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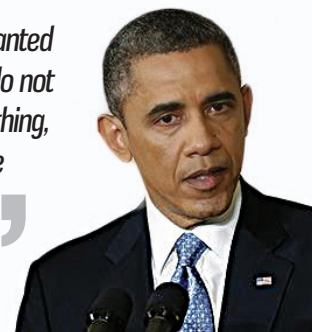


Off-Screen Surprises
At Sochi Olympics

Holder Announcement
Scrutinized By Some

“There is no doubt we wanted
to make it very clear that we do not
abide by discrimination in anything,
including discrimination on the
basis of sexual orientation.”

-President Obama on appointing
three openly gay athletes
for Sochi delegation, pg. 4



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BAD
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An Interview With
Icon Pam Grier



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COVER

14 As bad as she wants to be



“Why is surgery the most common question? What a lot of people don’t realize is this question is really inappropriate. Most transgender people do not have surgery.”

—Nikki Selik, pg. 5



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Olympic Visibility

Some Big Surprises Off-Screen At Sochi

BY LISA KEEN

LGBT visibility during the first few days of the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, included some high profile political "messages," two gay inclusive television commercials, and several surprise choices by both Russian games organizers and openly gay athletes.

It was Olympic organizers at the speed skating stadium who chose to play the iconic gay anthem "YMCA" over the public address system during Saturday's competition. And it was openly lesbian athlete Daniela Iraschko-Stolz who reportedly told reporters, "I don't think it's a good idea to make protests here, no one cares."

Most Americans are getting their Olympic coverage via NBC's nightly broadcasts of selected, edited events, as well as some live coverage during the day. Although broadcast of some of the first events began on Thursday, February 6, the most-watched programming started with the opening ceremony Friday night.

NBC led its opening ceremony coverage with an interview taped by anchor Bob Costas via satellite with President Obama on Thursday. In that interview, Costas asked the president why he, the vice president, and First Lady did not attend. President Obama said they all had busy schedules and "a lot going on," and pointed out that he hasn't attended any other Olympics since taking office in 2009.

Costas pointed out that the president chose three openly gay athletes to be part of the 10-member U.S. presidential delegation to the opening and closing ceremonies, saying that seemed to be sending a message. President Obama acknowledged he was.

"There is no doubt we wanted to make it very clear that we do not abide by discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation," said President Obama. (The full interview is available at NBC's Olympics.)

International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach seemed to chide President Obama with his own remarks at the opening ceremony. Although he said the Olympics are about "embracing human diversity in great unity," he called on "political leaders of the world" to "have the courage to address your disagreements in a peaceful, direct, and political dialogue and not on the backs of these athletes."

However, many people were attempting to find politics on the backs of the athletes, literally. When the German team entered the stadium wearing multi-colored uniforms, NBC co-anchor Meredith Vieira immediately characterized them as "rainbow-colored" but

then quickly added that, when the uniforms were unveiled last October, the German team officials made a point of saying they were not a statement in regards to Russia's anti-gay laws.

"So, if you're thinking that this was a statement about that," said Vieira, in an unusually strident tone, "it is not."

Vieira said nothing as members of the Greek team, the first to enter the stadium, paraded in wearing white gloves with rainbow colored fingers.

Few Gay Signs Televised

Although some activists had predicted gay athletes and their supporters might wear "P6" or rainbow pins during the Olympics, there were very few clear signs of anything gay on the televised Olympics. Openly gay snowboarder Cheryl Maas of The Netherlands took a fall on one of her runs and, after she stood the obligatory few minutes in front of a "Sochi 2014" wall to await her score, she walked away holding her gloved right hand in front of the camera. Because Maas is gay and the glove had what appeared to be a unicorn and a rainbow-colored target on it, some interpreted that as a moment of LGBT visibility.

Another openly gay athlete (there are only seven among the 2,800-plus athletes competing in Sochi), Austrian ski jumper Daniela Iraschko-Stolz reportedly told reporters, "I don't think it's a good idea to make protests here, no one cares."

"I know Russia will go and make the right steps in the future," said Iraschko-Stolz about the country's anti-gay laws, according to an Associated Press report, "and we should give them time. I am here as a sportswoman. I always say I'm together with my woman now and don't have any problems, not in Russia or with the Austrian federation."

One of the more prominent televised moments of visibility came in the form of two commercial advertisements for Chevrolet. One showed a large number of different family configurations, including what appeared to be a two-dad family and a two-mom family. The ad says that, "While what it means to be a family hasn't changed, what a family looks like has." Then it offered Chevy Traverse, "for whatever shape your family takes." The company also aired a second commercial showing happy life moments, including a gay male couple at a wedding ceremony.

Three sponsors of the IOC also issued statements of opposition to Russia's anti-gay laws - AT&T, DeVry University, and the Chobani yogurt maker.

See Olympic Visibility, page 13

www.PrideSource.com

What Schools Should Know About Transgender Students And Staff

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

There is more to the experience of transgender youth than whether or not they can use the proper restroom at school, and ACLU Staff Attorney Jay Kaplan was at the SOGI Education Conference on Feb. 7 to explain that to the teachers, counselors and students in attendance.

Kaplan is part of a workgroup that is crafting a comprehensive model policy for transgender students. He hopes it will be adopted by local school districts in the coming years. "As more and more students come out as transgender, and at earlier ages, this is something that school districts can no longer just ignore," he said. Districts will also have to have policies for transgender teachers and staff.

The bathroom issue is the one that makes news, and the one that people who do not understand the needs of transgender youth fear the most. "There's this idea that a male student will dress up like a female just to go into the girls' restroom. It's ridiculous," Kaplan said. "The restroom is there for one reason, and this is all part of proper restroom behavior...Our recommended policy is that students should be able to use restroom facilities in accordance with their gender identity and expression. If any student feels uncomfortable using a communal restroom, they should be afforded the opportunity to use a single user, gender neutral restroom. The fact that a student is transgender, however, does not mean that they should have to use a single user gender neutral restroom."

Maine Decision

A recent decision in Maine concluded that forcing a transgender student to use the staff restroom was discrimination because it singled her out and did not provide her the same level of access to facilities as other students. Michigan is not subject to the Maine court decision, but the decision could provide guidance to Michigan courts when addressing the issue of restroom usage for transgender students.

In Michigan law there is not precedent, however there are several areas where someone being treated unequally may be able to make a case.

There have been cases of workplace discrimination that have been tried under the umbrella of sex discrimination. "The EEOC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission] said that its sex discrimination, and they are actively looking for cases where

"There's this idea that a male student will dress up like a female just to go into the girls' restroom. It's ridiculous. The restroom is there for one reason, and this is all part of proper restroom behavior...Our recommended policy is that students should be able to use restroom facilities in accordance with their gender identity and expression." - Jay Kaplan ACLU

someone is discriminated against because they are perceived not to conform with stereotypes for their gender," Kaplan said.

He added that school districts are subject to the equal protection clause of the Constitution and that Title 9 of the Federal Civil Rights Law also applies to school districts based on sex discrimination. However, it is unclear if local human rights ordinances can be used

against school districts that discriminate. In Michigan, a person can be fired for being gay, and apart from cases where sex discrimination may apply, transgender people are not specifically protected.

In schools this does not only apply to students and their restroom usage. Discrimination can occur when teachers or

See What Schools Should Know, page 6

Transcending Anatomy Nikk Selik Shares His Transition Story

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

"When I realized I was trans, it came about unexpectedly. It was an epiphany. And once I knew that, I could never go back," said 25-year-old Nikk Selik as he shared his story with counselors, teachers and students at the annual SOGI Conference on Feb. 7. Selik is an FTM who has created a website and presentation called "Transcending Anatomy" to help people understand what it is like to be transgender.

Every transition story is different, and one thing that is unique about Selik's is that he's had tremendous support from his family and friends, and access to surgery and hormones that is not always the case for those transitioning. But the good fortune in his life has put him in a position to be able to share his story and teach others about transgender issues.

Selik was 20 when he made the decision to transition. "There's this idea that people have a 'sex change,'" he said. "Sex change is a very inaccurate term. Transitioning is a process." He explained that not everyone has access to the tools they need to change parts of themselves or their lives, and that some people may not want to make



Nikk Selik took care to stress that every person's journey is unique and that most journeys are always ongoing. An idealized appearance is not necessarily an endpoint. He also said that gender is not binary. BTL photo: Crystal Proxmire

certain changes. But among some potential changes for transgender people there are social and physical ones.

"Social transition can include changing

See Transcending Anatomy, page 6

BRIEFS

BAY CITY

Ordinance Vote

BAY CITY, Mich. (AP) At press time a hearing was planned for Tuesday at 4 p.m. A big public turnout was possible as leaders consider a measure to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Ernie Krygier, chairman of the Bay County Board of Commissioners, tells The Bay City Times that the proposal "grew into a major discussion."

Tuesday's hearing was the final public meeting on the issue before a vote on the proposed ordinance that's expected in March.

If the ordinance is approved, it could become law as soon as May 1.

The ordinance has been in the works for months and is modeled after similar measures adopted in other Michigan communities. The ordinance would affect entities owned and operated Bay County, as well as contracts the government makes.

DETROIT

Equality Michigan Dinner Feb. 22

Equality Michigan and Motor City Casino present the 2014 Annual Dinner. Richard Carlborn, the current director of state campaigns at Freedom to Marry, will be making a special announcement about marriage equality in Michigan.

The event features a reception, silent auction, and the chance to network among fellow supporters in the community. The Catalyst Awards will also be presented, which recognize individuals and organizations for service to the LGBT and HIV-positive communities.

The 2014 Annual Dinner begins at 7 p.m. on Sat., Feb. 22 at the Amnesia Ultra Lounge in Motor City Casino, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. An early reception is available with VIP tickets and begins at 6:15 p.m. Tickets are \$175-300. For more information, visit www.equalitymi.org/dinner or call 313-537-7000.

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Did you face any challenges? If so, how did you overcome them?

What kind of wedding ceremony did you follow?

What were some highlights of your wedding?

Any advice you would offer for LGBT couples getting married soon?

Pictures (with rights and/or permission) are welcome.

Submit your wedding story to shelby@pridesource.com and your wedding could be featured in BTL's special "Wedding Guide" on April 10. Submissions should be in by March 31.

The Wedding Guide will run alongside BTL'S Ultimate Wedding Expo, which will take place at 12p.m. April 12 at the Southfield Civic Pavilion, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield.

- Shelby Clark

BRIEFS



IDAHO

Forty Arrested

Police in Boise arrested more than 40 protesters for trespassing Monday as they stood silently for more than three hours, blocking three entrances to the Idaho senate chamber. In a video posted by the Idaho Statesman newspaper, openly gay former state Senator Nicole LeFavour, who organized the civil disobedience, said the protesters would not leave until legislators began work on a proposed bill to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Republican leaders have refused to hold a hearing on the bill.

NINTH CIRCUIT

Stay Granted On Ex-Gay Therapy

The Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals issued an order Monday granting a stay of its decision upholding a California law that bars the use of reparative therapy of persons younger than 18. The court granted the stay of its decision in *Pickup v. Brown* and *Welch v. Brown*, pending the appeal by Liberty Counsel to the U.S. Supreme Court. Liberty Counsel has been challenging the law as a violation of the First Amendment rights of ex-gay therapists.

UNITED STATES

Tax Season Considerations

Lambda Legal says “there are still complications” for married same-sex couples preparing to file federal tax forms this year, as a result of the landmark ruling last June by the U.S. Supreme Court, striking down the Defense of Marriage Act. This is especially true for couples who live in states that do not recognize their marriages, says Lambda. And the group’s website is carrying an article to answer some of the more basic questions that might arise for couples as they file their federal taxes this year.

OHIO

Certifying Parenthood

Three married lesbian couples who are expecting to give birth to children and a gay male couple seeking to adopt filed a lawsuit in federal court in Cincinnati Monday. They are seeking a court order to force the state to put the names of both parents on the birth certificates of their children-to-be. Long-time civil rights attorney Al Gerhardstein said the lawsuit, *Henry et al v. Wymyslo*, builds on a ruling last December in which a federal judge found the Ohio’s ban on marriage for same-sex couples was unconstitutional. The judge in that case ordered the state to put the name of a deceased plaintiff’s spouse on the man’s death certificate. “If they were in marriages with opposite-sex husbands,” said Gerhardstein, “they would apply for their birth certificates while in the hospital, and the Cincinnati registrar would place the names of both parents on the child’s birth certificate.”

- Keen News Service

► What Schools Need

Continued from p. 5

staff jobs are threatened due to their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. It can occur when students are treated differently in sports, bands, contests and dress codes.

In Brighton the issue of gender discrimination came up when a transgender student wanted to be on the girls’ cheerleading squad, but the district wanted her to be on the boys’ squad. The boys’ squad offered less opportunity for competition. The ACLU worked with the parents and the schools to help clarify the situation, though ultimately the teen’s family decided it would be best to focus on studying rather than cheerleading altogether.

“The Michigan Athletic Association has not come out with any policies about transgender kids,” Kaplan said, though he expects that they won’t be able to pass the buck for long.

Isolation and Stigma Risks

The Norton Shores school district (near Muskegon) faced a discrimination suit when an FTM student was voted Homecoming King. Administration tried to strip the teen of his title and public backlash, and threats of a suit, forced them to change their stance. “They decided that year to eliminate King and Queen and just call the winners the Homecoming Court, and of course two years later they switched back once the

student was out of the district,” Kaplan said. In assisting with that case, the ACLU also learned that the district was forcing that student to room by himself when he traveled with the band for out of town competitions, a situation that could have led to isolation and stigmatization.

The ACLU got involved in discussions with another school district for trying to prevent a transgender student to sit on their chosen side of their gender-divided graduation ceremonies. Ultimately the school allowed the teen to sit on the boys’ side.

“Gender segregated activities that do not recognize nor respect those students who are transgender and or gender non-conforming can be problematic,” Kaplan said.

Dress codes are another issue that districts must be careful with.

“Dress codes can require appropriate attire, but they can’t be gender specific,” he said. “You cannot say that girls can wear earrings but boys can’t. If a transgender boy or gender non-conforming male student wishes to wear a dress, we believe that this is something that could be protected by the First Amendment.”

Another issue that comes up in schools is if they are required to call a transgender person by their birth name or by their chosen name. “The law does not require it either way,” Kaplan said. “But there is nothing in Michigan law that prohibits the school from using a student’s preferred name and/or gender.” This means a school district could include the chosen name and gender of transgender students on their non-

official records, such as student IDs, the yearbook, etc.

Privacy

This also ties into issues of privacy. “If a student is transgender, that is not public information. Transgender status is confidential and should not be freely discussed among staff, other students, the school community or the media, without the expressed authorized permission of the student and his/her parents,” Kaplan stressed.

A school administrator in the workshop remarked that in her district the official records of the transgender students have their birth name, but also their preferred name in parenthesis and that preferred names are used by the staff.

Not all districts are as welcoming however. “We recently were working with one family in the Detroit area who got such pushback from the school district about recognizing their child as transgender, that they moved to California which has policies and practices that are more welcoming of transgender students. It’s a whole other world for them,” Kaplan said.

GLSEN and the National Center for Transgender Equality have created a “Model District Policy on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students,” which is available for download at www.transequality.org/PDFs/Trans_ModelPolicy_2013.pdf. The ACLU provides information for serving LGBT students at www.aclu.org/lgbt-rights_hiv-aids/library.

► Transcending Anatomy

Continued from p. 5

your name, changing the pronoun you prefer, dressing and presenting yourself differently,” he said. Making physical changes can also help with transitioning, but it is not essential to being a transgender person.

He and other transgender people are often faced with “the question,” Selik said. “Why is surgery the most common question? What a lot of people don’t realize is this question is really inappropriate. Most transgender people do not have surgery. They’re cutting you open, they’re stitching you up. It’s not fun. There are so many risks and complications... When I started I thought

I would go all the way. But I’m not so sure I want genital surgery... What’s in my pants does not make me a man.”

Selik’s experience with “top surgery” could be part of the reluctance. It took three attempts to get his chest surgery right. Prior to having tissue from his breasts removed, Selik wore a chest binder every day. “I was super desperate to get top surgery,” he said. “Dysphoria was the reason I decided to transition. Dysphoria is a deep and unsettling discomfort. I felt, deep down, being in a female’s body was not right.” By having a flat chest, Selik is able to feel like himself in the world.

The other part of transitioning uses Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). Selik injects himself every two weeks with testosterone, which stops menstruation, deepens his voice, starts the growth of facial and body hair, and, unfortunately, produces acne. He explained that his MTF counterparts may take estrogen to give them softer skin and hair and helps them grow breasts.

Selik’s parents struggled at first

with the changes he was making, but a counselor convinced them to help him get his top surgery. “After a year and a half on hormones they saw how happy I was, and they’re so supportive now,” he said.

To help others understand what it means to be a transgender person, Selik set up a website at www.transcendinganatomy.com, and he gives presentations to schools, community group, conferences, and corporations.

Selik took care to stress that every person’s journey is unique and that most journeys are always ongoing. An idealized appearance is not necessarily an endpoint. He also said that gender is not binary. He chose to transition from female to male because that is what fit for him, but that overall “it’s not about changing genders, it’s about getting rid of those labels... When a baby is born, the first thing we ask is ‘is it a boy, or is it a girl?’ ‘Do we paint the room pink or do we paint it blue?’... The problem is not the people who have identities outside of these boxes. The problem is the existence of the boxes.”

MORE ONLINE

See more SOGI Conference coverage online
» www.pridesource.com

Holder Announcement Scrutinized By Some

AG: 'No Time To Rest' In Fight For LGBT Civil Rights

BY LISA KEEN

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder told a Human Rights Campaign audience in New York Saturday that, beginning Monday, he “will - for the first time in history - formally instruct all Justice Department employees to give lawful same-sex marriages full and equal recognition, to the greatest extent possible under the law.” But there have been some mixed assessments of how big this news really is.

Holder said his new policy is a response to the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling last June in *U.S. v. Windsor*. Many of the federal government’s agencies have issued new regulations in response to that ruling, striking down the key provision of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

Holder said the new policy would have “important, real-world implications for same-sex married couples that interact with the criminal justice system.” Specifically, he noted same-sex spouses would now have the same

Jon Davidson, legal director for Lambda Legal, says the announcement is “quite significant.”

rights as spouses in heterosexual marriages not to testify against their spouse in a civil or criminal trial. Same-sex couples will be able to file bankruptcy jointly. Federal prisoners with same-sex spouses will be eligible for visits from their spouses, escorted trips to attend their spouse’s funeral. And public safety officers with same-sex spouses will receive the same benefits as their heterosexually married peers.

The mainstream media reported the news widely. HRC President Chad Griffin called it a “landmark announcement” that “will change the lives of countless committed gay and lesbian couples for the better” and has “more profound” effects in the long-term.

Jon Davidson, legal director for Lambda Legal, says the announcement is “quite significant.”

“It instructs all government attorneys to respect all marriages of same-sex couples, regardless of the laws of their state of residence to argue for recognition of their marriages for all purposes,” says Davidson.

But Gary Buseck, legal director of Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, says the “substance” of the announcement was less



U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder addresses attendees at the HRC Dinner in NYC Saturday.

impressive. Many of the benefits touted as part of the new policy were already in place “and the other items are good but certainly not far-reaching.”

While there is important “symbolism” in the announcement, said Buseck, “bankruptcy was a done deal several years ago; and the other items are good but certainly not far-reaching.”

In June 2011, the largest federal bankruptcy court in the United States ruled in *re Balas* that DOMA violates the equal protection guarantee of the U.S. Constitution. In a strongly worded decision, the 20 judges participating in the decision ruled unanimously “there is no valid governmental basis for DOMA.” By then, Holder had already advised the courts that the DOJ would not defend DOMA, and House Speaker John Boehner decided not to appeal the decision.

“It seems like Holder is spinning it as his agency - DOJ - coming on board with respect for our married couples and adopting a place of celebration rule,” said Buseck. “I didn’t immediately see it as a big deal that DOJ was somehow officially coming on board with the general trend post-Windsor. But perhaps I am not giving them enough credit.”

In his other remarks Saturday night, Holder told the Human Rights Campaign fundraiser audience in New York City, that he thinks the struggle for LGBT civil rights has reached “a new frontier in the fight for civil rights.”

“This is no time to rest on our laurels,” said Holder. “This is no time to back down, to give up, or to give in to the unjust and unequal status quo. Neither tradition nor fear of change can absolve us of the obligation we share to combat discrimination in all its forms. And, despite everything that’s been achieved, each of us has much more work to do.”

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Solidarity
by Richard Grune, lithograph, 1947
(image: Schwules Museum, Berlin)

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ON VIEW JANUARY 5 - MAY 4, 2014

Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals

The Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals exhibit details the Nazis' so-called moral crusade against homosexuality in an effort to racially and culturally purify Germany. This persecution ranged from dissolution of homosexual organizations to internment of thousands of individuals in concentration camps. Gay men, in particular, were subject to harassment, arrest, incarceration, and even castration. In Nazi eyes, gay men were weak and unfit to be soldiers, as well as unlikely to contribute to the racial struggle for Aryan dominance.

Artifacts from the exhibit depict the freedom experienced by homosexuals prior to the Nazi rise to power in 1933:

FAR LEFT: A 1907 political cartoon depicting sex researcher Magnus Hirschfeld, "Hero of the Day," drumming up support for the abolition of Paragraph 175 of the German penal code that criminalized homosexuality (image: US Holocaust Memorial Museum Photo Archives)

LEFT: Cover of the September 1931 issue of *The Island*, a magazine for homosexuals (image: US Holocaust Memorial Museum)

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INTERNATIONAL

Gays in Kenya Protest Against Ugandan Bill

BTL Editor Note: LGBT Ugandan Activist To Visit Detroit, Michigan Feb. 20. See story online.

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) – Dressed in rainbow wigs and masks, gays and lesbians in Kenya on Monday joined a global effort to protest against an anti-homosexuality bill passed by Uganda’s parliament that is now in the hands of the country’s president.

Activists are trying to pressure Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni into not signing the bill, which increases prison times for homosexual acts. The bill, which legislators passed in December, also prescribes a seven-year jail term for a person who conducts a marriage ceremony for same-sex couples.

A leader of the protest in Kenya, Eric Gitari, executive director of Kenya’s National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, said the Ugandan legislation has major repercussions on human rights conditions across East Africa. Some gays and lesbians in Uganda have already fled to a Kenyan refugee camp, he said.

The Ugandan-related protests come as gay activists focus on many issues around the globe: A new law in Nigeria last month increased penalties against gays; Russia has faced questions in the run-up to the Olympics about gay discrimination; and an American university football player on Sunday announced he is gay, setting up the possibility of the first openly gay pro football player.

Rights activists around the world were holding street marches Monday “in solidarity” with Uganda’s homosexuals, said Pepe Julian Onziema, a gay leader in Uganda who said at least 15 homosexuals have fled Uganda since the bill was passed out of fear for their safety.

Gays and lesbians face severe discrimination in many African countries.

The American Jewish World Service, a U.S.-based group, also promoted the global protest against the Ugandan legislation. The group, which supports groups working to advance human rights of vulnerable and marginalized communities, sent a letter to Museveni from 400 rabbis asking that the legislation not be signed.

“Jews were marginalized for centuries and the history of the Europe’s Jews during the 20th Century reminds us that stripping away the rights of minorities by states is often a prelude to the worst kind of treatment,” Stuart Schear, a spokesman for the group, said by email.

The Ugandan bill was passed Dec. 20 by lawmakers, and many of them have since urged the country’s president to sign the bill.

“Museveni can keep the bill for a long time,” said Rwakafuuzi, who predicted upcoming court cases over the legislation.

Museveni has opposed the bill as harsh, but gay activists say Museveni’s other recent thoughts on the matter – that gays are often “abnormal” people who should be “rehabilitated” – fuel discrimination against gays in a country where homosexuality is already illegal.

Now Under New Management

Brian Savage And Michigan Log Cabin Republicans Look To Expand

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Exiting Michigan Log Cabin Republican Chairman Joe Sylvester has high hopes for the new leadership of the organization he ran for the past five years. In a recent press release he announced that Brian Savage will be taking over as chairman, Kevin Knight as vice chairman, Matt Pascoe will be staying on as treasurer and Daniel Dobson will remain as the group’s secretary.

“You will find they have a skill set that is unrivaled in MILCR history and I have complete confidence that they will create the most vibrant LCR group in the country,” Sylvester wrote.

The group has struggled to unite its membership which is spanned out across the state and across the political spectrum; however with new leadership Savage is hopeful he can bring people together to work from within the Republican Party to create change.

Savage, 26, currently serves as the board chairman of the OutCenter located in Benton Harbor, and in 2012 he ran for State Representative in Michigan’s 78th District, losing in the primary.

“I’ve have the pleasure of serving in the organization (OutCenter) for the last three or four years. We have regular services that we provide for Whole Lives, Healthy Lives adult services, and a county-wide GSA since many of the high schools don’t have those available. We’re trying to create unity. Over 200 people came to our most recent fundraiser. We also have a partnership with the county health department, Berrien County, working with counselors,” Savage said. That organization is non-partisan and service-driven.

But Savage is also passionate politically. He was in touch with the Michigan LCR after having run for office last year. After nearly a year of discussions, the board structure came into place.

“I think it’s a really important time for the Republican Party. We’ve had a lot of interest recently in Log Cabin, not just gays and lesbians, but also allies and that’s been really encouraging,” Savage said.

Recent controversy over remarks by Michigan’s GOP National Committee Chairman Dave Agema, and more open discussion about marriage and non-discrimination have made it possible for more people to come out as LGBT Republicans and allies in the Republican Party according to Savage.

“There is opportunity for people to

understand that the Agemas are not the people we want to be associated with. How do we create a message that works for all Republicans? Common ground is where things get done,” Savage said.

“It doesn’t mean people have to jump ship. A lot of people underestimate how many people are gay and lesbian in the Republican Party. A lot of business owners would love to see the Republican Party be more inclusive. Now



“There is opportunity for people to understand that the Agemas are not the people we want to be associated with. How do we create a message that works for all Republicans?”

- Brian Savage MILCR

it’s a great opportunity to reach out to the gay and lesbian community, at least let them know we’re here and we’re going to do what we can on our side of the aisle. We’re working on the same goals.”

“I really like the idea of the Republican platform of limited government. It inspires people to open businesses, do what they want with their money, have more control rather than just bigger government deciding what to do. I also believe in a strong defense, and strong foreign policy issues,” said Savage.

MILCR will have some major challenges working within the party. On key issues of interest to LGBT people, the 2012 Republican Party Platform, page 10 states, “We reaffirm our support for a Constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman. We applaud the citizens of the majority of States which have enshrined

in their constitutions the traditional concept of marriage, and we support the campaigns underway in several other states to do so.” Such a state amendment has existed in Michigan since 2004. The 2012 Republican platform, page 43, also said, “We will enforce and defend in court the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in the armed forces...”, an issue now decided in favor of LGBT people by a ruling last June by the U.S. Supreme Court. The platform also agreed with the discriminatory policies of the Boy Scouts keeping out LGBT people, found on page 12.

Recently state Republican leadership has hinted at some movement to amend the state’s nondiscrimination policy to include sexual orientation and gender identity protections in it’s Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and nationally some prominent Republican leaders - in particular U.S. Senators in Ohio (Portman) and Illinois (Kirk) have come out in support of gay marriage, however they find themselves in the minority on this issue.

Savage lives in Baroda near St. Joe and Benton Harbor where he works in hospitality and is a volunteer deputy with the Berrien County Sheriff’s Department. “It’s Republican territory,” he said. “It’s been enjoyable living here. I moved here six years ago and it’s been great. I don’t have any complaints about this area. I’m excited about the timing of things.”

Both Savage’s parents were police officers in Illinois where he grew up, and being involved in the community is a value he was raised with. He said that politics is in his DNA, and he loves being part of the Out Center. “Politics is a great avenue for creating change. You have to be in the game. It’s better to be involved and serve my community than to do nothing,” he said.

The next few months will be spent accessing the strength of the LCR network and clarifying the mission. Vice Chairman Knight from West Branch has worked in the national LCR office and other Washington, DC-based offices. Pascoe of Ferndale is the longest serving executive board member and will stay on as the organization’s treasurer for his fifth year. He works in hotel management. And MILCR Secretary Dobson lives in the Grand Rapids area after having served twice in Iraq for the Michigan Army National Guard.

For more information on the Michigan Log Cabin Republicans, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MILCR.

Meet The REACH Award Winners

KGLRC Celebrates Work Of Equality Volunteers

KALAMAZOO — Those who work towards LGBT support and equality were recognized by The Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center with the annual REACH Awards at the Winter Gala on Feb. 1. The event also helped raise money for the community center and its programs.

Kellogg's K-Pride Affinity Group earned the 2013 Retail Award for their commitment to workplace diversity and inclusion. Kellogg's belief that, "goodness shines from the inside out," is apparent with their thirteen permanent Diversity and Inclusion Councils. Each Council works to engage employees with one another, Kellogg, and the communities in which they operate. Kellogg has also scored 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index for four years running.

The Terry Kuseske Education Award went to long-time GSA advisor and educator at Kalamazoo Central High School Patricia Carlin. She has created a safe and inclusive space for all of her students during her tenure at Kalamazoo Central. Carlin is a tireless advocate and ally to all students, with a focus on LGBT youth who have needed safe adults on their side.

Jon Hoadley was honored with the Advocacy Award. His leadership with the Unity Michigan Coalition has helped to bring protections in housing, public accommodations, and employment for more than 344,000 Michigan residents. Hoadley also managed the One Kalamazoo campaign to defend the Kalamazoo Non-Discrimination Ordinance. As a result of that victory he regularly consults on nondiscrimination campaigns across the country. Previously, Hoadley served as executive director of the National Stonewall Democrats, worked for the Gill Action Fund, and managed South Dakotans Against Discrimination. In the Kalamazoo community, Hoadley serves as the vice president of CARES, an HIV/AIDS Service Organization serving southwest Michigan.

The Community Award was presented to Charley Bowers. She was recognized for her advocacy on behalf of Michigan's transgender community. By sharing her personal story and struggle, Bowers has worked to improve awareness and understanding across the state. Her advocacy has had a particular focus on engaging young people and challenging



Kalamazoo Resource Center Executive Director Zach Bauer welcomes guests to the Winter Gala Feb. 1 Below is Kellogg's K-Pride Affinity Group members who received the Retail Award. Photography by Terry Johnston Photography. Visit his facebook page for event photos.

LGBT-serving organizations to be more trans-inclusive. Bowers serves on the board of directors of Holland Is Ready and is a long-time volunteer with the Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center.

The Jim Knox Humanitarian Award went to David Feaster whose advocacy in the HIV/AIDS community began during his studies at Rutgers University where he was president of the Rutgers University Gay Alliance. Now the current executive director of CARES, Feaster joined as a board member in 1998 and began as a staff member in 2001. He is also a founding and steering committee member of Kalamazoo Alliance for Equality. Feaster's commitment to improving the lives of individuals living with HIV/AIDS by decreasing stigma and improving care to communities of color has greatly increased the impact of this work.

Rev. Beth McLaren earned the Faith Award for her advocacy on behalf of the LGBT community. McLaren has

served as a strong voice as a member of the KGLRC Board of Directors, the KGLRC Faith Alliance, and a member of the clergy to advance conversations about fairness, equality and justice. She has been an ordained Episcopal priest for over 20 years, serving both in Michigan and in Connecticut. She has been an active participant in the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan having served on the Christian Formation Task Force, the Anti-Racism Task Force, and the Cathedral Corporation.

For more than twenty years the Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center has sought to serve the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allied community of southwest Michigan. For more information visit www.kglrc.org.



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Reaction to Missouri All-American and NFL prospect Michael Sam Saying In Interviews That He Is Gay

"It takes an incredible amount of courage to break ground on a social issue on a national stage. Michael Sam is a young man of tremendous fortitude and confidence. It is these traits that make it possible for him to be among the best on the field and now to have an impact on the world of sport in a very important way. I also applaud the wonderful support given to him by his teammates and the University of Missouri."

- Southeastern Conference Commissioner Mike Slive.

"I think a lot of guys in the NFL are going to say they will accept it, but there are a lot of guys who won't. The reality is Michael Sam is going to open himself up to a lot of criticism and a lot of challenges. Those are challenges most gay people have to go through, but when you are dealing with alpha males and some meatheads in an NFL locker room it's amplified. And there are some guys who have strong religious beliefs too, so he's going to be judged. He's going to face some things that are going to be very difficult to overcome."

- Former NFL offensive lineman Frank Garcia, now a sports radio show host with WFNZAM in Charlotte.

"Very happy for Michael Sam. His courage will inspire millions to live their truth."

- MLS player Robbie Rogers, who is gay, on Twitter.

"I could care less about a man's sexual preference! I care about winning games and being respectful in the locker room!"

- Carolina Panthers running back DeAngelo Williams on Twitter

"We are so proud of Michael for what he has accomplished at Mizzou academically, socially and competitively. This is a young man who earned his degree from MU, was a unanimous All-American on the football field and now he's being a leader in his personal life. He continues to display great character, courage and compassion. We are proud of him on every level."

- Missouri Athletic Director Mike Alden

"There will be some interest early on (and missteps), but by week one, it'll be a non-story. The way it should be from that point on."

- Arizona Diamondbacks pitcher Brandon McCarthy on Twitter

Discrimination's Due



BY GWENDOLYN ANN SMITH

A new study conducted by Ann P. Haas and Philip L. Rodgers of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and Jody L. Herman of UCLA Law School's Williams Institute forges an important link between suicide attempts by transgender people and the discrimination they face.

Specifically, the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, or NTDS, states that 78 percent of those who responded to the survey and had suffered physical or sexual violence while at school attempted suicide. Further, 65 percent had attempted suicide after suffering the same at their workplace.

The study covered more than just violence in workplace and school: it shows that 57 percent of transgender people who were rejected by their family attempted suicide, 69 percent who had ever been homeless, 60 percent of those who were refused treatment by a doctor, and 57-61 percent among those who had been disrespected or harassed by member of law enforcement.

Let's step back and put this in context, by way of a study from October of 2010, conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Their findings showed that 41 percent of transgender people in the United States have attempted suicide; this is almost nine times the national average.

It is with no pride that I say that while I am not in that 41 percent who attempted suicide, I most certainly have been very close on more than a few occasions. I've been lucky, nothing more, to not be part of this statistic.

I have also had a great many transgender friends who have attempted suicide, and a handful or so who were successful.

To be frank, I don't think I needed this study to tell me that transgender people are more likely to attempt suicide based on the discrimination and ill treatment we may face. This link seems brutally obvious.

It is damned hard to be transgender in this society. We live in a culture that is very rigidly gender divided. We segregate the lives of our children from before birth, selecting pink or blue from the first ultrasound while holding "gender reveal parties" to share the news with family and friends. Everything from womb to tomb is built around a notion that we're either one or another, and we must live up to sometimes unrealistic expectations around the same.

Transgender people, in this culture, are

treated as something that everyone is free to mock and everyone is allowed to hate. To some, we're "traps," existing only to somehow turn straight people queer - and deserve all the hate, derision, and violence sent our way.

I am of the belief that it is gender that lay at the heart of not only the discrimination that transgender and gender non-conforming people face, but the same core lies at the heart of homophobia. It is not the sexual practices that create an aura of fear, but the sense that they will be viewed as somehow less a member of their gender for having a same sex attraction.

That notion that we are cruel deceivers lay at the heart of every cliché Hollywood has foisted on us, from *The Silence of the Lambs* to *Mrs. Doubtfire*: the only reason, according to the mass media, for a person to appear as the opposite sex is for some illicit gain.

That is when they're not trying to tantalize the audience with stories about our genitals and what they may or may not look like.

Those who try, again and again, to thwart transgender rights, particularly surrounding public accommodations, tell anyone who will listen that we're akin to rapists and molesters aiming for your wives and daughters in the ladies room, ignoring that we - like nearly everyone else - merely want a safe, clean place to go to the toilet.

When we're not viewed as deceptive, we're presented as some form of tragic disability. We are disordered, a victim of gender dysphoria. We're not to be feared, it would seem, but rather pitied for the cruel fate that is our lot in life. That we are suicidal is simply part and parcel of us poor dears being in a body that does not match our spirit.

Hogwash. If there is one clear thing from this most recent study, it is not that being transgender drives us to suicide: it is the

If there is one clear thing from this most recent study, it is not that being transgender drives us to suicide: it is the discrimination and violence we face for being transgender.

discrimination and violence we face for being transgender.

As I noted above, every time a transgender person faces physical or sexual violence at school, there's a 78 percent change they will attempt suicide. It's not being transgender that is causing that, but the way they are treated by others for being transgender.

This is why bills like California's AB 1266 are so vital. This is not about peeping toms in bathrooms, but about affording transgender and gender nonconforming students an equal footing in schools.

This is also why the story of Dr. Essay Anne Vanderbilt's outing by writer Caleb Hannan - and her subsequent suicide - was such a blow. We do not know for sure that one led to the other, but we do know that Vanderbilt had attempted suicide prior, and we can infer that this report outing Vanderbilt to an investor - and telling her that he was going to take her story public - certainly could not have helped matters.

I wish this was not such a radical notion that if you discriminate against us, and let us live our lives on an equal footing, a lot less of us will be showing up dead. The findings of the NTSB should be obvious and very much common sense.

It's high time that transgender people were given a fair shake.

Gwen Smith still misses many great people, lost along the way. You'll find her at www.gwensmith.com.



Brian 'Putin-oh!'



Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

It's Saturday last. For the past two hours I and four dining friends have been in three places one after the other, each thousands of miles apart. Detroit. China. Russia.

We met to dine at Angelina's – longtime BTL advertising supporter - across from the Michigan Opera Theater, where we had third-row seats for the opulent, athletic, dance-innovative, silk-waving, flower-strewn, Shen Yun Performing Arts troupe. It's my second performance attendance.

Our 10:30 desert-and-coffee is punctuated afterward with multi-TV coverage of the Sochi Winter Olympics. Between our table discussion about whether LGBT athletes should or shouldn't participate, the telecast camera alternates between bright, blood-red, multi-cossack dancer pageantry and dour, formal, glimpses of President Vladimir Putin.

Oppression is an underlying nexus between the Shen Yun troupe and the Sochi Olympics. Performance by the independent freedom loving Chinese is outlawed under 60 years of atheist communist rule, and anything slightly savoring of "gay propaganda" is anathema big time in Russia.

Hate mongering, harassment, violence, genocide are nothing new to Mother Russia. The country has a long history under the imperial czars of pogroms against Jews and of severe ethnic cleansing by the wholesale shifting of millions of citizens to godforsaken Siberia by order of Joseph Stalin, a mass murderer on par with Adolf Hitler.

In keeping perhaps, Sochi is called for the winter olympics a "ring of steel." 40,000 armed guards – 10 percent of its population – are keeping two-week watch. Of the total \$50 billion planning and staging costs, \$2 billion has been spent for security.

Missiles, high-speed boats, submarines, sky drones, the Russian 58th Army, secure Sochi's southern border.

Under billionaire Putin, totalitarian Russia is today ultra-conservative, rightwing in family values emphasis – some say an ideological strategy borrowed from the United States. Books such as "Brave New World" are banned, immigrants hunted, journalists killed, rock bands outlawed. It's open season on gays and lesbians.

This month's issue of GQ carries "Inside the Iron Closet," by Russian American Yuri Kozyrev, who spent November pre-game time carefully, covertly exploring the LGBT hate climate there.

Reports Kozyrev, "The Russian closet has always been deep, but its getting much darker. One man was charged for holding up a sign that said 'Being Gay Is OK'. A pink triangle is enough to get you arrested, if not beaten. Or, killed."

And his timely observation: "The less prosperity Putin can deliver, the more he speaks of Holy Russian Empire, language to which the Russian Orthodox Church thrills."

Says Putin, Golubye ('blue', Russian for queer), "Are welcome; if they don't impose their habits and their will on others." HuffPost photo IDs 40 openly gay athletes from around the world who participate or attend, among them heartthrob Jonny Weir, Martina Navratilova, Greg Louganis, Renee Richards, Brian Boitano.

Just maybe it's 'newly out' skate celeb Boitano who inspires a recent New Yorker magazine cover of Putin as a campy figure skater, vetted by a dozen look-alike judges. Putin looks like he's about to lip-sync YMCA! (Or, more likely, NKVD.)

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Creep of the Week

Gina Miller

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Sound the alarm! Radical homosexuals are coming for your God-given rights! And they probably are armed with pie tins full of whipped cream and/or glitter.

If you don't want to take my word for it, then surely the words Gina Miller wrote for a Feb. 3 Renew America column will suffice: "the radical homosexual movement's goal is nothing less than the obliteration of the rights of those who oppose it."



Gina Miller

"Homosexual 'rights' and the free exercise of religion cannot coexist. They are mutually exclusive, and one must give way to the other."

and the free exercise of religion cannot coexist," she writes. "They are mutually exclusive, and one must give way to the other."

If that's the case then Miller's team is in some serious trouble. Marriage equality has been on a tear across the nation and the expansion of rights to gay and lesbian couples doesn't appear to be stopping any time soon.

In fact, the United States Attorney General Eric Holder just announced an expansion of rights for same-sex married couples at the federal level covering things like testifying against each other in court, bankruptcy filings, and police and firefighter spouses receiving death benefits.

This news is apparently too much for Miller to take.

On her Facebook page, Miller posted a Fox News article on Feb. 8 about the plan to treat married same-sex couples like, well, the legal spouses they are. Her comment: "This evil, purely EVIL, administration is working its hellish a** off to make sure that the United States becomes the Sodom and Gomorrah of the 21st Century. How much MORE will we NOT escape the Lord's wrath?!"

One of her friends commented, "More like Sodomy & Gonorrhoea" to which she responds, "Yeah, that's a prolific byproduct." Get it? Butt sex and disease. Because that's all gay people are, isn't it? And apparently Miller and her friends are in junior high (though they no doubt oppose junior high students ever learning anything factual about sex of any kind because God hates that almost as much as God hates fags).

"We must not underestimate the determination of these people to force their will on the United States," Miller writes in her column. "Their serial lies claiming that their 'rights' (which are a fallacy, since they possess the same rights as other Americans) will not interfere with the rights of others could not be further from the truth."

She is talking, of course, about the rights of others to discriminate against LGBT people. And she is apparently confused about what it means to have "the same rights as other Americans." Because LGBT people simply don't. The right to marry. The right to discrimination protection under the law. The right to jointly adopt children. These are but a small sampling of the inequalities that are a stark reality to the LGBT people facing them every day.

Then again, if all Miller sees LGBT people as is "Sodomy & Gonorrhoea," well, no wonder she's so terrified that we're taking over.

Sounds scary. But what does it mean?

Well, for one thing it means that sometimes gays and their allies don't play nice in the on the Internet.

"I can't tell you how many countless times these people have screeched and wailed at me in comments sections of my columns that homosexual 'rights' will never affect Christians or any others who oppose them," she writes. "This is a damnable lie."

How dare "these people" sully the comments section, that oasis of reason for the polite and deferential?

And damnable, huh? Wow. That's pretty serious.

I always thought that God was in charge of the whole "to damn or not to damn" thing. Perhaps Miller is doing some damning freelancer work.

And no wonder she's upset. She's taken a position that is impossible to defend and doesn't allow for any kind of nuance: "Homosexual 'rights'

and the free exercise of religion cannot coexist," she writes. "They are mutually exclusive, and one must give way to the other."

NFL Prospect Could Become First Openly Gay Player

NEW YORK (AP) – The NFL, America's most popular pro sports league, could soon have its first openly gay player.

Michael Sam, a 6-foot-2 (1.8-meter), 255-pound (115-kilogram) American football star from the University of Missouri, came out on Sunday night. He could soon become the first openly gay athlete in any of the four major North American pro sports leagues, though a few players have come out after their playing days ended.

"I just want to go to the team who drafts me," Sam told ESPN in an interview that aired Sunday, "because that team knows about me, knows that I'm gay, and also knows that I work hard. That's the team I want to go to."

In interviews with ESPN, The New York Times and Outsports, Sam said publicly for the first time that he was gay. He said he came out to his teammates and coaches at Missouri in August.

Sam's announcement comes at a time gay rights and sports have collided at the Olympics in Sochi. Russia's anti-gay propaganda law has received much attention, and criticism, because of the games.

It also comes as one National Football League team, the Minnesota Vikings, has launched an independent investigation into the allegations of outspoken ex-Viking Chris Kluwe, who says that he was released from the team due to his support of gay marriage.

Sam received much public support Sunday night from people throughout the world of sports.

"I can't wait to cheer for whatever lucky team that drafts (at)MikeSamFootball," tweeted Jason Collins, the pro basketball player who said publicly last season that he is gay. Collins, a 35-year-old reserve center, came out after last season when he was a free agent and was not signed this season.

The NBA, NHL and Major League Baseball are also awaiting their first openly gay players. Major League Soccer has its first in Robbie Rogers, a former U.S. national team player who played

professionally in England. Rogers announced a year ago that he was gay as he said he was retiring. Rogers, now 26, has since joined the Los Angeles Galaxy.

"His courage will inspire millions to live their truth," Rogers tweeted about Sam.

Sam, who received the high honor of being named a first-team All-American player, is projected to be picked somewhere in the middle of the National Football League draft in May, when former college players are selected by pro teams.

"Hopefully it will be the same like my locker room," he told

won't," said Garcia, now a sports radio show host with WFNZ-AM in Charlotte. "The reality is Michael Sam is going to open himself up to a lot of criticism and a lot of challenges. Those are challenges most gay people have to go through, but when you are dealing with alpha males and some meatheads in an NFL locker room it's amplified. And there are some guys who have strong religious beliefs, too, so he's going to be judged. He's going to face some things that are going to be very difficult to overcome."

Sam participated in the Senior Bowl for graduating star players last month after being named defensive player of the year in the Southeastern Conference, traditionally the most competitive conference in college football.

A few NFL players have come out after their playing days, including Jamaican-born Kwame Harris and Dave Kopay.

Kopay's 1977 best-selling memoir about being a closeted NFL player has been credited

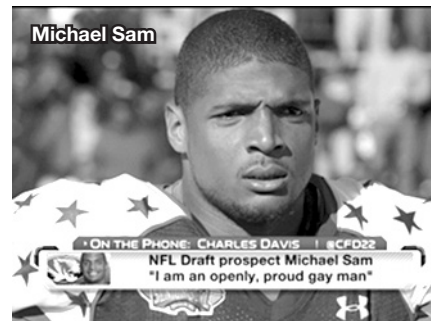
with inspiring other gay athletes, and his coming out is ranked the No. 1 most important moment in gay sports history by Outsports.

Recently, Swedish defender Anton Hysen came out in 2011. Last month, recently retired German star Thomas Hitzlsperger, 31, became the biggest name in soccer to say he is gay.

His decision to go public was hailed overwhelmingly as a positive step in the German media as well as in Britain, reflecting the way attitudes have changed.

Martina Navratilova, one of the greatest tennis players ever, came out voluntarily in 1981 while in the prime of her career, and is generally regarded as the first superstar athlete to do so. Navratilova has said she believes she lost at least \$10 million in endorsement deals.

Tennis great Billie Jean King, on the other hand, was outed in 1981 near the end of her career, and has said she was forced to continue playing pro tennis because she lost all of her endorsements.



Michael Sam

ESPN. "It's a workplace."

The NFL said in statement: "We admire Michael Sam's honesty and courage. Michael is a football player. Any player with ability and determination can succeed in the NFL. We look forward to welcoming and supporting Michael Sam in 2014."

There also were words of caution.

Offensive lineman Frank Garcia, who played nine seasons (1995-2003) in the NFL with the Panthers, Rams and Cardinals, said Sam could face "huge challenges" in the league.

Garcia was teammates and close friends with defensive lineman Esera Tuaolo, who announced he was gay on HBO's Real Sports in 2002 ... three years after he left the NFL.

Garcia said although he and Tuaolo regularly hung out as teammates in Carolina in 1999, Tuaolo never once let on that he was gay.

"I think a lot of guys in the NFL are going to say they will accept it, but there are a lot of guys who

Lesbian Wins Gold, Hugs Putin

Openly gay Dutch speed skater Ireen Wust won a gold medal in the 3,000 meter women's speedskate Sunday, and Russian President Vladimir Putin congratulated her at a nearby bar. Wust told a Dutch broadcaster, "He congratulated me and asked if everything was OK in Russia.... He was happy to see me, but then he had to leave again. But I cuddled him." Reaction was mixed. ABC News commentators pondered whether Putin's gesture indicates he's more liberal than originally thought. Queer Nation New York issued a press release to say, "By embracing Vladimir Putin, a man who has trampled on the human rights of LGBT Russians, political dissidents, artists, undocumented immigrants, and others in Russia, Wust has endorsed his fascist agenda." ABC News said Wust identifies as bisexual and is currently dating a man, but the Daily Mail newspaper of the U.K. quoted her as saying nobody would be asking about her relationship at the Olympics "if I would've had a relationship with a guy..."

- Keen News Service



Ireen Wust of the Netherlands flashes three fingers in each hand, indicating her third Olympic gold medal, after winning gold in the women's 3,000-meter speedskating race at the Adler Arena Skating Center during the 2014 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, in Sochi, Russia. AP Photo/Matt Dunham



On opening day of Olympics Google showed its support of LGBT people, making a statement about Russia's anti-gay laws.

► Olympic Visibility

Continued from p. 4

Some media have suggested Russian President Putin might have been delivering a "message" at Friday's opening ceremony in his choice of former Olympic skater and current Member of Parliament Irina Rodnina to help light the Olympic torch. While at first glance, Rodnina's credentials seemed to make her an obvious choice for the task, news media soon picked up on her notoriety. As the UK newspaper, The Guardian, reported last September, Rodnina last fall posted a photo on Twitter that showed President Obama and the First Lady together and, because the president had a big bite of food in his mouth, his face was oddly contorted. Rodnina photoshopped a banana onto the photo's foreground, making it appear the president and First Lady were mesmerized by the prospects of a banana.

In reaction to that photo, U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul last September published a message on Twitter, calling Rodnina's post "outrageous." The Guardian story at the time noted that "Racism is rife in Russia, and black football players often face racial abuse involving bananas."

"It is difficult to see the image as anything but racist," said a Chicago Tribune article Sunday.

Dmitriy Chernyshenko, head of the Russian Olympic committee, said his "panel" chose Rodnina and did so solely because of her Olympic legacy.

And it was also difficult to figure out what Putin and Russian organizers were trying to say Friday night, if, in fact, Putin was controlling all the messaging at the opening ceremony. A singing group widely identified as a "pseudo-lesbian" band - called T.a.T.u. (which reportedly means 'this girl loves that girl', according to the Daily Beast) - performed a song called "Not Gonna Get Us" - reportedly about two school girls in love - as the Russian team marched to their seats at the opening ceremony. The two female singers walked onstage hand in hand.

And it probably startled many in the speed skating arena when the iconic gay anthem "YMCA" started coming through the public address system Saturday. According to Associated Press, the stadium crowd was "dancing and hopping to the disco hit," which was among 4,600 songs approved by the Sochi organizers for use during the Games.

Meanwhile, off-camera, and covered by some media, was the detention and arrest by police of more than a dozen people in St. Petersburg, 1,200 miles away from Sochi, on Friday for holding up rainbow flags and a banner that said "Discrimination is incompatible with the Olympic Movement."




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Pam Grier Film Festival

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And raising chickens.

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It's so great you're keeping busy.

I've always done that. My grandfather was the first feminist in my life who wanted me and all the girls to hunt, fish, drive and bring the boat in – to be self-sufficient.

Is that why you're so drawn to strong female personas?

That trajectory was guided by circumstance. I had been a military brat and I studied martial arts, but I was also part of the women's movement – a global movement of being self-sufficient and not being oppressed.

You've been a symbol of black female and even lesbian empowerment throughout your career.

I had to do "The L Word." I got tired of hearing rumors. I didn't know about the lesbian community. I didn't know about the discriminatory practices in the workplace, in society, that they couldn't adopt children – it's just unfair.

I'm a black woman so I can't understand or know how they feel, but I've been profiled and marginalized. I lived through the Jim Crow period growing up. I couldn't go to ballet school, couldn't go to gymnastics school, couldn't take writing lessons, but yet I learned on my grandfather's draft horse how to ride a horse and jump fences and trees – but they wouldn't let me take writing lessons. It was heartbreaking. My mom used to break down and cry in the car. It was so painful.

So we just made up our own entertainment at home, like tying a rope in the tree between the house and the garage and jumping off the roof like Tarzan. Oh did we have so much fun growing up.

You've always been a badass then, haven't you?

Well, it's just that I love the freedom – the freedom of seeing what your body can do.

Regarding the prejudice you experienced as a child, what do you notice about the progress we've made?

We've got an inclusion. Our evolution has come. For me to be able to return to Detroit and meet the people who've supported my career for 45 years – I was there this summer for the Global Automotive Summit hosted by Rainbow PUSH to meet all these women executives and see what they're doing in the automotive field. As I was telling them about recycling fuels and that I drive a big truck that pulls the horses' trailer, one girl said, "Really?" and I said, "Yeah! I'm not gonna



AS BAD AS SHE WANTS TO BE

Pam Grier On Detroit, Being 'Boringly Straight' & Beyoncé's Homage To Her

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Having pioneered '70s-era blaxploitation films, Pam Grier's embodiment of badassery established that girls could kick just as much butt as boys. Her roles in "Coffy," "Foxy Brown" and Quentin Tarantino's "Jackie Brown" – and later on "The L Word" – made her a trailblazer, an icon and an inspiration.

So what in the world is a legend doing talking to me from a barn in Colorado?

"Everyone is under the assumption that I live in a palace overlooking Malibu or something, or that I'm in New York in a penthouse, but not at all," says Grier, 64.

Not even close, actually. Grier dwells on a secluded homestead in Colorado with horses, dogs, turkeys and chickens – but she won't be later this month.

The actress gets back to her urban roots to host a retrospective Feb. 21-22 at the Redford Theatre in Detroit, which was the first stop on a promotional tour for her 1971 film "The Big

Doll House" that brought her to the Fisher Theatre. It's been an enduring love affair ever since. "I'm coming to Detroit to help with the rebuilding of it," Grier says. "It's the fabric of our nation and a beautiful city. I can't wait."

What have you been up to?

Between my charities, my work and trying to continue protecting myself from my curiosity, I've been busy! When I'm not working, I'm training and riding horses.

marginalize my life because I'm afraid of a big truck. No – I get in that sucker and we're gone!"

In "Sheba, Baby" they allowed me to have the first personal watercraft. Kawasaki hadn't had it in movies yet and they wanted to put it in my movie "Sheba, Baby" because I had such great success as an action actress. Shit, I drove my horses up in a horse trailer when I did "The L Word" – to Canada! Road trip! There was a lot of beer drinking. We had a ball. Life's too short. At my age, I still ski and snowboard. I look for fresh powder at 8 o'clock in the morning. I wanna be first in the line. Yes, I'm a Shred Betty. Come on and join the old lady!

"The L Word" has had such significance in the gay community. What do you think is the show's lasting impact?

It's in 23 countries (that are) very oppressive countries politically. I signed thousands of autographs at some of the conventions in England for women from Russia, Czech Republic, Argentina, Australia, China, all over the world. To see them, to see their faces, they could be my daughters.

What do they say to you?

They absolutely hug me and adore me and bring me bootlegged copies of "Jackie Brown" and all my movies – and I say, "Where do you get them?!" They say, "You don't want to know."

That gratitude must feel rewarding.

It is – because it's for womanhood first. We're women first. I don't care what they do in their bedroom or whom they wanna procreate with – it's none of my business. And it's natural. Everyone has a natural instinct to be attracted to either the same or the opposite (sex), it's given to you – and if it's a choice, that is *your* choice. But who tells you who you should procreate with or have a family with, or how you can live and not live? You might as well go back to Jim Crow.

When you did "The L Word," did you have any epiphanies about your own sexuality?

That I'm boringly straight! Everyone said, "Well, did the girls do anything that you were appalled by?" and I said, "No, are you kidding me?!" And so many people said, "Well, won't you turn gay if you're around them?" And I said, "Like you'll turn black if you're around me? And I'll turn into a horse if I'm around my horses?"

I learned so much, and I support the gay community and I'm wholeheartedly glad it's changing. It's fabulous to see. And you know what – I don't have gaydar. There are people around me who are gay and I don't know it. I was like, "Oh, really? You're gay? So what."

Even after doing the show you don't have gaydar?

Even after doing "The L World" I still don't have gaydar. It's not something that you look for unless you're gay. When you're straight, you're not looking for that. I look for old,

straight, sweaty men. Sweaty stankin' men! (Laughs)

Even when I had to kiss Janina (Gavankar), this beautiful Persian, it was like kissing – I'm not gonna say, "Hey, it's like kissing my dog or like kissing my mom or kissing a lamp," but I wasn't turned on, so I said, "Ah, guess I'm straight."

To know that some actresses who were hired to do "The L Word" couldn't kiss other actresses so they were released – because they couldn't kiss a woman in a scene! – I wanted to talk to them, but they wouldn't talk about it. There are actresses and actors who won't kiss actors of another race. You know, not all actors are liberals and inclusive. There are a lot of white males who won't kiss a black woman. A lot of people bring politics and religion to work, and I was surprised that some of the most highly trained actresses would not kiss some of the female actresses on our show who were straight, and some were gay, but they wouldn't kiss them.

It almost goes without saying that you're the queen of badassery.

Well, I did bring a voice to women's sexuality – and without a sports bra.

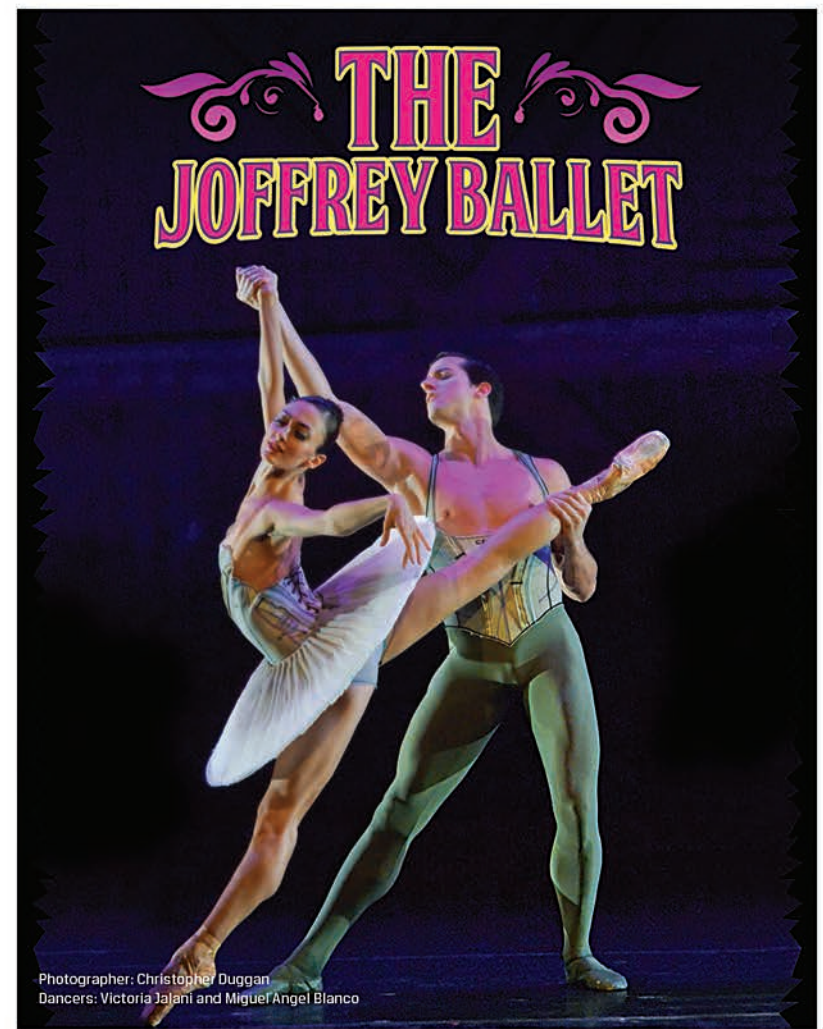
What do you think of the opportunities for women in film these days?

It's fabulous – because men aren't afraid. Men who run the studios and do the hiring and developing and banking, women are moving into that as well and it's great to see. It's great to see them feel comfortable. "Coffy" was written for a white woman, but there were none who could do stunts or handle a gun, but (I could) thanks to my feminist grandfather, Daddy Ray.

When my parents divorced, my mom took me to a hardware store to figure out how to fix and repair her home – and keep it. We walked into the hardware store, and it wasn't like a Home Depot today, but it was mesmerizing to see how you build a home. Plumbing, electrical, drywall, tools – oh my god, we can do this?! Bob Vila of "This Old House" – he was my hero.

Which actresses currently portraying fierce female characters stand out to you? Michelle Rodriguez? Angelina Jolie?

Oh, Michelle – my goodness! We worked on a film in New York with Adrien Brody and she's fantastic. She's like my little daughter. I can't wait to work with her. Even Meryl Streep. I thought she was fantastic in "August: Osage County." I thought she was whooping Julia Roberts' ass. That was a whoop ass scene! Angelina Jolie – love her work. And lemme tell you what Beyoncé did at her sold-out concert in Vancouver. I was sitting in the front row – this was probably 2006 or '07 – and she saw me in the audience and stopped her concert to pay me homage for giving her confidence to be an independent woman. She stopped her concert for that. I didn't want her to see the tears trickling down my face, but that was so humbling and so wonderful.



Photographer: Christopher Duggan
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Screen Queen

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI



finish. With just two short behind-the-scenes featurettes, only the extras are a letdown.



Don Jon

A movie in which a bare-chested Joseph Gordon-Levitt watches porn and spansks his monkey is already

high on the Things To See list, but it just so happens that the directorial debut from the actor, variety-show creator and just cool-as-shit guy is an admirable comedic commentary on how media alters our expectations and ignites Scarlett Johansson fantasies. Johansson plays Barbara, the girl eager to ride off with her prince charming. She has balls, and so does Don Jon – the problem is he can't stop playing with his. Levitt's dramedy, also featuring the master-class acting of Julianne Moore, is an entertaining, sexy and stylized exploration of gender roles, unrealistic wants and JGL's beefed-up body. The extras aren't as generous – what, no director commentary? – but all that semi-nakedness should satisfy you.

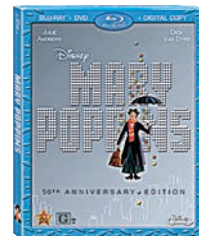


Fruitvale Station

A gut-punch of a movie, "Fruitvale Station" is even more tragic and upsetting and emotional because it actually happened. It's the story of 22-year-old Oscar Grant (an electrifying Michael B. Jordan), a just-released-inmate who starts getting his life together – and being the father, son and boyfriend he wasn't in prison – when a New Year's night out ends in his death after a cop turns a gun on him. Was it an issue of race? Was this another Trayvon? The intent of director Ryan Coogler, who focuses on capturing the people and events of Oscar's last day (his mother is played by acting powerhouse Octavia Spencer), isn't to place blame or even to blast

the officer who was clearly in the wrong for pulling the trigger – it's to honor a life cut way too short. The cast and filmmakers sit down for a post-screening discussion during one of two bonus features.

Also Out



Mary Poppins: 50th Anniversary Edition

Winner of five Academy Awards and revered for the casting of Julie Andrews in the titular role, Disney's classic about a magic nanny and the kids she grows to love (and who grow to love her) is deemed a national treasure – but it's really not as good as you remember it. Sure, there's the irresistibility of those sunny song-and-dance numbers ("A Spoonful of Sugar" will still cast a big smile across your face) – and Andrews and Dick Van Dyke, her playful pal, are pretty much magical themselves – and then other stuff happens. Boring stuff. And for two-and-a-half hours. A spoonful of sugar? How about three cups of coffee to go with it? Still, its 50th anniversary Blu-ray debut dazzles with a big spread of special features: an Andrews/Van Dyke commentary, a page-to-stage doc, music and more.



One Direction: This Is Us

One Direction wants you to know that, despite how rich and famous they are, they still have moms and dads – and they haven't forgotten about the famine in Africa. "This Is Us" is clearly made for fans eager to watch this boy band pitch a (real) tent in the woods, learn to drink miso soup and tear it up on stage. And they obviously know how to work their girl/gay fans into a frenzy. But while their ear candy is pretty tasty, maybe there should've been a story – their "struggle with fame" doesn't count



The Sound of Music Live!

After "The Sound of Music Live!" made its TV premiere in December, star Carrie Underwood told haters they needed to find Jesus. But Carrie, doomed even before stepping into Julie Andrews' Maria von Trapp shoes, could've used some divine intervention herself. Or, at the very least, an acting coach. Underwood nails the singing, but the emotion? The passion? The joy? You'd find more of it staring at a piece of wood for a couple of hours. Thank god, then, for the show-stealing Audra McDonald. As for the rest of this hot mess? Don't be surprised if Jesus is shaking his head and pouring another drink, too. If you make it to the extras, there's a behind-the-scenes feature.



We're the Millers

Fake family is as awkward and funny and dysfunctional as the real thing – or at least it is in "We're the Millers," the movie starring Jennifer Aniston as a stripper. The actress gets down to her sexy undergarments as Rose, a woman roped into her drug lord neighbor David's scheme to smuggle marijuana from Mexico to clear his debt. So David, Rose and two youngsters – their "kids" (Emma Roberts and Will Poulter) – pile into a van and pretend to be the happiest family you've met since the Bradys. It's a laughable premise with almost enough pseudo gayness, fake-family sexy time, TLC sing-alongs and blow-job bribery to keep it interesting. A gag reel, extended scenes and "Stories from the Road" are also included.

Lee Daniels' The Butler

When "The Butler" – excuse me, "Lee Daniels' The Butler" – was released last year, it seemed Oscar bound. It had social issues. It had the "inspired by a true story" handle that makes the Academy wet. For heaven's sake, it had The Oprah. No matter, the all-star orgy/civil-rights caper was shut out, but don't be too surprised. Daniels' film about Cecil Gaines (Forest Whitaker), a White House butler trying to do the best he can for his family (including Oprah as his wife), is highly watchable, even riveting and risk-taking at times, but its showy stunt casting (that's Mariah Carey going diva-less as a cotton-picking field slave), clunky dialogue and just plain hamminess get in the way of the storytelling. Oprah, who you'd think would be distractingly Oprah, is actually quite amazing. And that inspiring-but-campy end? I cried when I should've laughed. Special features include a doc covering the film's historical relevance, deleted scenes and a brief look at the real freedom riders.



Prisoners

Check your Xanax supply before this chilling and tensely searing story of child abduction gets your blood boiling. It's a rough watch from all sides: the parents agonizing over their lost girls who mysteriously vanish on Thanksgiving Day, and the suspect they torture to find them. In a powerful, award-caliber role, Hugh Jackman is the protective patriarch (newly out lesbian actress Maria Bello plays his grieving wife) who will stop at nothing to save his daughter, even if it means getting in the way of Detective Loki's (Jake Gyllenhaal) investigation. Superbly acted (Viola Davis, Terrence Howard, Paul Dano and Melissa Leo round out a terrific cast) and expertly plotted, the macabre, moral-challenging "Prisoners" keeps you guessing all the way through its unnerving

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Cheers For Charity

Royal Oak Events Help Support Local Organizations

BY SHELBY CLARK

Metro Detroiters recently raised their glasses for some good causes in Royal Oak.

On Jan. 18, Royal Oak craft beer supporters, the Polar Beer Club, threw the Royal Oak Beer Fest at the city's farmer's market. The sold-out event funneled its donations to multiple charities, including AIDS Walk Detroit.

AIDS Walk Detroit is Michigan's largest grassroots HIV/AIDS fundraiser. Since 1991, the Royal Oak-based charity has held several fundraisers throughout the year, including their annual 5K walk through Royal Oak every fall.

This year's Royal Oak Beer Fest included food samples, local and national beer presence, and even games. A highlight of the crowded affair included the super-sized "Jenga" near the entrance, with strangers quickly becoming friends as they played.

Some stand-out samplings included the large Sierra Nevada station, handing out this year's Bigfoot and the expensive quad, Ovila. Grand Rapid's Brewery Vivant was present to hand out many of their mainstays, while Quebec's Unibroue was on hand with their world-renowned La Fin du Monde Golden Ale.

Representatives of the charities being supported, like Vista Maria, were present throughout the night to hand out information on their causes.

Information on the charities, as well

as this year's Royal Oak Beer Fest, can be found at www.royaloakbeerfest.com.

On Jan. 25, the Royal Oak Craft Beer Fest took a slightly more personal focus with its Royal Oak Music Theatre event: Everyone working the festival was a volunteer for Camp Casey. The festival was in its third year of working with Camp Casey to bring donations to the unique, local non-profit, with many LGBTs present both behind and in front of the beer sampling.

Some of the beers present included Bell's well-known Hopslam and a unique combination at Founder's: their Centennial IPA mixed with Blood Mary Mix. Craft liquor from Detroit-based Two James Spirits was handed out as well.

Camp Casey is a Royal Oak-based organization that runs a horseback-riding program for children with cancer. Founder Molly Reeser was present at the festival the entire night, while many people pouring drinks or handing out fliers were personally touched by the nonprofit. One pourer, Nicki, excitedly volunteered; her daughter had received a "Horse House Call" while suffering from cancer, and is thankfully now in remission.

Camp Casey was started as a dedication to Reeser's best friend, Casey, who passed away from cancer at age 13. In college, Reeser decided to turn her friend's love of horses into a passion to be shared with others suffering from the disease. Ten years later, the charity has become

Michigan's own answer to "Make a Wish," focusing on the seemingly universal love of horses most children have.

Funds raised from the various events thrown in Royal Oak throughout the year go toward various aspects of the charity, including funding "Cowboy Camp Outs." The campouts happen two times a year, where children are able to go to a real "Dude Ranch" and experience Wild West living.

The Royal Oak Craft Beer Fest funds will also be funneled toward "Horse House Calls," where very ill children are able to see and pet horses brought directly to their homes.

Charity events in the Royal Oak area will occur throughout the next several months to benefit Camp Casey, including "Dabble," a wine and craft beer tasting event on Valentine's Day at Rust Belt Market in Ferndale (www.dabledetroit.com).

Other upcoming events in the area for Camp Casey include the Cowbell Pub Crawl in Ferndale on March 29 and the Gardenia Bluegrass & Roots Festival at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market on April 11.

For further information on Camp Casey and their events, visit www.camp-casey.org.

Royal Oak Craft Beer fest information for this year's event can be found at www.royaloakcraftbeerfest.com.

For info on future events in Royal Oak, check out BTL's calendar at www.pridesource.com/calendar.html.

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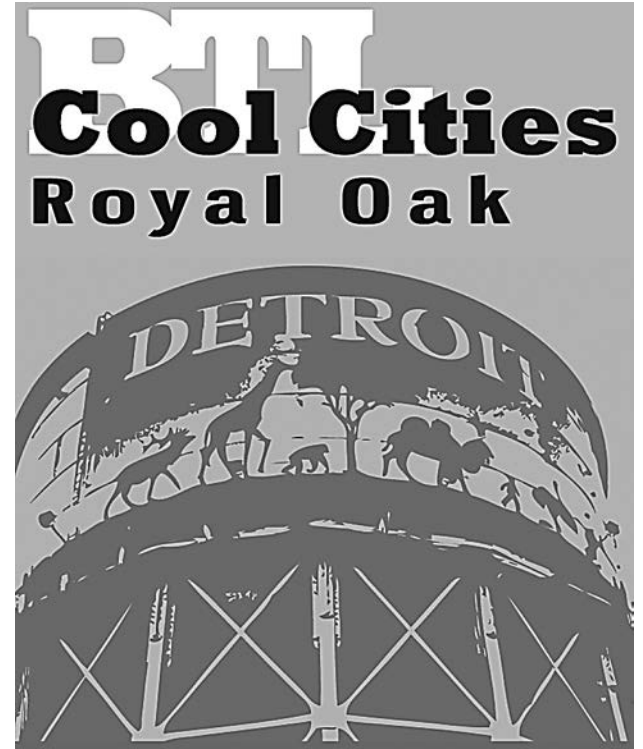
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Happenings

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Wednesday, Feb. 19

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

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

Newly Single Support Group 7 p.m. Group for all dealing with the end of a relationship and want to talk - or listen - to others who share similar

OUTINGS

Thursday, Feb. 13

Cupid Ain't @#!: An Anti-Valentine's Day Poetry Movement 6 p.m. Featuring J Mase III, a black/trans/queer poet based in Brooklyn. Join us after for V-Day One Billion Rising For Justice Campaign which works to help women who've been victims of all types of abuse and injustice find a voice through dance. She's the First, University of Michigan-Dearborn, 4901 Evergreen Road, **Dearborn**. 313-593-5000. Umd.umich.edu

Gender Hormone Counseling Sessions 6 p.m. Darnell Jones, RPH and GNA, will conduct one on one counseling sessions for the transgender community. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Share the Love and Celebrate Valentine's Day 6:30 p.m. To benefit Michigan Marriage Challenge. Featuring Keynote Speaker nationally renowned journalist and NPR Commentator Jack Lessenberry. Tickets: \$50-500 DeBoer/Rowse Legal Fund, 27777 Schoolcraft, **Livonia**. Michiganmarriagechallenge.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

Whole Lives, Healthy Lives Adult Support Group 7 p.m. This one-of-a-kind program in Berrien County helps attendees support each other in healthy ways through active listening and caring feedback. OutCenter, 132 Water St., **Benton Harbor**. 269-925-8330. Outcenter.org

Friday, Feb. 14

Queen of Hearts 18+. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., **Lansing**. 517-894-1315. Spiraldancebar.com

Gay Business Networking 8 a.m. To help members increase their business through a structured, positive, and professional word of mouth. Every second Friday. GOAL, 100 Phoenix Dr., **Ann Arbor**. Meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

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 (coffees, teas, smoothies), sodas, water, and more. Tickets: \$20. 18+. Five15, 515 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. Five15.net

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Feb. 15

Queer & Trans Yoga - Winter Workshop Series 10 a.m. All-levels class. All are welcome. Tickets: \$10-25 (any amount accepted). Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Gay Straight Alliance in Berrien County 2 p.m. LGBTQ youth, friends and allies, ages 14-18. OutCenter, 124 Water St., **Benton Harbor**. 269-925-8330. Outcenter.org

X the Line - Peer Educators 2 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. dsmith@goaffirmations.org Goaffirmations.org

Men's Discussion Group 6 p.m. Lighthearted or in-depth discussion on a variety of topics. For gay, bi-affectional, and transgender men 18 and up. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Dirty Show 7 p.m. International Erotic Art Exhibition. 21+. Select dates are 18+. Tickets: \$15+. Dirty Show, 1600 Clay St., **Detroit**. 1-800-838-3006. Dirtydetroit.com

p.m. and 12 a.m. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., **Lansing**. 517-894-1315. Spiraldancebar.com

Monday, Feb. 17

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

Restorative Yin Yoga with Meditation 6:45 p.m. Get pampered. GOAL, 1945 Pauline Blvd., **Ann Arbor**. Meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

A2 TNG (Next Generation of Kinkster) 7:45 p.m. A kink and fetish oriented group for younger kinksters. The group focuses



Editor's Pick

"Everybody's got the right to some sunshine." Nine characters looking for either love, equality or a common voice deliver that message on the Farmington Players stage in the Stephen Sondheim musical, "Assassins." They are determined to change the world by targeting the United States President in pursuit of their own twisted versions of "The American Dream."

The show's premise: Put Assassins together in "Purgatory," a carnival setting that erases all boundaries of space and time, allowing them the freedom to share their madness in the form of music.

"Assassins' is first-rate entertainment that presents American history with all its warts and foibles," says director Mike Smith.

Performances are Feb. 13 through March 1. Reserved seats for all shows are on sale now by calling 248-553-2955. The Barn is located at 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills.

Open Meditation Saturdays 9 p.m. A communal, non-hierarchical meditation space open to all. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Sunday, Feb. 16

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

Fifth Annual Chili Cook-Off/Beer Tasting 2 p.m. The Annual Chili Cook-off/Beer Tasting is a fundraiser for Ann Arbor Civic Theatre. A2CT provides opportunities for everyone in the community - regardless of experience or income - to participate in and experience live theater. Tickets: \$5-20. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre, 2019 W. Stadium Blvd., **Ann Arbor**. 734-971-2228. A2ct.org

Monthly Support and Program Meeting 2 p.m. PFLAG, 306 N. Division, **Ann Arbor**. 734-741-0659. Pflagaa.org

Conversation Station 5 p.m. GOAL, 714 S. Washington, **Royal Oak**. 248-981-4227. MarciWilliams@yahoo.com GetOutAndLive.me

Salon Sunday 7 p.m. Free cabaret concerts. Five 15, 515 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. Five15.net

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

Showbiz Sunday 10 p.m. Ace Deville, Delicious, Maria Mirelez, DJ Lippgloss, and more. Additional showtimes at 11

on support, the sharing of information in the form of demonstrations or discussion groups and socializing. Meets on the third Tuesday of every month. Open to all. A2 TNG, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-678-2478. CuteSubToy@yahoo.com JimToyCenter.org

Tuesday, Feb. 18

Older Adult and Senior Helpline 4 p.m. Provides peer counseling, empathy and community resources for LGBT adults. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 1-800-398-4297. goaffirmations.org

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

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

Interweave 6:15 p.m. A spiritual home to LGBTQ and all family and allies. Potluck begins every meeting. First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, 4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, **Ann Arbor**. 734-665-6158. Uuaa.org

Euchre at Esquire Club 6:30 p.m. Lansing Association for Human Rights, 1250 Turner St., **Lansing**. 517-487-5338. lahronline.org

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

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

Karaoke 9:30 p.m. Hosted by KJ Les. aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-

experiences. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.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. openarms@michiganaidcoalition.org Michiganaidcoalition.org

Sistrum Weekly Rehearsal 7 p.m. Sistrum, Lansing Women's Chorus, 215 N. Capital Ave., **Lansing**. Sistrum.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/Male

Thursday, Feb. 20

Twisted Games Party games and fully nude strippers. Hosted by Ace Deville. 18+. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., **Lansing**. 517-894-1315. Spiraldancebar.com

Detroit Elders 5 p.m. Discuss and address issues specific to the LGBT community as we "age in the D." Detroit Elders, 4750 Woodward, **Detroit**. 313-833-1300. belcrest5440@yahoo.com

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

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MICHIGAN'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

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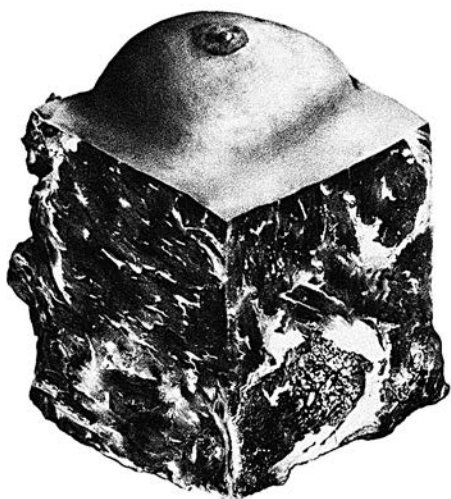
SHOP LGBT

Hear Me Out

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Against Me!, Toni Braxton and Babyface

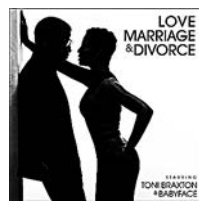
AGAINST ME! TRANSGENDER DYSPHORIA BLUES



Against Me!, 'Transgender Dysphoria Blues'

The remarkable thing about "Transgender Dysphoria Blues" – besides, of course, it being an emancipating declaration of independence – is that it even exists. Can you imagine, in the late '90s when this punk-rock quartet from Florida first rocked its way to notoriety, something as transgender-focused as this? Against Me!'s sixth release is a deeply personal outpouring as necessary – both to now-frontwoman Laura Jane Grace and the band's fans – as it is empowering. An open diary exploring internal and external struggles with identity – but also alienation, acceptance and love, fear and loss – the complex, oft-tremendous "Transgender Dysphoria Blues" triumphs at acknowledging one's differences and the power that can be had when we embrace them. "We can't choose how we're made," Grace insists on the title track, venting frustrations over the gritty track – and then recognizing the one person who truly gets her. "True Trans Soul Rebel" thrashes like some of the best radio-made '90s rock, but beneath the hard-guitar guise is an emotional undercurrent so heartfelt and raw – especially the verse suggesting suicide – that Grace's pain becomes ours. "Dead Friend" is brutally honest, and "Drinking with the Jocks" fights with its claws out. And if you've ever

wanted to piss on the house of a person you hate, "Black Me Out" is your song. But it's the poignancy of "Two Coffins," a bittersweet break from the pummeling punk sounds, that really floored me. The gratitude it expresses, while looking to the end of everything, still has me trying to pick myself up off the ground. *Grade: B+*



Toni Braxton and Babyface, 'Love, Marriage & Divorce'

In the '90s, Toni Braxton broke more hearts than she un-broke, and the world was OK with that. The world was so OK with that, Braxton racked up No. 1s, snatched a few Grammys and joined the pantheon of premier female powerhouses – Mariah Carey, Whitney Houston, Celine Dion – who could sing a song like a hose puts out a blazing fire. Braxton still sounds every bit as pillow-soft demure and sultry low on "Love, Marriage & Divorce," her first release since 2010's "Pulse," as she did then. And with Babyface as her co-pilot – the producer lured the singer back to music after she almost gave it up entirely – the two recapture the greatness of an enduring, two-decade-plus partnership, once again

shaping those sophisticated love songs that speak to the heart and, yeah, sometimes break it. Focusing on relationship ups and downs, the aptly titled "Roller Coaster" has a hooky groove that mitigates its cliché amusement-park metaphor. The song sets the tone for this classy – and sometimes dull – R&B throwback, a therapy session encompassing all the feels of that crazy thing called love: the regretful "Hurt You," a harmonious mid-tempo about infidelity; the vengeful "I Wish" set to an ironic piano solo; and the kinky "Sweat," a standout so good you'll pick a fight just to have makeup sex. *Grade: B-*

Also Out



Broken Bells, 'After the Disco'

You know that period post-clubbing when the lights go out and nothing else matters because you're too drunk to care? This is your soundtrack to that night. Set to a dreamy ambiance of shimmer, and inspired by late '70s Bee Gees, "After the Disco" is the second LP from the pairing of artist-producer Brian Burton (aka Danger Mouse) and The Shins frontman James Mercer. Oftentimes their indie-pop gets swallowed in the morning sun – the melodies just aren't all that ear-grabby – but occasionally, like on the entrancing synth jam "Perfect World," it'll intoxicate you like a night of heavy drinking.



Cibo Matto, 'Hotel Valentine'

Cibo Matto's first all-original release since their disbanding in 2001 involves a "love story and a group of ghosts in a hotel." And if you think that sounds weird, hear the music's playful wonkiness. The New York duo of Miho Hatori and Yuka C. Honda, long known for their bizarre observations on everything (especially food), queer up "Hotel Valentine" with the most schizo of sonic hybrids: disco meets No Doubt meets speakeasy lounge music on "10th Floor Ghost Girl," and "Housekeeping" whomps with urban swag and B-52s kitsch. Who needs marijuana? Here's your trippy high.

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Happenings

Continued from p. 22

Relationship Skills Class 6 p.m.
A series for LGBTQ people and their
friends and loved ones. Topics include:
exploring personal and cultural
relationships, values, arguments and
making agreements, accountability
and building community connections.
Tickets: \$35 per person. Affirmations,
290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-
398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

The Parent Network 6 p.m. This group
aims to assist parents in understanding
their child's identity, while also giving
parents the opportunity to socialize with
other adults who have LGBTQ children
at the Michigan Gay and Lesbian Resource
Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo.
269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

**Out as an Ally: A Step Forward in
Understanding** 7 p.m. Ally training
program. Pizza provided. Free. Holocaust
Memorial Center, 48123 Orchard Lake
Road, Farmington Hills. 248-553-2400
x24. Holocaustcenter.org

ConVocation 8 p.m. A convention of the
many mystical spiritual paths and faiths
and the people that follow them who
desire to teach each other and promote
fellowship among all esoteric traditions.
Michigan Pagans, 5801 Southfield
Expressway, Detroit. Meetup.com/
michiganpagans

Drag Queen Bingo Un-Leashed 8
p.m. "No Holds Barred" Thursday
edition! 18+. Tickets: \$20. Five15, 515
S. Washington Ave., Royal Oak. 248-
515-2551. Five15.net

the Wind and the Rain. Tickets: \$10-30.
Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth
Ave., Ann Arbor. 4 p.m. Feb. 16. 734-
763-4186. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Lights,
Camera... The Oscars!" Special pops
concert. Dessert and wine reception
offered afterwards. Wharton Center for
the Performing Arts, Michigan State
University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East
Lansing. 8 p.m. Feb. 14. 800-WHARTON.
Lansingsymphony.org

Palmer Woods Music in Homes "Jazz
Tribute with Barefield-McMurray-Young-
Keita Quartet" Tickets: \$35-40. Palmer
Woods Mansion, Detroit. Feb. 15 - Feb.
16. 313-891-2514. Palmerwoods.org

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Infected
Mushroom" With Butch Clancy. Royal
Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St.,
Royal Oak. Feb. 15. 248-399-2980.
Royaloakmusictheatre.com

The Ark "My Folky Valentine" Tickets:
\$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann
Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 13. 734-761-1800.
Theark.org

The Magic Bag "The Muggs" With Amy
Gore & Her Valentines, The Hatchmen
& Audra Kubat. Tickets: \$10. The
Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave.,
Ferndale. 8 p.m. Feb. 15. 248-544-3030.
Themagicbag.com

The Majestic "Skinny Puppy" All ages.
Tickets: \$26. 50-30. Majestic Theater,
4120-4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit.
7:30 p.m. Feb. 19. 313-833-9700.
Majesticdetroit.com

The Majestic "Nicole Atkins" All ages.
Tickets: \$12-14. The Magic Stick, 4120
Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Feb. 19.
313-833-9700. Majesticdetroit.com

University Musical Society (UMS)
"St. Lawrence String Quartet" Tickets:
\$22-46. Rackham Auditorium, 915 E.
Washington St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb.
14. 734-763-3333. Ums.org

MUSIC & MORE

Classical

Detroit Symphony Orchestra
"Ravishing Rachmaninoff". Max M.
Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward
Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 13. 313-
576-5111. Dso.org

Michigan Philharmonic "Fabulous
Fifties" Geff Phillips, guest vocalist. The
Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400
Cherry Hill Road, Canton. 7:30 p.m. Feb.
15. 734-394-5300. Michiganphil.org

Oakland Symphony Orchestra
"Concert III: 17th Annual David Daniels
Young Artists Concert" Overture to
Oberon by Carl Maria von Weber. The
Black Swan by Bright Sheng. All Things
Majestic by Jennifer Higdon. Tickets:
\$10-20. Varner Recital Hall at Oakland
University, 2200 N. Squirrel Road,
Rochester. 3 p.m. Feb. 16. 248-370-
2030. Oakland.edu/oso

Comedy

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Tina
Giorgi: Valentine's Weekend" Tickets:
\$10-15. Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase,
314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 13 -
Feb. 15. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Amy
Schumer". Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318
W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. Feb. 14. 248-
399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Concerts

Blind Pig "The Wild Feathers with
Saints of Valory" 18+. Tickets: \$13-
15. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann
Arbor. 9 p.m. Feb. 13. 734-996-8555.
Blindpigmusic.com

Kerrytown Concert House "Joshua
Breakstone" CD release concert for With

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

A Night of One Acts \$5. Richmond
Community Theatre, 69619 Parker St.,
Richmond. Feb. 21 - 22. 586-727-9518.
richmondtheatre.com

Assassins \$16-18. Farmington Players,
32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington
Hills. Feb. 14 - March 1. 248-473-1856.
Farmingtonplayers.org

Harvey \$8-10. Center Stage Jackson at
Middle School at Parkside, 2400 4th St.,
Jackson. Through Feb. 16. 517-796-
2602. centerstagejackson.org

Leaving Iowa \$8-14. Riverwalk
Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing.
Through Feb. 16. 517-482-5700.
riverwalk.com

Peter Pan The Musical \$12. The
Franke Center for the Arts, 214 E.
Mansion St., Marshall. Feb. 20 - 23. 269-
781-0001. frankecenterforthearts.org

The Little Mermaid Jr. \$12-15. Macomb
Center for the Performing Arts, 44575
Garfield Road, Clinton Township. Feb. 15.
586-286-2222. Macombcenter.com

The Miracle Worker \$24. The
Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Civic
Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo.
Feb. 14 - March 1. 269-343-1313.
Kazoocivic.com

College/University Theater

Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo \$5-
20. The University Theatre at Williams
Theatre inside The Gilmore Theatre
Complex, 1903 W. Michigan Ave.,
Kalamazoo. Through Feb. 16. 269-387-
7222. wmutheatre.com

Hay Fever \$10-28. U-M Department of

Theatre & Drama at Lydia Mendelssohn
Theatre, 911 N. University, Ann Arbor.
Feb. 20 - 23. 734-971-2228. tickets.
music.umich.edu

In the Red and Brown Water \$10-20.
Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward Ave.,
Detroit. Through Feb. 16. 313-577-2960.
wsushows.com

Under Milk Wood \$8-14. Oakland
University Dept. of Music, Theatre and
Dance at Varner Studio Theatre, 2200 N.
Squirrel Road, Rochester. Through Feb.
16. 800-585-3737. oakland.edu/mtd

Professional

'Tis Pity She's a Whore \$8-12. Pigeon
Creek Shakespeare Company at Dog
Story Theater, 7 Jefferson SE, Grand
Rapids. Feb. 21 - 23. 616-425-9234.
dogstorytheatre.com

A Play by Franco Vitella \$15-18.
Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company at
The Abreast Performance Space, 1301
W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Through Feb.
22. 313-408-7269. Magentagiraffe.org

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

Awake \$8-10 in advance; \$2 more at
the door. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes
& Noble Booksellers, 6800 Orchard Lake
Road, West Bloomfield. Through Feb. 23.
248-850-9919. twomusetheatre.org

Chicago The Musical \$29-69. The
Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Feb.
18 - 19. 810-237-8689. thewhiting.com

Clybourne Park \$27-29. Farmers Alley
Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo.
Through Feb. 23. 269-343-2727.
farmersalleytheatre.com

Collected Stories e. \$15-20. Matrix
Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley, Detroit.
Feb. 21 - March 16. 313-967-0999.
matrixtheatre.org

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

I Do! I Do! The Snug Theatre, 160 S.
Water St., Marine City. Through Feb. 22.
810-278-1749. thesnugtheatre.com

Lysistrata Jones \$25-40. Meadow
Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Road,
Rochester. Feb. 12 - March 9. 248-377-
3300. mbtheatre.com

Moon Over Buffalo \$12-30. Hilberry
Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Feb. 21
- April 5. 313-577-2972. hilberry.com

Murder at the Howard Johnson's
\$27-32. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E.
Cady St., Northville. Through 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

Oliver! \$22-32. The Encore Musical
Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St.,
Dexter. Through March 2. 734-268-
6200. theencoretheatre.org

Out of Time \$8-12. Stark Turn Players
at Dog Story Theatre, 7 Jefferson
SE, Grand Rapids. Feb. 14 - 16.
starktturnplayers.org

Passing \$10-15. Noble Peak
Productions, Charles H. Wright Museum
of African American History, 315 East
Warren Ave., Detroit. Through Feb. 16.
passingonstage.com

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

**Sesame Street Live: Can't Stop
Singing** \$15-68. Fox Theatre,
2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit.



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Editor's Pick



Judson Center hosts its frequent "Foster Parent Orientation" this week. With the motto, "Give Hope. Become a Foster Parent," the center hopes to see all interested in helping a child.

The training class helps attendees learn more about becoming a licensed foster parent. Discussion includes the steps it takes to become a foster parent, the rules of being a foster parent, the

types of children that come into care, and more.

Foster Parent Orientation begins at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 18 at the Judson Center. The Judson Center is located at 4410 W. 13 Mile Road, Royal Oak. For more information, call 313-794-5653 or visit www.judsoncenter.org.

Through Feb. 17. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

The Algorithm \$10. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Through Feb. 16. 313-365-4948. planetant.com

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

The Suit . \$18-60. University Musical Society, Power Center for the Performing Arts, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 19 - Feb. 22. 734-764-2538. ums.org

The Sunshine Boys \$15-18. Broadway Onstage Live Theatre, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Feb. 21 - March 22. 586-771-6333. broadwayonstage.com

The Taming of the Shrew \$20. The Elizabeth Theater Company, 2040 Park

Ave., Detroit. Through March 2. 313-454-1286. elizabeththeater.com

Tony n' Tina's Wedding \$63. Detroit Actors Guild Productions, Inc. at Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren. 6:30 p.m. Feb. 21. 586-268-3200. andiamoitalia.com/showroom

Tony n' Tina's Wedding \$55. Detroit Actors Guild Productions, Inc. at Chrysler Theatre, St. Claire College Center for the Arts, 201 Riverside Dr. West, Windsor. Feb. 14 - Feb. 15. 519-252-6579. chryslertheatre.com

ART 'N' AROUND

4731 Gallery "D-struction!: Detroit Constructionism/Assemblages, as it Stands Today" 4731 Grand River #103, Detroit. 6 p.m. Feb. 15.

Cranbrook Academy of Art and Art Museum "Waylande Gregory: Art Deco Ceramics and the Atomic Impulse" 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 16 - March 23. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) "3: Kathryn Brackett Luchs, Lois Teicher and Marie Woo" 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 17 - Feb. 15. 313-832-8540. Detroitartistsmarket.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Foto Europa, 1850 to the Present" 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 25 - April 27. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

Downriver Council for the Arts "Native American Poster Exhibit" 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Feb. 7 - Feb. 28. 734-720-0671. Downriverarts.org

Downriver Council for the Arts

"Adult Watercolor Class" Admission: \$10. Downriver Council for the Arts, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Aug. 7 - June 25. 734-720-0671. Downriverarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Point of View: 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 26 - April 13. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.org

Gallery 1212 Old Town "Homebound: The Work of Nicolas V. Sanchez". Gallery 1212 Old Town, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. Feb. 1 - Feb. 27. Gallery1212.com

Grand Rapids Art Museum "Friday Night Conversations" 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. Aug. 9 - Feb. 28. 616-831-1000. artmuseumgr.org

MOCAD "Tabernacle: A Metamorphic Healing Module" 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 7 - May 4. 313-832-6622. Mocadetroit.org

Pewabic Pottery "State of Flux". Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1 - March 9. 313-626-2000. Pewabic.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Open Figure Class" Tickets: \$15 (or \$100 for all six sessions). 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" 52 E. Forest Ave., Detroit. Jan. 24 - May 21. 313-831-8700. Nnamdicenter.org

The Scarab Club "Gary Grimshaw: Solo" 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Jan. 1 - Feb. 15. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

University Of Michigan Museum Of Art (UMMA) "Flip Your Field: Photographs from the Collection". University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Dec. 1 - March 16. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

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Classifieds

01-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AA MEETINGS

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.

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

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

Warren-Monday
 7:30 p.m., Eastside Serenity Gay AA, Odd Fellow's Hall, 830 S Monroe St Closed/Discussion.

101-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AL ANON

Diversity Wednesday AI-Anon Family Group
 Wednesday 8pm
 St. Luke's Parrish Hall (in basement)
 Lewiston & Livernois, Ferndale MI
 Closed Meeting

Go After Your Serenity (G.A.Y.S.) AI-Anon Family Group
 Saturday's 8pm
 Drayton Ave. Presbyterian Church (in basement)
 Pinecrest & Drayton, Ferndale
 Closed Meeting

112 ANNOUNCEMENTS - VOLUNTEERING

Ferndale Pride 2014 Volunteers
 We appreciate our helpful volunteers and would like you to be involved. Choose dates and times that work for you. Please ask your friends and family that would like to volunteer to sign up as well. Interested? Fill out our online registration form: <http://www.ferndalepride.com/volunteering/how-to-volunteer.html>
 Sponsorship and vending opportunities available.

205 REAL ESTATE - HOMES FOR RENT

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428 PROF. SERVICES - MASSAGE

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Contact Dave at massage4@aol.com
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michigan_mens_clothing_optional_yoga



Solution to puzzle from page 30

D	A	C	H	A	A	B	L	E	I	L	S	A	
I	N	H	E	R	F	U	E	L	N	U	L	L	
A	N	A	F	F	A	I	R	T	O	F	L	O	G
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WANTED

AFFIRMATIONS IS LOOKING FOR AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Affirmations Community Center
Metro Detroit's LGBTQA Community Center
Headquarters: Ferndale, Michigan
Position To Be Filled: May 2014
Apply now for consideration!



THE ORGANIZATION

Affirmations is Metro Detroit's community center for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their allies.

It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Housed in a state-of-the-art, multi-use facility in the heart of downtown Ferndale, at the Northern border of the City of Detroit, it is easily accessible from across the Metro Detroit area. Affirmations is the hub of this community, celebrating wellness, personal growth and development, youth and the needs of its constituents. Affirmations is the largest LGBTQA organization in Michigan, and one of the ten largest in the United States.

Affirmations offers programming to its members and the community focused on the areas of advocacy, culture, health and wellness, social, recreation and youth services. Resources of the Center include the Pittmann-Puckett Art Gallery, General Motors Foundation Media Center, Bayard Rustin Library, David Bohnett Cyber Center & Café, Helpline, a rooftop sky deck and excellent recreational assets, all in 17,000 square feet of space that is new, modern and accommodating. The Center is available to the public for events and activities. Like many nonprofit organizations, Affirmations has found the need to expand its scope of financial support. Many programs are grant-funded, and the new Executive Director will be charged with developing sustainable channels of funding to bring continued growth and success to the organization.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Executive Director will be the key leader providing vision and building communication throughout the organization. Of strategic importance will be promoting Affirmations across the Metro Detroit community, supporting the organization's image with results that resonate with a diverse base of patrons and funders, while working collaboratively with organizations from the business, nonprofit and public sectors to maximize broad-based multi-cultural support for the organization's efforts.

The resourceful and community-focused person holding this position will provide leadership for outreach and service to all segments within the broader population. Using entrepreneurship and a collaborative style, the Executive Director will foster and grow programs and participation in new and promising directions.

Responsibilities include revenue accountability, with demonstrated ability to partner with funders and donors to support programs and facility budgets. Primary objectives include:

- o To ensure implementation of Affirmations' Strategic Plan: 2013-2015.
- o To lead a thorough and credible needs assessment of LGBTQA communities in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb
- o Public Relations and outreach to drive organizational awareness, membership and programs
- o Leadership of existing and new program initiatives.
- o Leadership of staff and volunteers to provide an effective and friendly environment.
- o Financial management to make the most effective and efficient use of revenues from programs and
- o Lead collaborative advocacy efforts in ensuring equal rights for the LGBTQA community.
- o Engage Allies in supporting funding, services and advocacy for LGBTQA interests.

Affirmations is committed to serving as broad a constituency as possible and to providing a diverse, multicultural and inclusive space related to sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, race and/or cultural affiliation, disability and socio economic status. Affirmations is a welcoming and empowering organization in the service of The Executive Director will have approximately 7 full-time and 3 part-time staff on board. Budgetary responsibility is presently \$1 million, with mandate to grow. Success in this position requires the ability to lead the organization

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATIONS

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We encourage expressions of interest as early as possible, preferably in advance of March 15, 2014. New inquiries after that date by e-mail are encouraged and will be given consideration, time permitting. For consideration, please e-mail your cover letter and resume, along with salary requirements to:

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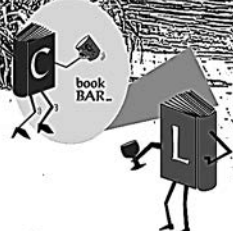


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UDM Theatre Company's 'Somebody/Nobody' continues through Feb. 16 at Marygrove Theatre. Photo: UDM Theatre Company

Hooray For Hollywood?

BY JOHN QUINN

I'm nobody! Who are you?/Are you nobody, too?

Then there's a pair of us – don't tell!/They'd banish us, you know.

How dreary to be somebody!/How public, like a frog

To tell your name the livelong day/To an admiring bog!

One can't help but wonder if Emily Dickenson's poem, "Nobody," was the inspiration for Jane Martin's off-the-wall comedy "Somebody/Nobody," which opened Feb. 7 at The Theatre Company of the University of Detroit Mercy. It's a rousing satire that explores what is arguably the greatest threat to society's average intelligence – the cult of celebrity.

And who better to skewer celebrity than "America's best known, unknown playwright." "Jane Martin" is a cypher, believed to be a pseudonym for one or another male artist associated with the Actors Theatre of Louisville, K.Y., where "her" plays usually premiere. An exception is "Criminal Minds," which was first produced by The Theatre Company at UDM!

When Loli (Claire Hardy), who is "as corny as Kansas in August," actually leaves Kansas for Los Angeles, she finds that working as an auto mechanic is no way to be "somebody." The serial phone calls from her mother are interrupted by frantic calls for help from her front door. The damsel in distress is actress Sheena Keener (Michelle Renaud), the goddess of low-budget horror flicks, who, fleeing an awards ceremony in a panic attack, tumbled down a flight of steps. The self-absorbed starlet is brash enough to make the Kardashians look Amish. She moans about the cruel price she pays for notoriety. "Why can't I be left alone to be famous?" On the other hand, Loli wails, "You have everything and want out! I've got nothing and want in!"

But Loli's Mom has sent Cousin Joe Don (Eric W. Maher) to fetch her home. Sheena finds the gruff Ozark hermit strangely attractive. The home invasions don't end, however. Loli's peace is disturbed by one of Sheena's fans (Shaunte

REVIEW

Somebody/Nobody

UDM Theatre Company at Marygrove Theatre, 8425 McNichols Road, Detroit. 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday through Feb. 16. 2 hours. \$5-20. 313-993-3270.

<http://theatre.udmercy.edu>

McArthur), among the half of Hollywood's stalkers who think they're vampires. The Stalker is banished by the arrival of Galaxy ("Bigger than a star"), the 19-year-old top talent agent to B-list film types and Sheena's representative. The wildly satirical character is played in all her androgynous glory by Judo Manko.

The character descriptions should tip you off: "Somebody/Nobody" is a farce, and a wickedly funny one, too. The over-the-top script ably defines the old line about "a laugh a minute." The exuberance of opening night may have been responsible for the cast knocking five minutes off the estimated running time, yet the pacing was perfect. Director Dr. Arthur J. Beer shrewdly walks the line between farce and mere silliness. We should note, however, that while agitation naturally pushes the voice higher and faster, the actor can't sacrifice articulation in the process. The few technical errors opening night are unlikely to be repeated.

Situation comedy frequently revolves around one sane individual caught up in a bunch of crazies. Hardy delivers a solid, grounded performance from which her fellows' outrageous characters can spring. Following Loli's growing awareness that everybody is somebody sometime adds a gentle moral to this screwball fable.

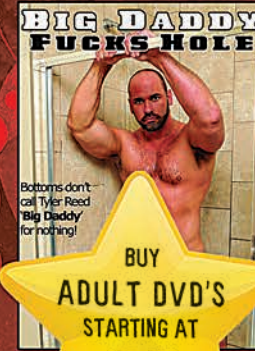
Maher's blunt backwoodsman is a fine counterpoint in his very physical performance. Michelle Renaud, a May graduate of UDM, embodies every vapid, synthetic personality we've ever loved to hate.

It doesn't matter who "Jane Martin" really is. Her questionable identity is just extra spice in the "Somebody/Nobody" stew. What counts is that somebody, somewhere is making sure sophisticated comedy is alive and well.

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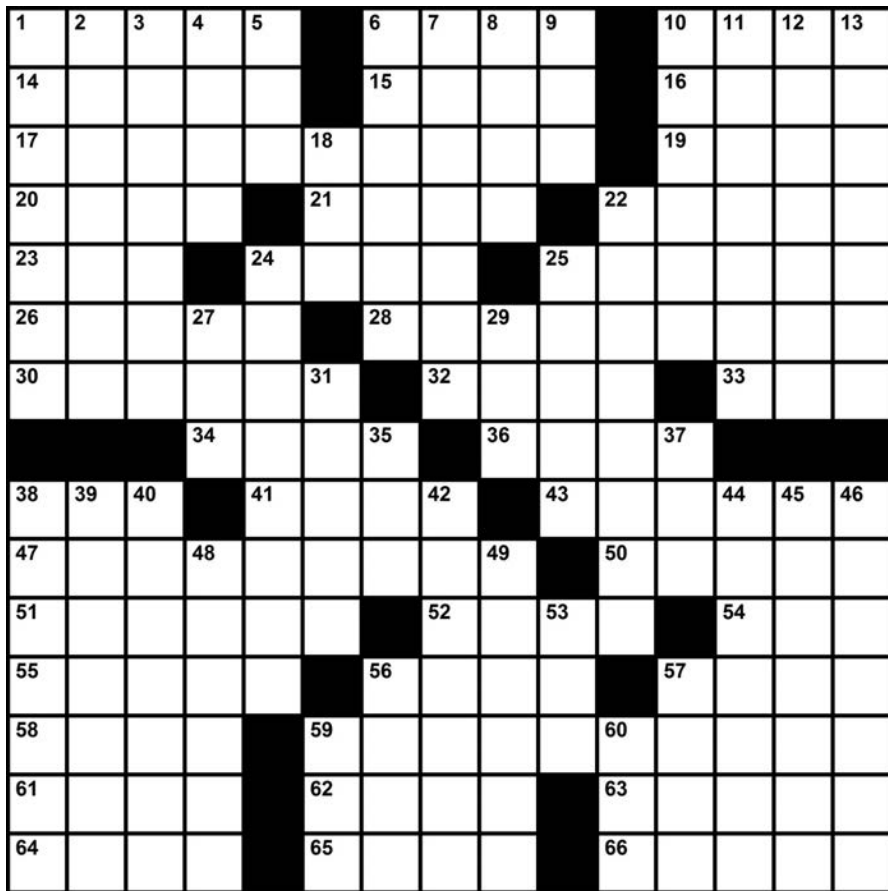
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B.W. Outs Himself



Across

- 1 Country house, to Nureyev
- 6 Not impotent
- 10 Ingrid's role in "Casablanca"
- 14 "___ Shoes" (Toni Collette movie)
- 15 Tank contents
- 16 Void's partner
- 17 With 28-Across, story by Binyavanga Wainaina
- 19 Be active in S&M, perhaps
- 20 Knock off
- 21 Porgy's lady
- 22 Conductor Georg
- 23 Telecommunications co.
- 24 Pound unrelentingly
- 25 Make bubbly
- 26 Ancient erection
- 28 See 17-Across
- 30 "___ anyone?" (Troy Perry invite?)
- 32 Collars, as a perp
- 33 Former stat for Kopay
- 34 Caribbean pirate portrayer Johnny
- 36 Himalayan legend
- 38 ___ UP (advocacy org.)
- 41 Clears
- 43 Tavern with naked dancers?
- 47 "One Day I Will Write About ___" (B.W. memoir)

- 50 Rosa's red
- 51 Zoot suit wearer
- 52 Forgets the words, maybe
- 54 Tyler of "Lord of the Rings"
- 55 Eulogizer of Diana in song
- 56 Brazilian soccer great
- 57 "Ziegfeld Follies" costume designer
- 58 Dating from
- 59 "I Am a ___, Mum" (B.W. story in which he outs himself)
- 61 Where a sailor may hit bottom
- 62 Break it on Broadway
- 63 Beau chaser
- 64 Pravda provider
- 65 Like half of the Odd Couple
- 66 Earth tone

Down

- 1 Nin, for one
- 2 Bening of "American Beauty"
- 3 Spank, perhaps
- 4 Test the weight of
- 5 Poodle's bark
- 6 Out of the way
- 7 Try to catch your lover cheating, perhaps
- 8 Do-overs for Amelie Mauresmo
- 9 "Xanadu" grp.
- 10 Drop a dime

- 11 Doris Day's "___ of Broadway"
- 12 Like a one-armed bandit
- 13 Mediterranean capital
- 18 "Guys and Dolls" co-creator Burrows
- 22 Tour Hollywood?
- 24 "Hook" role for Robin Williams
- 25 "For ___ waves of grain" (Katherine Lee Bates)
- 27 Was out in front
- 29 Oral input
- 31 Like milk mixed with useless tears
- 35 Palm Pilot, e.g.
- 37 WWII battle site, for short
- 38 Deep down
- 39 Gay neighborhood of New York
- 40 Goes quietly
- 42 Connived like Scar in "The Lion King"
- 44 Tall marsh plant
- 45 Emulate 38-Across
- 46 Mardi Gras participant
- 48 Laughs at
- 49 It gets delivered at the end
- 53 Arenas' month
- 56 Type of sci, in college
- 57 Business biggie
- 59 Head cover
- 60 I, Claudius?

Solution on pg. 26

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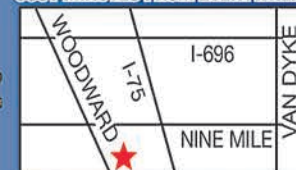


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