that home chore providers, electricians, home repair people, and home care workers are LGBT-friendly and vetted before

they enter a member's home. The network staff could assist in the creation of a buddy system and create a call service to check on older adults living alone.

Only two in ten LGBT elders can look forward to children taking care of them in their old age. At the LGBT Older Adult Coalition, we know that and we're working to put systems in place that will help LGBT elders stay in their own homes and remain connected to communities.

Only two in ten LGBT elders can look forward to children taking care of them in their old age. At the LGBT Older Adult Coalition, we know that and we're working to put systems in place that will help LGBT elders stay in their own homes and remain connected to communities

Detroit area. If you or someone you know would like to join our planning committee, please contact Kathleen LaTosch or Jay Kaplan or visit our website at www.lgbtolderadults.com.

Kathleen LaTosch Co-Chairs the LGBT Older Adult Coalition with Jay Kaplan of the ACLU of Michigan. She can be reached at klatosch@gmail.com.



Fundraisers For Michigan Marriage Equality

Share the love and celebrate Valentine's Day

Thursday, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Burton Manor, 27777 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Michigan 48150
Dinner and dancing for a great cause!
Featuring Keynote Speaker nationally renowned journalist and NPR Commentator Jack Lessenberry.
Full buffet dinner includes Chicken Scallopini, tossed green salad, green beans, fresh baked rolls and desserts. Coffee, tea and soft drinks included, cash bar.
Gold Level \$500, includes champagne VIP reception with Jack Lessenberry at 6:00 p.m.
Silver Level \$250
Bronze Level \$100
Guest \$50
Make checks payable to DeBoer/Rowse Legal Fund and send c/o Mary Barr, Treasurer, 12864 Glenview Drive, Plymouth, MI 48170.
Please include your email and/or contact phone number for ticket purchase confirmation.

Equality Cabaret: Making Marriage Equality a Reality

Presented by Jim Toy Community Center
Sunday, Feb. 23, 1:00 p.m. at the Ark in Ann Arbor.
Emceed by UofM Professor Holly Hughes, the evening will feature singer songwriter Vienna Teng, folk duo Nervous But Excited in a greatly anticipated re-union, the Dueling Divas Callie McKee and Robby Griswold of Arbor Opera Theatre, and others.
Ticket prices:
\$250 –Benefactor floor front row reserved, name on program and from the stage
\$100-Supporter reserved, seating and name on program
\$25 – General Admission
To learn more about the family and the case or to donate on-line: www.michiganmarriagechallenge.com. To donate directly to the cause: www.gofundme.com/marriageequalitymichigan

► Hazel Park

Continued from p. 5

and Globalization Studies. Feltz was also chosen to participate in a special study-abroad program with the Saudi government, where he met with government leaders. After interning at the White House and with the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate, Feltz was hired by the Lugar Center as the Project Coordinator for the Bipartisan Nuclear and WMD Policy Dialogue Program. He and his girlfriend, Laura, reside in Washington, D.C.

Feltz will be available to testify about his experience as a child raised from birth with two mothers in a rural area of Michigan.

Zoe Almquist is the 24 year-old daughter of a lesbian couple from

Ann Arbor. She graduated from Northwestern University in 2011 with a major in mathematics. Almquist excelled at field hockey both in high school at Ann Arbor Pioneer and as a student at Northwestern. After graduation, she remained at Northwestern as an Assistant Field Hockey Coach. Almquist's team just won a share of the 2013 Big Ten Championship. She resides in Evanston, Illinois. She will be available to testify about her experience as a child born to and raised by a lesbian couple.

Implications And Expenses

The trial has implications for every LGBT couple in Michigan, as well as people who want to adopt children without the caveat of being married.

“We are confident that our expert witnesses will demonstrate once and for all that same-sex couples are just as fit to parent as their heterosexual counterparts. Every major sociological and psychological organization is in agreement on this issue. There is simply no legitimate reason to prevent gays, lesbians, and their children from the same legal rights available to heterosexuals and their families,” said Dana Nessel, one of the attorneys for the Hazel Park couple.

She and her legal team are seeking donations to cover the costs of their national and Michigan expert witness, associated legal and consultant fees and related trial costs. They say they need to raise between \$555,550-\$767,525 in order to fund the case. The website to give donations is www.MichiganMarriageChallenge.com.

► GOP

Continued from p. 7

Why is there such a distance between Snyder's weak response to Agema's bigotry and DeVos' hardline comments?

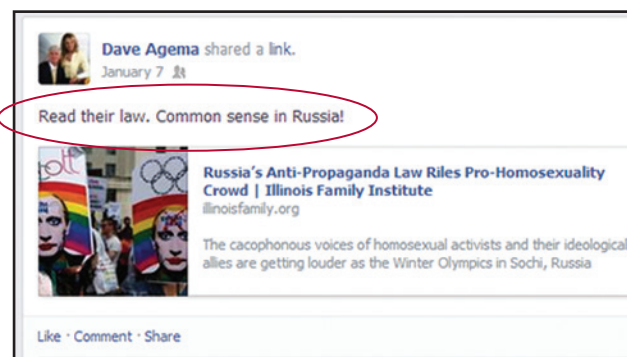
The answer may lie in a pitch battle for the Lt. Gov's post for the upcoming gubernatorial election. Snyder is widely seen as safe in his seat, but current Lt. Gov. Brian Calley has become the scapegoat for Snyder's support of issues anathema to the hardline right wing of the Tea Party in Michigan. Calley has also enraged conservative activists over plans to expand Medicaid as part of implementing the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare).

As a result of this, Tea Party activists have launched a drive to replace Calley on the November ballot with someone

they trust as being conservative. Tea party activist Wes Nakagiri has already launched a campaign to replace Calley on the ballot. Conservative Tea Party darling Todd Courser is also considering a bid to replace Calley, and sent out a

survey last week seeking information on whether conservative activists would support his move on the Lt. Gov. slot over Nakagiri and Calley.

At the end of the day, DeVos is not beholden to the Tea Party activists and so has the freedom to call out Agema - who has a huge Tea Party and conservative following - while Snyder has to be more circumspect or see a more concerted move to out flank him on the right.



Dave Agema's Facebook page Jan. 7 supporting Russia's anti-gay law. On Jan. 9 Agema attacked Muslims. Some state Republicans are calling for Agema to step down including longtime fundraiser Betsy DeVos.

Stunning Oklahoma Marriage Victory

BY LISA KEEN

In yet another stunning victory for marriage equality, a federal judge in Oklahoma ruled Jan. 14 that the state's ban on same-sex couples obtaining marriage licenses is unconstitutional.

“Equal protection is at the very heart of our legal system and central to our consent to be governed. It is not a scarce commodity to be meted out begrudgingly or in short portions,” wrote U.S. District Court Judge Terence Kern, a Clinton appointee. “Therefore, the majority view in Oklahoma must give way to individual constitutional rights.”

Kern ruled Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage violated both the equal protection and due process rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and he added that it is “insulting to same-sex couples, who are human beings capable of forming loving, committed, enduring relationships.”

“This is a tremendous day for loving and committed same-sex couples and their families in Oklahoma,” said Evan Wolfson, head of the national Freedom to Marry organization. Wolfson said the Oklahoma decision builds on the momentum from eight other states ending their restrictions on marriage for same-sex couples in 2013.

“The federal district judge has done the right thing by affirming that marriage is a fundamental freedom for all people, gay and non-gay - for all of us who believe in liberty and fairness.”

However, unlike the federal judge in Utah, Kern stayed the effect of his ruling, pending appeal to the Tenth Circuit. The Utah case, *Kitchen v. Herbert*, is also pending appeal before the Tenth Circuit. The U.S. Supreme Court stayed the effect of that ruling after more than 1,300 same-sex couples had married.

Unlike many of the current marriage equality lawsuits around the country, the one in Oklahoma, *Baldwin v. Oklahoma*, has been pending since 2004. Two lesbian couples, represented by private attorneys, challenged both the state constitutional amendment barring the issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex couples and the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

“...civil marriage in Oklahoma is not an institution with ‘moral’ requirements for any other group of citizens,” noted Kern. He noted that the Tulsa clerk “does not ask a [heterosexual] couple if they intend to be faithful to one another, if they intend to procreate, or if they would someday consider divorce, thereby potentially leaving their child to be raised in a single-parent home. With respect to marriage licenses, the State has already opened the courthouse doors to opposite-sex couples without any moral, procreative, parenting, or fidelity requirements. Exclusion of just one class of citizens from receiving a marriage license based upon the perceived ‘threat’ they pose to the marital institution is, at bottom, an arbitrary exclusion based upon the majority's disapproval of the defined class.”

The lead plaintiff couple, Sharon Baldwin and Mary Bishop, is both editors at the daily Tulsa World newspaper and have been together for 15 years. They had a commitment ceremony in Florida, but when they applied for a marriage license from the Tulsa city clerk, they were refused.

The other plaintiff couple, Susan Barton and Gay Phillips, has been a couple for 30 years; own a joint business helping homeless teens. They obtained a civil union license in Vermont in 2001, a marriage license in Canada in 2005, and a marriage license in California just days before voters there approved Proposition 8 in 2008.

Creep of the Week Council Nedd II

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

It is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as I write this, which means that people on the Interwebs are debating about whether or not King would've supported the fight for LGBT civil rights. We can only go on King's teachings, combing through his speeches and writings to find support for the "he'd love gays/he'd love gays not" arguments.



Meanwhile, fine upstanding folks like Nedd are making the right-wing media rounds to make white people feel better about their continued oppression of people of color.

But the Episcopal Missionary Church's Bishop Council Nedd II has got it all figured out. During an interview with Radio America host Greg Corombos he says King would definitely be a conservative and he'd no likey the gays.

"A lot of [gay rights] activists say that this is the natural extension of the civil rights movement," Corombos says. "Where do you come down on that and what do you think Dr. King would think about that?"

"Well, I'll start by saying gay is not the new black," Nedd replies. "Any individual who happens to be homosexual, they're already covered under, um, the law because of their color, because of their sexuality, because of various other things. It's not a separate classification, um, and personally I'm offended by it."

I, too, am offended – though my offense stems from the fact that sexual orientation isn't a category automatically covered under civil rights law. Nedd, on the other hand, seems pretty confused. I don't know what "law" he's talking about that covers people "because of their sexuality" and yet also does not consider sexual orientation a classification. Thankfully his ignorance isn't

stopping him from speaking out against the gays.

He continues, "And I'm offended by pastors who sold out on the issue and decided, 'You know what, I don't really care what the Bible says. Um, you know, the black president wants me to support this so I'm going to support this.' It's absurd."

Damn that black president with his powers to rival Jesus! Seriously, though, as far as Nedd's concerned, if a pastor supports LGBT people, then that pastor's clearly being used as a puppet by Obama and has no convictions of his or her own. Meanwhile, fine upstanding folks like Nedd are making the right-wing media rounds to make white people feel better about their continued oppression of people of color.

When Corombos asks how King "would see America today in terms of racial equality," Nedd claims that King "would say that a major victory had been accomplished."

"The world he knew was a very segregated America," Nedd continues. "At the end of his life, there were, you know, riots in the street. Again, they were turning water hoses and dogs on children in parts of this country and because of the advent of television, people were able to see it in the country and were rightly appalled by what they saw."

But today? "There's equality in the eyes of the law. Segregation is, I guess, you know, legally banished from the land..."

Indeed, segregation is "legally banished." That's not the same as actually banished. But de facto segregation is largely invisible to folks who don't have a vested interest in seeing it. Therefore many people are, wrongly, not appalled.

Later Corombos asks, citing Jesse Jackson as one example, "Why do you think so many leaders of that era ended up being more liberal?"

Nedd responds, "I'm not exactly sure why."

Oooh, oooh, can I guess? Can I guess? Maybe it had something to do with those fire hoses Nedd mentioned? Or Freedom Riders being murdered? Or King getting thrown in jail? Or the government monitoring him like he was a terrorist? Or, I don't know, seeing King gunned down right before their eyes? Or all of the above?

Or, I don't know, since folks like Jackson and Al Sharpton and John Lewis are still alive Nedd and Corombos could just ask them. But I suspect their answers wouldn't go over well with the World Net Daily crowd.

SOCHI: Putin Pours Fuel On Anti-Gay Controversy

BY LISA KEEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin poured fuel on the anti-gay controversy Jan. 17, saying gays visiting Russia for the Olympics can feel at ease as long as they "leave children in peace, please."

The remark, and its underlying insinuation that gay people harm children, was not included in Putin's published remarks on his official website but was reported by media attending his speech to the volunteers in Sochi for the Olympic Games.

Just one day before and one day after those remarks, Putin promised there would be no discrimination against athletes or visitors.

"The Games will be held in complete compliance with the Olympic Charter, without any discrimination on the basis of any characteristic," said Putin in an address welcoming foreign ambassadors to Moscow on Jan. 16.

And in a group interview with reporters, Putin assured ABC news anchor George Stephanopoulos "none of our guests will have any problems," and reminded him about Olympic protests in 1968 by black Americans.

The latter comment came in response to Stephanopoulos pressing Putin on how he would respond "if gay or lesbian athletes engage in some sort of protest, wear a rainbow pin or some other kind of protest, will they be free from prosecution under the propaganda laws?"

According to ABC's transcript of the interview, Putin said, "Acts of protest and acts of propaganda are somewhat different things."

"So if they wear a rainbow pin or kiss their partner..." asked Stephanopoulos.

"They are close, but if we were to look at them from the legal perspective," said Putin, "then protesting a law does not amount to propaganda of homosexuality or sexual abuse of children. That's one. Two is that I'd like to ask our colleagues, my colleagues and friends that, as they try to criticize us they would do well to set their own house in order first. I did say, after



Russian President Vladimir Putin appeared on ABC Sunday and defended recent antigay legislation and saying the U.S. should "sett their own house in order" before accusing Russia.

all, and this is public knowledge that in some of the states in the U.S. homosexuality remains a crime."

Stephanopoulos corrected him, noting that the U.S. Supreme Court struck down "those laws."

But Putin replied that the U.S. was not "in a position to criticize us" given that "there are a lot of folks in the U.S. who share the view that the legislation in their state or in their nation is appropriate, well-grounded and is in sync with the sentiment of the vast majority of the population."

"This needs to be discussed together at some, some more acceptable forum. Shared approaches need to be devised. We hear you," said Putin. "My response to you is none of our guests will have any problems. We remember certain dark-skinned citizens of the U.S., during Olympics, major international competitions, protest against segregation. I saw it with my own eyes on TV screens. Well, this is a practice that people use to make a statement about their rights."

Putin said he had no reaction to President Obama's including three openly gay members in the U.S. delegation to the Sochi Games' opening and closing ceremonies.

He also downplayed any worry last week about reports that 30

percent of tickets are still unsold to the Games, just three weeks out from the February 7 opening ceremony.

The Russian channel R-Sport, a

Russian President Vladimir Putin poured fuel on the anti-gay controversy Jan. 17, saying gays visiting Russia for the Olympics can feel at ease as long as they "leave children in peace, please."

division of Russia's leading news agency, reported Friday that Putin would fill the empty seats with volunteers, if necessary.

At the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, only three percent of tickets went unsold by the end of the Games, according to the Vancouver Olympic Committee's Marketing Report.

In addition to the prominent controversy around Russia's new laws hostile to LGBT people, Russia has been hit with three terrorist attacks in the past month and new threats this week. The website of a Chechen group posted a videotaped threat against the Games on Sunday, promising "revenge" for "all the Muslim blood that is shed every day around the world, be it in Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria, all around the world."

Court Upholds GID Surgery For Prisoner

BY LISA KEEN

A federal appeals court Jan. 17 affirmed a district judge's order that a state prison violated the constitutional rights of a prisoner with severe gender disorder when it refused to provide sex reassignment surgery.

The lawsuit, *Kosilek v. Spencer*, was supported by Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, the ACLU, the Human Rights Campaign, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the National Center for Transgender Equality, and other LGBT organizations.

"If she needed treatment for cancer or heart disease, this case would never have wound up in court," said GLAD attorney Jennifer Levy.

"If we are to call ourselves a civilized society, there is a baseline of care that has to be provided to all prisoners, including prisoners who are transgender. We hope that Michelle will now get the treatment that she desperately needs."

Massachusetts prison inmate Michelle Kosilek, born with male genitals and named Robert Kosilek, was convicted in 1992 of murdering her spouse and sentenced to life without parole. In 2000, she sued for hormone treatment for her gender disorder and obtained it. In 2006, she sought sex reassignment

surgery but was refused.

The state had argued that the level of treatment already being provided to Kosilek - hormones, permanent hair removal, female clothing and makeup, and psychotherapy - was adequate.

A group of doctors certified that the treatment was medically necessary and, in 2012, a federal district court judge ruled that withholding treatment violated the U.S. Constitution's Eighth Amendment guarantee against cruel and unusual punishment. The judge ordered the commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Corrections, Luis Spencer, to provide her with sex reassignment surgery.

In a 2 to 1 decision Jan. 17, a First Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals panel upheld that decision.

The majority decision, written by Judge O. Rogeriee Thompson and joined by Judge William Kayatta (both Obama appointees), said to reach an Eighth Amendment violation, the prisoner must have a "serious medical need" and the prison's treatment must fail to achieve a level "reasonably commensurate with modern medical science and of a quality acceptable within prudent professional standards." All inadequate care does not constitute a violation

of the Eighth Amendment, said the majority, so there must also be proof that the government was "deliberately indifferent" to the prisoner's treatment and the security considerations surrounding that treatment.

"We are assuredly mindful of the difficult tasks faced by prison officials every day," wrote the majority. "But as the Supreme Court has cautioned, while sensitivity and deference to these tasks is warranted, "[c]ourts nevertheless must not shrink from their obligation to 'enforce the constitutional rights of all 'persons,' including prisoners." And receiving medically necessary treatment is one of those rights, even if that treatment strikes some as odd or unorthodox."

The district court's findings "that Kosilek has a serious medical need for the surgery, and that the [Massachusetts Department of Corrections] refuses to meet that need for pretextual reasons unsupported by legitimate penological considerations - mean that the DOC has violated Kosilek's Eighth Amendment rights."

Dissenting Judge Juan Torruella (Reagan appointee) said, "That appropriate medical care must be provided does not, however, mean that inmates may seek and receive the care of their choosing....Prison officials

commit no violation so long as the medical care provided is minimally adequate."

Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality, said, "Decisions about treating serious healthcare decisions like sex reassignment

The state had argued that the level of treatment already being provided - hormones, permanent hair removal, female clothing and makeup, and psychotherapy - was adequate.

surgery need to be made by doctors and patients, not prison authorities."

The majority took the time in its 90-page decision to discuss gender identity disorder, explaining it as "a psychological condition involving a strong identification with the other gender," recognized by the American Psychiatric Association. It also noted that sex reassignment surgery has been accepted treatment for the disorder "since at least the 1950s."





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The Punking of **JD** Samson

MEN Member On The Sound Of Queer Activism, Home-Composing & Her Controversial Column

BY CHRISTOPHER J. TREACY

The sound and look of punk are different things to different people. But whatever the specifics, the spirit of the term is much more tangible – it’s a means of standing off to the side, likely in some state of rebellion. To quote late Plasmatics front gal Wendy O.

Williams, punk is “... saying ‘no’ to the Status Quo.”

Musician, songwriter, DJ and activist JD Samson has spent her career on the hard-to-classify fringes of pop culture, composing music that is at once danceable, infectious and, well, punky. But what does that mean for an indie-pop artist in 2014? For Samson,

it goes back to her role as one third of the celebrated electro-clash outfit Le Tigre, a band that helped tame some of the unrest stirred by the riot grrrl movement by using their music as a catalyst for positive change. So, perhaps on some level, punk is about being contrarian.

“The idea was to re-channel all that angry

riot grrrl energy in a constructive way,” she explains over the phone. “It was the sound of smart people having fun, concentrating on how things are right rather than continuing to focus on what’s wrong. From there we built a sense of community and celebrated it, and at the same time we created a space where people could feel safe to express and

JD Samson & MEN

9 p.m. Jan. 28
Blind Pig
208 S. First St., Ann Arbor
blindpigmusic.com

enjoy themselves regardless of body image. It was about uniting people on a positive premise, but there was always some queer activism going on.”

Samson – out, proud and supremely androgynous at 35 – connects her sexuality to her music via the term “queering,” as in “turning something on its head.” Queering is an inherently punky ideal, and she’s used it as a way of fusing the oft-hedonistic world of dance music with gender and identity politics. She believes the righteousness of dance music provides a confident space to absorb ideas that challenge the world around you. This script-flipping manner comes across loud and clear through MEN, her current band, which plays Ann Arbor’s Blind Pig on Jan. 28.

Touring in support of “Labor,” MEN’s second full-length release, Samson says her new songs continue where 2011’s “Talk About Body” left off, capitalizing on an electro-organic vibe that recalls the home-cobbled feel of LCD Soundsystem while continuing to provoke thought about what it means to be queer ... both in and out of the sack.

“MEN is pretty much built on the same ideal as Le Tigre, but taking it further into the pop realm,” she says. “We go back and forth, between the artsy and the pop-y, between the personal and political.”

There’s been a lot of criticism about home-composing in the last decade, blaming software like Pro-Tools and Ableton Live for creating a digitally leveled playing field which allows low-talent individuals to make impressive sounding tracks. But Samson, who does quite a bit of home recording, sees ragged glory where others find fault.

“I think of myself as an artist before I’m a musician,” she says. “I studied art and theory and learned about self-expression that way; music is just the genre where success came. But when we talk about people using software to learn how to create songs, I think of this: Punk music used to be about self-taught people playing in garages. Now, the self-taught crowd is working from a studio in the bedroom. The aesthetic is very

similar – it’s about teaching yourself to express opinions through your creativity, to find a channel for those ideas. It seems like a natural progression to me.”

That said, one thing listeners will quickly notice is that the vocals on “Labor” have a slicker production value than on MEN’s debut. Samson cops to using pitch control, but in alignment with her general M.O., for her it’s a tool of expression rather than any sort of crutch or bid for popularity. Given that she was a film student just prior to the digital revolution, she’s got a healthy respect for the handcraft of art (in general) and avoids shortcuts. But she also knows how to exploit a fun toy when she finds it.

“I have a weird relationship with Auto Tune,” she says. “Le Tigre didn’t use it at all; it wasn’t nearly as prevalent then. And the way it’s used now in mainstream pop is kinda crazy, like, even when the vocal line is really close to the right pitch, it gets used anyway. But I started using it for some demos and discovered that it’s useful as a learning tool, like, ‘Oh, that’s where my voice should be.’ And then I employed it as

a way of creating a separate character in my production. In the song “I Don’t Care,” there are two voices, each panned to one side; one is tuned, one is not. So, Auto Tune is potentially a way of enhancing the conversation in my narratives.”

And sometimes, being a punk just boils down to pissing people off with your honesty. Back in the fall

of 2011, Samson published a blog entry with the Huffington Post entitled “I Love My Job But It Made Me Poorer.” In it, she spelled out her feelings about embracing a career that lacks a safety net. She wrote very openly about struggling to keep up with her peers and learning to cope with financial uncertainty. Rather than recognizing it for its eye-opening frankness, however, many readers called her out in the comments with a sarcastic “boohoo” tone, blaming her for choosing a difficult career and accusing her of playing the victim.

“I don’t want to be too pessimistic,” she says. “The Huff Po article was meant as a reality check, but some people took it the wrong way. The point is that it’s time to let go of the myth that people in the music industry are living large. But it’s not all bad. It’s exciting to think that, ‘Wow, the music industry is no longer about money.’ That aspect of it isn’t going to recover. Now it’s about making art, which should have been the case all along.”

“Punk music used to be about self-taught people playing in garages. Now, the self-taught crowd is working from a studio in the bedroom. The aesthetic is very similar – it’s about teaching yourself to express opinions through your creativity, to find a channel for those ideas.”

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Patti For President

Our Q&A With A Legend ... And Your Next Leader?

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Patti LaBelle can say anything she damn well pleases. First of all, she's Patti LaBelle – legend, icon, trailblazer, Hall of Famer, the Godmother of Soul. Second – there is no second. When you've been belting it out for a half-century, there doesn't have to be.

So when the beloved singer rang me recently before her Jan. 26 gig at Sound Board at MotorCity Casino Hotel, LaBelle wasn't about to mince her words when she talked about her player haters, “all the little heifers who can't sing” ravaging the once-honorable “diva” title – and the singer who was too intimidated by Patti's talent to open her show.

We can't wait to see you, Patti.

I can't wait to see my children! It's been a long time. Well, I was in Detroit for a brief Christmas show with KEM and Ron Isley (in December 2013), but that wasn't a Patti moment. (Laughs)

When did you first know you had a big gay following?

I've been in this business for maybe 51 years, and so I think 50 years ago. (Laughs) The first year I wasn't sure, but the second year of performing I got this love – I mean, great love – from my gay fans. I always questioned, “Why do they love me? Why do they really, really give a damn about Patti LaBelle?” And I think it's because I'm such a free spirit and such a drag queen, really, myself. The original drag queen.

What's your relationship with them been like over the years? Has that bond gotten stronger?

It's much stronger. I think if I ran for president of the gay community, they might elect me. And I would handle it so well. It would just be one of those things I was born to do. So I think every year it grows and grows and grows. A lot of gay fans who come to see me, I think they're afraid to be out until I say something and let everyone know it's fine to just be yourself.

If you were president, what would be the first thing you might do for the gay community?

I would let everyone gay who wants to get married – no matter



Photo: Nata Sha

what city, what country, what state – say “I do.” That would be my first order. Everybody say “yes” to gay marriages.

For you, what does it mean to be a diva?

That word is used so loosely that I don't even consider myself a diva. I always considered myself a woman who sings her heart out and who gives 120 percent. “Diva” is a word that I

INFO

Patti LaBelle

7:30 p.m. Jan. 26
Sound Board at MotorCity Casino Hotel
2901 Grand River Ave, Detroit
soundboarddetroit.com

wouldn't wanna call myself because it's so loosely used. It's not cute anymore.

Is there a negative connotation to it now?

Yeah, because all these little heifers who can't sing are called divas! It doesn't mean anything to me and probably to some of the other ladies who have been doing it for as long as I have: Gladys Knight, Aretha Franklin, Dionne Warwick. You know, I'm speaking for me – I don't know if they like to be called divas – but I know I wouldn't call them divas, because it's not in good company.

But it used to be a respectable term at some point.

Well, for opera singers, and for ladies who earned it, but that was way, way back when. Now you can look up to them, but you might not see what you wanna see. A hot mess! People who are doing it and doing it with about 40 people on stage with them to hide their pitifulness – that's not a word, but you know what I mean.

You're the president, Patti. Make up words if you want.

You got that right.

Do you notice when your gay fans are in the audience? Do you feel that energy?

Yes! We were in Durham or Raleigh, N.C. – I don't know where I was Saturday – and it was a front row of white gay men, and when I sang “Little Girls” they hugged each other and stood up after. A lot of people stood for this particular song, but they were so happy to be there, listening to me, knowing that it's OK to kiss, that

it's OK to hug, that it's OK to just let yourself go. And I do notice my children. At every show I do – I notice them.

What are the songs you can't leave the stage without performing?

Of course “Over the Rainbow,” and of course “Lady Marmalade” or “Lady M” or whatever you wanna call it. “If Only You Knew,” “You Are My Friend” and “New Attitude.”

There are so many. I like to end the show with the Lord's Prayer, but I haven't lately. I think I will when I see you.

Detroit needs a prayer.

I know, baby, I know.

What happens if you don't perform these songs?

They don't get angry, because I'm making sure I'm giving 120 percent of whatever song I choose – and they accept that.

It's been said that some singers are intimidated by your voice, as they very well should be. Has anyone ever turned down the opportunity to perform with you because of that?

Actually, Phoebe Snow did not want to open the show for me. She said she didn't wanna be in the building with Patti LaBelle as a compliment, and she was one of my great friends. She passed on, but she was one lady who said, "I refuse to go on the same bill as Patti LaBelle," because she loved me. There are a lot of ladies who don't love me and they don't love what comes out of this mouth ... vocally, you know. So they play hate, and I congratulate. Heyy!

You keep it real.

Oh, there's no reason to do anything else but.

You've even said you're honest to a fault. When has your honesty got you in trouble?

A few times that I can't talk about. (Laughs) Once recently, too. At this show in – oh, I don't know where I was this past weekend – but I said something that was totally gross and my son, who's my manager, stands in the back and watches everything, and when I come off (stage) he kills me. He killed me. "Mom, how could you say that?" I said, "It just slipped out." It was something about drinking water. It was something about a particular kind of water that I hate. I was just dissing the water but (he said), "Don't talk about it, because they might sue." Chris, I do a lot of things that after I do them I say, "Why?" (Laughs)

But please don't stop.

I promise not to.

Your last non-Christmas studio album was in 2006 with "The Gospel According to Patti LaBelle."

Was it?

Hard to believe, isn't it?

Gosh, well, I'm working on a jazz CD that should be out this year, and then not only that, darling, but simultaneously I'll be doing a dance album and an album of ballads.

You have three albums in the works? You're gonna spoil us.

Yes, I am, honey. It's about time! It's been so long.

Can you tell me a bit about this dance album?

It's just gonna be dance music. I'm not sure who's gonna produce or anything; I just know that I'm doing that this year. As soon as I know something about it, I will let you know.

Lastly, Patti, what's the greatest life lesson you've learned?

I've learned to love my family while they're here and give them anything they want ... within reason. Never neglect going to the hospital to see your sister who's dying of cancer. I missed that one. I missed my last sister, Jackie, who died five minutes away and she wanted an egg sandwich and I said, "I'll bring it tomorrow." And tomorrow she was gone. My life lesson is to do for those who you care for today. Right now. Like, when you hang up, Chris, call somebody and tell them you love them.

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'Young, Hot & Gay' Comics Bring Comedy Show To Lansing, Novi



BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

They're young, hot and gay – and they're coming to Novi and Lansing. Jordan Pease, Heather Turman and

Tara Egnatios, who are traveling cross-country on their "Young, Hot & Gay Tour," will stop at Laff Tracks Comedy Club (30850 N.Beck Road, Novi) on Jan. 25 and Connxtions Comedy Club (2900

“ I was performing in Mexico, up popped a Facebook message that basically said, “Pack your shit, it’s go time.” ”

N. East St., Lansing) on Jan. 26. We caught up with Pease before the show.

How did you get involved with The Young Hot & Gay Tour? What can people expect?

I actually got involved with The Young Hot & Gay Tour through Michigan native Heather Turman. We worked together a few times in the Los Angeles comedy circuit and

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always would joke about hitting the Bible Belt and taking on the road together. In October, (while) I was performing in Mexico, up popped a Facebook message that basically said, "Pack your shit, it's go time."

When did you know you wanted to be a comedian?

I knew I wanted to be a comedian since my father passed away summer of 2010. Though I have to admit, since birth I was an entertainer. Every one of my childhood school report cards read, "Talking is disruptive to the learning environment." I was a clown who would smile his way out of everything. Still am!

Which comedians do you appreciate most?

If I had to choose one comic to sit me down and give me the "pow-wow" speech of life in the comedy world, I'd want it to be Roseanne Barr. She put the "unruly woman" on the map, and then said deal with it! You have to be slightly insane to get pleasure from having an audience of strangers sit, judge and laugh at you. I appreciate the comics who never give up till the day they croak.

What do you think this new generation of comedians brings to comedy?

Like music, style and clothing, I think comedy eventually repeats itself. Our generation can make

jokes about using new technology – iPhones, electric cars, Keurig coffee machines – while the past generation has the ability to rant on about life when answering machines ruled the world. Each generation brings slang and current affairs. I believe our generation brings some backbone.

You tell jokes for a living, but what cracks you up?

Authority kills me. Every time I catch a cop giving someone a parking ticket, or a coach shunning an 11-year-old baseball player, I just laugh. People take life way too seriously. Inappropriate moments will always be my forte. Laughing all day just keeps life from being boring.

Singing Festival Lands In East Lansing Jan. 31

BY SHELBY CLARK

The 12th Annual Mid-Winter Singing Festival, held from Friday, Jan. 31 to Saturday, Feb. 1, will celebrate singing in various genres, from American folk to Southern gospel. The festival will be held at the Hannah Community Center in East Lansing.

Several well-known faces of Lansing music will be on hand, including Bob Blackman as Master of Ceremonies. Blackman is the host of "The Folk Tradition" on WKAR FM 90.5 and also frequently hosts Ten Pound Fiddle concerts.

The festival begins with Dr. Ysaye M. Barnwell, the festival organizer, singing at Fairchild Theatre at Michigan State University in East Lansing. The event, presented by Sistrum (East Lansing's Women's Chorus), begins at 7 p.m. Jan. 29.

The weekend portion of the festival begins with a free children's concert with Lake Effect. The show, sponsored by the City of East Lansing, is at 11 a.m.

Featured concerts of the festival are titled "Community Sings," where all are invited to sing along with the main performers. Dr. Barnwell will host the first Community Sing of the weekend event at 8 p.m. on Jan. 31. She will also lead the festival choir of Saturday's Community Sing.

Dr. Barnwell has sung with Sweet Honey in the Rock, a respected a capella

group. She's had an expansive career that's included connections with Sistrum, as well as a composer, arranger, teacher, author, choral clinician and actress. Her work as a Sign Language Interpreter has helped her bring her musical passions to all audiences.

In addition to Dr. Barnwell's choir-conducting talents, Robin and Linda Williams, Joel Mabus, Dan Chouinard, and others will host Saturday's Community Sing, beginning at 8 p.m.

The Williams couple have performed acoustic bluegrass music for decades. Singer-songwriter Mabus has recorded over 20 solo albums of original and traditional music since 1978. Chouinard is known for his piano, accordion and storytelling skills.

In addition to the many concerts, the festival will feature six workshops on Saturday, Feb. 1. Pre-registration is not required. The single purchase of a \$10 wristband allows festival attendees to pick and choose different workshops.

Workshops run roughly an hour and will be spread among Room 211, Room 235 and the Banquet Room of the community center. The first workshops begin at 12:20, with the last workshops beginning at 3.

Julianna and Andy Wilson of The Springtails will run "Swing Era Favorites," while jazz musician Claudia Schmidt, along with Ruelaine Stokes, will conduct "Fun with the Spoken Word."

Folk, be it country-oriented or more pop, dominates many of the other workshops. Gospel-folk singer Julie Beutel will teach

in "Songs of Peace, Justice and Freedom," and Community Sing host Joel Mabus will host "Singing with the Banjo."

The final workshop, "Five Hundred Miles and More ... Folk-Pop Favorites," will be taught by Michigan-based harmony singers Wanda Degen and Kay Rinker-O'Neal of The Catbird's Seat.

A special workshop, titled "Building a Vocal Community: Singing In The African American Tradition," will be hosted by Dr. Barnwell. The four-hour workshop begins at noon on Feb. 1 and participants will become the festival choir for the Saturday Night Festival Choir performance. Two pieces learned and practiced in the workshop will be presented at the evening event. Tickets for this workshop are \$40, which include admission into the Saturday evening Community Sing.

Hannah Community Center is located at 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. Tickets for workshops range from \$10-40, with tickets for singing events ranging from \$5 for students to \$20 for the general public. Workshops are free for all those 18 and under, or students with valid college ID. The Children's Concert is free.

For more information on the festival, call 517-267-0410 or visit www.singingfestival.com.

For more information on other events in the Lansing and East Lansing area, visit BTL's calendar at www.pridesource.com/calendar.

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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Jan. 23

New Volunteer Meeting 5:30 p.m.
Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile
Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105.
Goaffirmations.org

Connections 6 p.m. Open to all LGBTQ
and Ally youth from 13-18. Join us to meet
other LGBTQ and Ally teens and socialize
in a safe space. Kalamazoo Gay and
Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St.,
Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

or anything in between, this is your
opportunity to express yourself on stage.
All ages welcome. Affirmations, 290 W.
Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-
7105. Goaffirmations.org

Drag Queen Bingo 7 p.m. A fun
alternative to your usual weekend hot
spots. Shows get out just early enough
for you to hit the local clubs or bars!
Refreshments from our full coffee
bar (coffee, teas, smoothies), sodas,
water, and more. Tickets: \$20. 18+.
Five15, 515 S. Washington Ave., **Royal
Oak**. 248-515-2551. Five15.net

**Equality Cabaret Pre-Benefit
Photoshoot** 11 a.m. Jim Toy
Community Center, 319 Braun
Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867.
Jimtoycenter.org

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

Men's Discussion Group 6 p.m.
Lighthearted or in-depth discussion on
a variety of topics. Affirmations, 290 W.
Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-
7105. goaffirmations.org

Tashmo Biergarten 12 p.m. Pop-up
European style beer garden with Detroit
sensitivity. Food, beer, games, and
more. Location often varies. Tashmo
Biergarten, 1420 Van Dyke, **Detroit**.
guten-tag@tashmoodetroit.com
Tashmoodetroit.com

Queer Women's Committee Potluck 1
p.m. Monthly potluck on fourth Sunday
of each month. All lesbian, bisexual,
transgender, queer and ally women
welcome. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian
Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St.,
Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

**International Holocaust Remembrance
Day Commemoration and Presentation**
2 p.m. Through the combined efforts of
his assimilated German Jewish family,
a little-known Jewish children's rescue
organization, and the well-intentioned
trickery of his aunt and uncle, 15-year old
Guy Stern immigrated to St. Louis in 1937.
Now 92 years old, he tells of his family's
traumatic experience under Nazi rule,
his fortuitous escape to the U. S. A., and
his return to Europe as an officer in the
American Secret Service. Free. Holocaust
Memorial Center, 48123 Orchard Lake
Road, **Farmington Hills**. 248-553-2400
x24. Holocaustcenter.org

**WWS XII: 12th Anniversary Gala
Celebrating the KCH Tradition Wine,
Women and Song** 4 p.m. Tickets: \$20-
50. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N.
Fourth Ave., **Ann Arbor**. 734-763-4186.
Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Server Sundays 9 p.m. Bring in a
paystub or POS card. Discounts for
those in hospitality industry. aut Bar, 315
Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677.
Autbar.com

Monday, Jan. 27

Fun Run & Walk Program 6:30 p.m.
Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource
Center, **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234.
Kglrc.org

Center Open-Drop In 7 p.m. Jim
Toy Community Center, 319 Braun
Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867.
Jimtoycenter.org

Mad Hatter's Writing Group 7
p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile
Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105.
Goaffirmations.org

**Movement with Kristi Faulkner
Dance** 7 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine
Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105.
goaffirmations.org

Through My Eyes 7 p.m. Film.
Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile
Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105.
Goaffirmations.org

Writing Group 7 p.m. Different focus for
each meeting. Meets fourth Monday of
every month. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine
Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105.
goaffirmations.org

Editor's Pick



"Gnosis"

Charles Alexander, known for his work writing his weekly
column "Parting Glances" with BTL, currently has a solo
exhibition of work at The Scarab Club in Detroit. The art exhibit,
titled "Alexander: Art Bi-Polar," will feature "whimsical, satiric,
enigmatic and intuitive" work.

Alexander's work has been displayed at numerous galleries,
including Detroit Artists Market and the Detroit Institute of Arts,
as well as in Chicago and San Francisco. Alexander has been
awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the annual Pride
Banquet and a Spirit of Detroit Award.

The Scarab Club is located at 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. The
gallery is open Wednesday-Sunday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more

information on the exhibition, call 313-831-1250 or visit www.scarabclub.org.

Sue Eckstein's Cancer Fight Show
7 p.m. With Kaleido, Trick Trick, Ty
Stone, Daniel Harrison, & More! All ages.
Tickets: \$10+. The Majestic, 4120
Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 313-833-9700
.Majesticdetroit.com

**Toastmasters International
SpeakOUT! Club** 7 p.m. Toastmasters
will show you how to listen more
effectively, think on your feet and
speak confidently Jim Toy Community
Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**.
734-995-9867. Jimtoycenter.org

Trivia with Terry 7 p.m. Join Terry for
Trivia upstairs. No registration required.
Aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-
994-3677. Autbar.com

Friday, Jan. 24

Open Mic Night with Michelle Brown
6 p.m. Whether it's poetry, singing

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film:
You and I. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine
Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105.
Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Jan. 25

**Heart 2 Art Workshop with Diane
Olsen** 9:30 a.m. Tickets: \$110.
Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400
Culver St., **Saugatuck**. 269-857-2399.
Sc4a.org

**Adult Two Day Core Kingian
Nonviolence Workshop** 10 a.m.
Refreshments, lunch and dinner
included. Tickets: \$30-50. Positive
Peace Warrior Network, 3061 Field St.,
Detroit. Ppwn.org

LAHR Breakfast Club 10 a.m. Meet
at Flap Jack near Frandor. Lansing
Association for Human Rights,
Lansing. beachlerb@sbcglobal.net
lahronline.org

Annual Craft Beerfest 7 p.m. 21+.
Tickets: \$45-60. Royal Oak Music Theatre,
318 W. Fourth St., **Royal Oak**. 248-399-
2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Drag Queen Bingo 8 p.m. Reservations
required. 18+. Drag Queen Bentley
James. Ticket: \$20. Leaf & Berry, 6385
Orchard Lake Road, **West Bloomfield
Township**. 248-671-6011. info@
leafberry.com Leafberry.com

Open Meditation Saturdays 9
p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile
Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105.
goaffirmations.org

Sunday, Jan. 26

**Rev. Roland Stringfellow, Pastoral
Candidate** Visit to MCC. Metropolitan
Community Church of Detroit (MCC),
2441 Pinecrest Dr., **Ferndale**. 248-399-
7741. Mccdetroit.org



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Editor's Pick

In association with Get Out And Live (GOAL), head to Jimi's Restaurant & Banquet Center for "Conversation Station." The "Rap Group" discuss a new topic each week.

The event is open to anyone, and discussion is not limited to a chosen topic. If someone wishes to talk about something, they are free to do so. The meetup is, at its core, a group of friends who enjoy each others company and support each other in any way possible.

Conversation Station begins at 5 p.m. every Sunday at Jimi's Restaurant, 714 S. Washington, Royal Oak. For more information, call 248-981-4227 or e-mail marcilwilliams@yahoo.com. More GOAL events can be seen at goalgetoutandlive.me.

Tuesday, Jan. 28

Grand River Connection Creative class. Lansing Association for Human Rights, Lansing. grandriverconnection.com

Trans/Genderqueer Peer Group 4 p.m. EMU LGBTRC, Ypsilanti. 734-487-4149. Emich.edu/lgbtrc

Aff Action Night 6 p.m. Educating others about how to make Michigan an equality state. Pizza provided for volunteers. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

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

Life's a Stitch 6:30 p.m. Open to those who Crochet, Knit, Quilt, Needlepoint, Macrame and Jewelry. Free. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.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, Jan. 29

Senior Koffee Klatch 1 p.m. A lively, discussion and social group for LGBT adults over 45. Group covers topics pertaining to aging and outside speakers. Potluck dinners at members homes, lunches out and holiday parties. Meets ever Wednesday on the upper level of the Affirmations building. Senior Koffee Klatch, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. GoAffirmations.org

COBO Support Group 5 p.m. Coming out, being out. EMU LGBTRC, Ypsilanti. 734-487-4149. Emich.edu/lgbtrc

Mid-Week Meditation 6 p.m. Suggested Donation: \$3. Michigan Pagans, 195 W. Nine Mile Road, Suite 1B, Ferndale. Meetup.com/michiganpagans

Dr. Ysaye Barnwell 7 p.m. Part of Mid-Winter Singing Festival. Sistrum, East Lansing. Sistrum.org

Open Arms Support Group 7 p.m. Southeast Michigan's lonest running peer-run HIV/AIDS support group for those infected or affected by HIV or AIDS. Michigan Aids Coalition, 429 Livernois, Ferndale. 248-545-1435. MichiganAidscoalition.org

Young@Heart 7 p.m. Socializing and conversation for those 45 and older. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Whiskey Wednesday 8 p.m. Country line dancing. Free juke box. MaleBox Michigan, 23365 Hoover Road, Warren. 586-806-2390. Facebook.com/MaleBoxMichigan

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

MUSIC & MORE

Classical

Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra "Cosi fan tuttee: Mozart Birthday Bash" The A250 become one of the actors on center stage in this narrated semi-staged opera. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Jan. 25. 734-668-8397. A2so.com

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Hilary Hahn" Tickets: \$15. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 24-Jan. 26. 313-576-5111. Dso.org

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Beyond the Beast" ALEJANDRO VINA-Selections from "Book of Grooves." FREDRIK ANDERSSON-The Loneliness of Santa Clause. ASKELL MASSON-Rhythm Strip. Molly Grove Chapel, First Presbyterian Church, Lansing. 3 p.m. Jan. 26. Lansingsymphony.org

Concerts

Blind Pig "JD Samson & Men" 18+. Tickets: \$12-14. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. Jan. 28. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Blind Pig "Fourth Annual Folk The Police-A Folk Tribute To Rap" 18+. Tickets: \$15. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. Jan. 26. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Nicola's Books "Malcom Gladwell" Author of David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants. Tickets: \$15-35. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Jan. 27. 734-668-8397. Michtheater.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Andrew Blenndermann" Tickets: \$0-10. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. 2 p.m. Jan. 26. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

St. Cecilia Music Center "Homecoming-A Family Reunion" Hot Jazz. St. Cecilia Music Center, 24 Ransom NE., Grand Rapids. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 23. 616-459-2224. Scm-online.org

The Ark "James Hill" Tickets: \$20. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Jan. 23. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Magic Bag "Who's Bad (The Ultimate Michael Jackson Tribute)" Tickets: \$20. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Sep. 13-Jan. 24. 248-544-3030. themagicbag.com

The Majestic "St. Lucia" All ages. Tickets: \$15. The Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Jan. 24. 313-833-9700. Majesticdetroit.com

University Musical Society (UMS) "Denis Mastsuev" Piano. Tickets: \$10-60. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 4 p.m. Jan. 26. 734-761-1800. Ums.org

The Majestic "Punk Rock Winter Formal" With Bill Bondsman, F*ck You Pay Me, Nice Hooves, Nervosas, & Rebel Spies. All ages. Tickets: \$7-10. The Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. Jan. 25. 313-833-9700. Majesticdetroit.com

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

Arsenic and Old Lace \$7-24. The Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Through Jan. 25. 269-343-1313. kazoocivic.com

Big Love \$10-15. Peppermint Creek Theatre at Miller Performing Arts Center, 6025 Curry Lane, South Lansing. Jan. 30 - Feb. 8. 517-927-3016. Peppermintcreek.org

Deathtrap \$7-15. Twin City Players, 600 W. Glenlord Road, St. Joseph. Jan. 31 - Feb. 23. 269-429-0400. Twincityplayers.org

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change \$16-14. Spotlight Players at The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. Jan. 31 - Feb. 9. 734-394-5300. spotlightplayersmi.org

Into the Woods \$18-24. The Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Parish Theatre, 426 South Park Street, Kalamazoo. Jan. 24 - Feb. 8. 269-343-1313. kazoocivic.com

Next to Normal \$13-25. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin Ave., Ann Arbor. Jan. 30 - Feb. 2. 734-763-3333. A2ct.org

Screen Play \$10-12. Emergent Arts at The Mix Studio Theatre, 130 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti. Jan. 22 - 26. 734-961-8704. emergentarts.com

Shrek The Musical \$20-22. Stagecrafters at Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Through Jan. 26. 248-541-6430. Stagecrafters.org

College/University Theater

Birth and After Birth \$10-12. Studio

See Happenings, page 24

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Editor's Pick

The Michigan premiere production of "My Occasion of Sin" by Monica Bauer is now playing at the Detroit Repertory Theatre through March 16.

Racist talk, thoughts and actions seem to be resurging all around us. We hear and see it in personal vilification of our president, in voting rights disenfranchisement, in talk of secession, in the waving of the confederate flag, in the denigration of the working poor, the unemployed and immigrants.



The events and lists of racist attacks seem to go on and on. Is there no end, no ray of hope?

Tickets are \$17 advance, and may be purchased by phone with no extra fees by calling 313-868-1347, or \$20 day of performance.

The Detroit Repertory Theatre is located in the center of the City, easily accessible from all major freeways at 13103 Woodrow Wilson.

Happenings

Continued from p. 23

Theatre, underground at the Hilberry, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Jan. 25. 313-577-2972. wsustudio.com

Fences Free. WSU's Maggie Allessee Dept. of Theatre and Dance at Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, 315 East Warren Ave., Detroit. Jan. 25. thewright.org

Seven \$5-20. The University Theatre at York Arena Theatre inside The Gilmore Theatre Complex, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. Jan. 23 - Feb. 2. 269-387-6222. wmutheatre.com

Professional

1300 Lafayette East \$41-48. The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company at Aaron DeRoy Theatre on the campus of the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Jan. 29 - Feb. 23. 248-788-2900. jetttheatre.org

A Doctor in Spite of Himself \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Feb. 8. 313-577-2972. hilberry.com

A Play by Franco Vitella \$15-18. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company, The Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Jan. 31 - Feb. 22. 313-408-7269. magentagiraffe.org

Almost, Maine \$32-39. The Dio - Dining and Entertainment, 135 E. Main St., Pinckney. Jan. 30 - March 2. 517-672-6009. diotheatre.com

American Idiot \$34-69. Broadway in Detroit at Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Jan. 31 - Feb. 2. 313-237-SING. broadwayindetroit.com

ComedySportz Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 877-636-3320. comedysportzdetroit.com

County Line \$22-41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Feb. 16. 734-663-0681. performancenetwork.org

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through March 22. 313-577-2972. hilberry.com

Harris Cashes Out! \$25-40. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Through Feb. 2. 248-377-3300. mbtheatre.com

I Hate Hamlet \$16-\$18. The Box Theater, 90 Macomb Place, Mount Clemens. Through Jan. 25. 586-954-2677. theboxtheater.com

Improv Mondays \$5 at the door. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck.

Through March 31. 313-365-4948. planetant.com

Million Dollar Quartet \$29-67. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 31 - Feb. 1. 810-237-8689. thewhiting.com

Murder at the Howard Johnson's \$27-32. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Jan. 30 - March 9. 248-347-0003. tippingpointtheatre.com

My Occasion of Sin \$17-20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through March 16. 313-868-1347. detroitreptheatre.com

Owl's Winter \$3-12. Wild Swan Theater at Towsley Auditorium in the Morris Lawrence Building on the campus of Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E. Huron River Dr., Ann Arbor. Jan. 23 - 25. 734-995-0530. wildswantheatre.org

Peter and the Star Catcher \$25+. Wharton Center's Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. Jan. 22 - 26. 800-WHARTON. whartoncenter.com/events/detail/pilobolus

Redwood Curtain \$18.50-42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through March 15. 734-433-7673. purplerosetheatre.org

Rock of Ages \$35-58. Miller Auditorium, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 23. 269-387-2300. millerauditorium.com

Sesame Street Live: Can't Stop Singing \$15-68. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 23 - Feb. 17. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

Snow Queen \$5-10. PuppetART, Detroit Puppet Theater, 25 E. Grand River Ave., Detroit. Through Jan. 26. 313-961-7777. puppetart.org

Stomp \$25-55. The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 24 - 25. 810-237-8689. thewhiting.com

The Addams Family \$25-65. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. Jan. 24 - 25. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

The Lion in Winter \$15-25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Jan. 23 - Feb. 23. 517-655-SHOW. williamstontheatre.org

The Submission \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Feb. 3. 248-545-5545. thewingald.com

The Taming of the Shrew \$20. The Elizabeth Theater Company, 2040 Park Ave., Detroit. Jan. 30 - March 2. 313-454-1286. elizabeththeater.com

You Just Have No Idea \$15-18. Broadway Onstage Live Theatre, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Through Feb. 8.

586-771-6333. broadwayonstage.com

ART 'N' AROUND

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) "3: Kathryn Brackett Luchs, Lois Teicher and Marie Woo" Featuring the dynamic works of three major figures of the Detroit arts community. Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 17-Feb. 15. 313-832-8540. detroitartistsmarket.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "A Throne for an African Prince" The works of Africa sculptor Olowe of Ise, whose royal throne fills this gallery, are much sought after by museums; the DIA is one of only two museums to own three of his pieces. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 1-March 16. 313-833-7900. dia.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Point of View: Contemporary African American Art from the Elliot & Kimberly Perry Collection" Art from former NBA player and his wife. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 26-April 13. 810-234-1695. flintarts.org

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. Aug. 9-Feb. 28. 616-831-1000. artmuseumgr.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "John Peterson" Complex pen & ink drawings. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. Jan. 1-March 22. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Open Figure Class" Tickets: \$15 (or \$100 for all six sessions). Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. Jan. 23-Feb. 27. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

The N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art "Do The Yale Thing: An Exhibition of Exceptional Artwork by Recent Yale MFA Graduates" The N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art, 52 E. Forest Ave., Detroit. Jan. 24-May 21. 313-831-8700. nnamdicenter.org

The Scarab Club "Gary Grimshaw: Solo" Grimshaw is a graphic artist of exceptional talent who has an extraordinary history and character. He was born in Detroit. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Jan. 1-Feb. 15. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

UMMA "Fragments from the Past: Islamic Art from the Collection of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology" University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Nov. 30-April 13. 734-763-4186. umma.umich.edu



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Over 20 Years Of Experience



Go Comedy! presents "Breaking Convention" through March 7. Photo: Pete Jacokes

Dive Into The Convention World With New Original Comedy

BY DANA CASADEI

Attending Comic Con has always been a dream of mine. Now, I would go more for the TV shows and movies than the comic book aspect of it all, but still, I really hope to go someday. For now, Go Comedy! Improv Theater's "Breaking Convention" will probably be as close as I get to the infamous Hall H. And you know what? That's perfectly all right.

The show, which was written by the cast and director Pete Jacokes, is just under 90 minutes. This is plenty of time for audiences to get sucked into the world of conventions.

The Richard Myron Convention Center has hit a bit of a snafu. Instead of booking conventions throughout the year, all of them have been scheduled for the same weekend. With no time to fix it, the crew must do their best to have things run smoothly. Following everything from check-in (for both the conventions and hotel), to food court moments (both adorable and horrifying), to the actual conventions themselves, there's a little bit of everything.

Oh, and you'll learn about "The Legend of Nancy" and her Pampered Chef ice cream scoops.

Picking a favorite actor would be

REVIEW

Breaking Convention

Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 8 p.m. Thursday-Friday through March 7. 85 minutes; no intermission. \$15-20. 248-327-0575.

www.gocomedy.net

like picking a favorite kid. Each of the six – Jenny Bloomer, Billy Crawford, Michelle Giorlando, Erik Heilner, Scotty Myers, and Chris Petersen – are all unique in their own way, shining at least once during the show. Even though they are all wonderful – they really are – I have to make a special shout-out to a few.

The ladies playing two grandmas (who are members of the Red Hat Society trying to have a wild girls weekend) are perfection. If Go Comedy! ever needs a new two-man show – or in this case, women – they should have Bloomer and Giorlando portray the grandmas again. I'm sure they would have no problem creating a multitude of stories for "The Adventures of Grandmas Gone Wild." The last scene they have together, which incorporates the entire cast, is easily the best moment of the show.

On the boys' side, you're going to

remember Petersen for two very different characters. The first would be when he plays a cat; yes a cat. Trust me, it's weirdly amazing. The second would be when he's a man that starts out friendly, until he finds out the concession stand doesn't have cheese for nachos. He then turns to the audience, blank stare, and begins to tell the workers how they're going to die in a fiery blaze. Each scenario begins with, "Here's what's going to happen." This whole thing is done in an excellent deadpan. When the character returned, all Petersen had to do was turn and give that blank stare before the audience erupted in laughter. Then he delivered the line. Cue bigger laughs.

Like many Go Comedy! Shows, the costumes and props by Jacokes and Tommy LeRoy said as much about the characters as the words spoken by the actors. Giorlando's princess outfit and the rapping dads' face paint were two personal favorites.

A few of the characters and plot points fall a little flat, and some are just plain strange, but aren't all conventions a little bit funky? Plus, where else are you going to see a princess fighting with a priest about "Star Wars," while waiting in line to meet Doctor Who? I'm going to bet nowhere, except maybe Comic Con.

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- Ann Arbor-Friday**
 7:30 pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church Gay AA, 306 N. Division St. Closed/Discussion.
- Bloomfield Hills-Sunday / Tuesday / Thursday**
 8:00 pm, North Woodward Equality, Birmingham Unitarian Church, 38651 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, lower level classroom - enter first walkway off Woodward entrance. Big Book/12 & 12 Meeting.
- 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-Saturday**
 1 p.m. Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.
- Livonia-Friday**
 8 p.m., West Side Story's Gay AA, Providence Medical Center, 7 Mile & Newburgh. Closed/Discussion.
- Warren-Monday**
 7:30 p.m., Eastside Serenity Gay AA, Odd Fellow's Hall, 830 S Monroe St Closed/Discussion.

101-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AL ANON

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- Go After Your Serenity (G.A.Y.S.) AI-Anon Family Group**
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Solution to puzzle from page 30

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Joaquin Phoenix in "Her."
Photo: Warner Bros.

'Her' Reminded Me Of Him

Riveting Film Reflects All Of Our Lives

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

I remember my first gay relationship, but I can't remember with whom. I don't know his name or what he looked like. I don't even remember where he lived. There's no lingering scent, no sweater he left behind, no string of texts to remind me that I didn't just imagine it. Why? Because I never met him. But he was there, he existed – and he made me feel less alone, less isolated and less not-normal every time he called me.

We connected in ways I couldn't with anyone else then. I was only 14 and grappling with my sexuality, and he showed me, simply, that I could just ... be. It was a meaningful connection that, because of time, almost escaped me until I saw Spike Jonze ("Adaptation.," "Where the Wild Things Are") explore a similar relationship in his bizarrely heartfelt and thought-provoking sci-fi romance "Her," the story of Theodore Twombly (Joaquin Phoenix), a letter writer who falls for a woman who lives in his computer.

She's an operating system, designed to fill the void of actual human interaction. Her name is Samantha (Scarlett Johansson), and she's a lot like Siri, except that – because this is the very near future (in a very posh-hipster L.A., by the way, where all men are hot Urkel nerds) – she isn't just a portal for information. She feels. She even sorta has sex. But without a physical body, the act of intercourse is challenging, and Jonze – in a scene that's unforgettably off-kilter – gets crafty and does something simultaneously out-there, but also surprisingly lamentable, that makes bot sex achievable. Jonze's comedic and poetically earnest script brims with this palpable intimacy, most of it emotional, as Theodore and Samantha bond in a way that

almost seems as authentic as any relationship – except that she's, like, not real.

A recluse who's in the midst of divorcing his wife Catherine (Rooney Mara), he's experiencing a rebirth. You see it in his smile as he joyously does circle spins in the middle of a crowd, you hear it in his laugh when she illustrates what anal sex with an armpit looks like, you feel it when he tells her, "I've never loved anyone the way I've loved you."

It's a more accurate statement than even he may realize: Theodore is in love with someone/something that, in all actuality, doesn't exist. And yet, there she is, and there he is, and there they are together. Becoming the sort of every-person, the wounded teddy bear whose desire for something more is easy to identify with (I can think of several occasions where I would've liked to tell my iPod what he tells his: "Play melancholy song"), Phoenix really gets to the core of Theodore's heart, drive and empathetic sensitivity. Every moment with Samantha is real, because those feelings he feels? They're real to him. Johansson, as Samantha, has never been better, and that's without ever appearing on screen. It's just her voice, but a voice that finds the soul in the soullessness of a computer. There's no way to forget Samantha.

Jonze, who's written and directed a profound post-modern meditation on the pursuit of human connection, is forcing us to think about our own lives, the way we relate to each other (and don't), and how technology has brought us, and will continue to bring us, closer and further apart.

I know it made *me* think. It made me think of those vague-but-significant phone exchanges I had when I was just a teenager coming into my own – and how technology, despite its serious effect on all of our lives, can never replace a real embrace from a friend, or a real kiss, or a conversation with a real person who makes this big, bad world seem not so big and not so bad.

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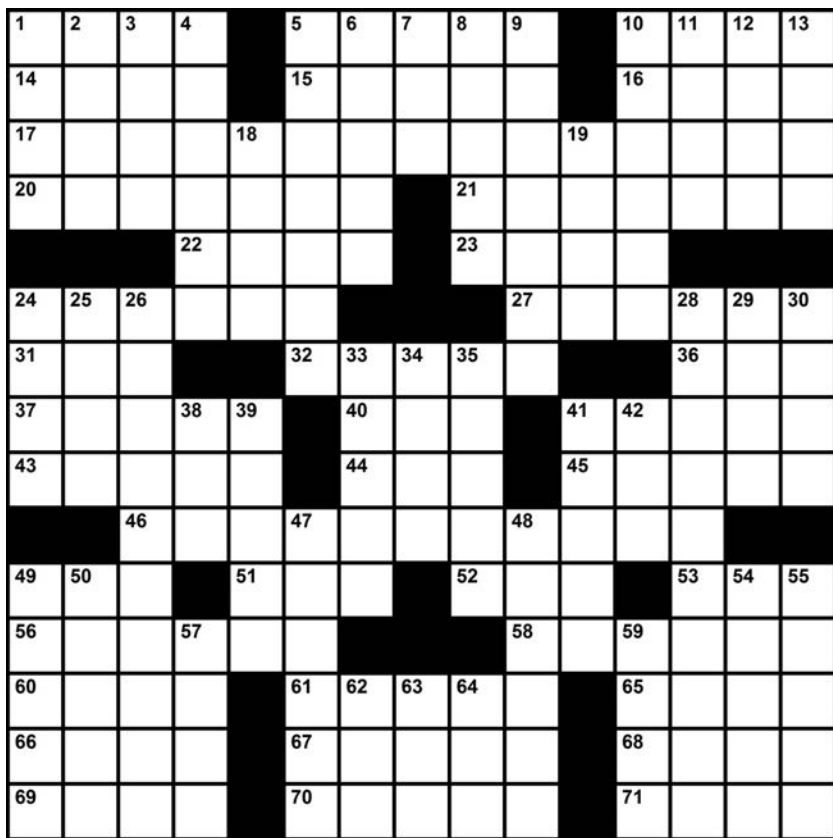
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Across

- 1 Jason went cruising in this
 5 Words on a book jacket
 10 Stonewall Jackson's boys
 14 Common lunch time
 15 Poet Vivien
 16 On the summit of
 17 Start of a definition of being afraid
 20 Go into free-fall
 21 Dance piece
 22 Fox comedy with Jane Lynch
 23 Pass out
 24 Insertion marks
 27 Heart rate-increasing exercise
 31 Writer Castillo
 32 More of the definition
 36 In addition
 37 Strive to stay within budget
 40 Some NLGJA members have worked here
 41 Nation once known as Zaire
 43 Hayek of "Frida"
 44 Sodom suffix
 45 Dorian Gray creator Wilde
 46 End of the definition
 49 FDR's country
 51 Tennessee Williams twosome
 52 Bonehead
 53 Thar-blows link

- 56 With 58-Across, Martin Luther King coworker and source of this puzzle's quote
 58 See 56-Across
 60 "That smarts!"
 61 Where to see Tom, Dick, or Harry
 65 She played Glinda in "The Wiz"
 66 Rib giver
 67 "We're doomed!"
 68 Crude cartel
 69 Rubber on a rim
 70 Insinuate
 71 Oral attention getter

Down

- 1 Queen's "subjects"
 2 Castle in a board game
 3 Pass, as years
 4 Like a nervous Nelly
 5 First in courage
 6 Flood protector
 7 Single, in gay Pareae
 8 Where a queen may rule
 9 Pray
 10 Top supporter
 11 Katharine's "Butch Cassidy" role
 12 Physicist Niels
 13 Went lickety-split
 18 Fullest extent

- 19 Sappho's "I"
 24 Mama ___ Elliot
 25 "Diana" singer
 26 Track vehicle
 28 Fosse moves
 29 "Cunt" author Muscio
 30 Nose activator
 33 Archaeological sites
 34 Capable of performing
 35 Link with
 38 Colette's Mrs.
 39 Fruit peeler
 41 Greek island
 42 Coll. of Phil Andros
 47 The last word
 48 Bullseye site
 49 One that lies on the bottom
 50 Riyadh resident
 54 Gregory, who played Ben Doucette on "Will & Grace"
 55 Make applicable
 57 Words of woe, to the Bard
 59 Sow chow
 62 First note sound, in "The Sound of Music"
 63 Palindromic boy king
 64 Nutty ___ fruitcake

Solution on pg. 28

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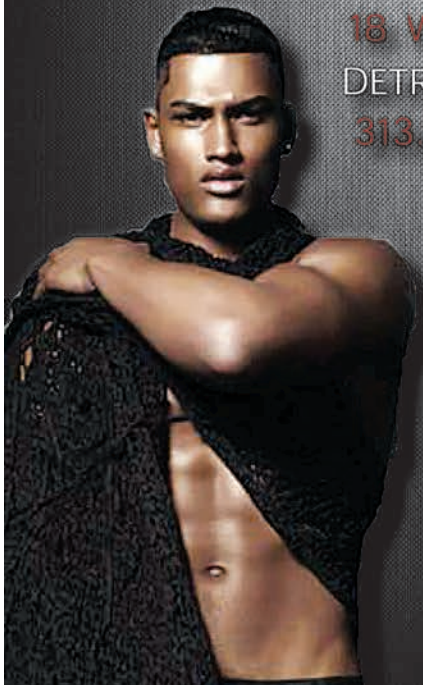
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