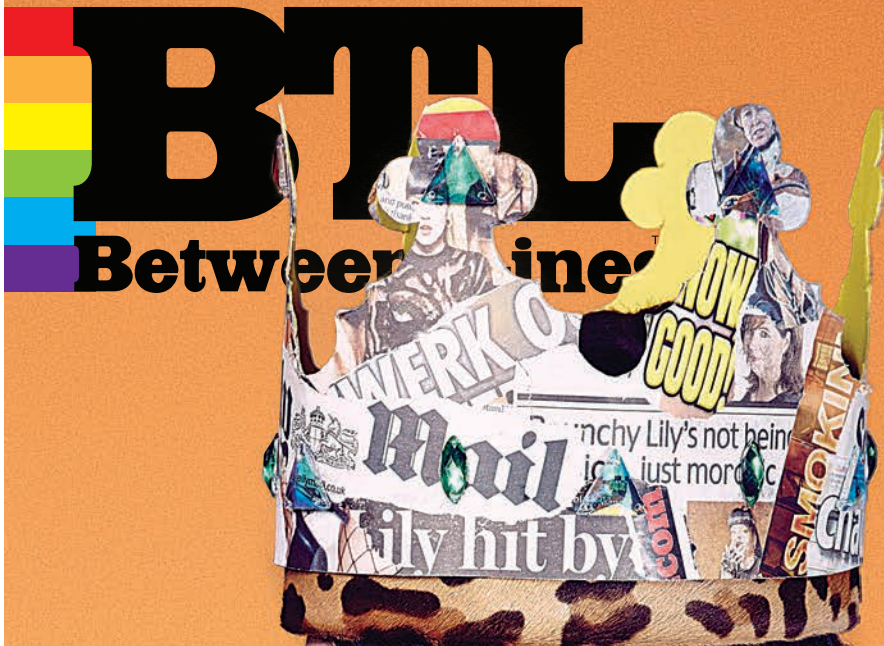


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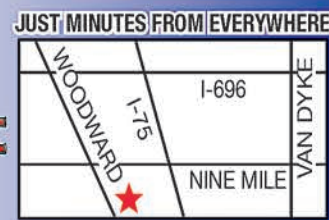
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“ We need to have civil engagement, we need to tell our stories to politicians, we need to talk to others about the laws, get out and vote, attend local city council meetings. We need to do all these things that have been suggested by you people here today.”

– Jay Maddock, pg. 7

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VOL. 2221 • MAY 22, 2014 • ISSUE 865

PRIDE SOURCE MEDIA GROUP

20222 Farmington Rd., Livonia, Michigan 48152
Phone 734.293.7200

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Susan Horowitz & Jan Stevenson

MEMBER OF

Michigan Press Association
National Gay Media Association
Q Syndicate



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Feds Approve Broad New Clinical Guidance On PrEP

A Game Changer: Michigan LGBT And HIV Leaders Welcome News

BY TODD HEYWOOD

On May 14 the CDC released a comprehensive clinical guidance for use of the anti-HIV drug Truvada in preventing new HIV infections. The new guidance is the most comprehensive clinical guidance issued by a government agency since the FDA approved the drug for prevention in July of 2012.

The new guidance says PrEP (which stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) should be considered for HIV-uninfected persons who fit any of the following risk categories: are in an ongoing sexual relationship with HIV-infected partner; a gay, bisexual or other man who has sex with men or a transgender woman who has had sex without a condom or has been diagnosed with a sexual transmitted infection in the previous six months and is not in a mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who recently tested negative for HIV; a heterosexual man or woman who does not always use condoms and is not in a mutually monogamous relationship with a person who has recently tested HIV-negative; anyone who has injected illicit drugs and shared equipment or has been in treatment for injection drug use in the past six months.

The guidance was developed through a partnership between the CDC, other federal health authorities, public health agencies, health experts and community leaders.

“While a vaccine or cure may one day end the HIV epidemic, PrEP is a powerful tool that has the potential to alter the course of the U.S. HIV epidemic today,” a press release from the CDC quoted Jonathan Mermin, M.D., M.P.H., director of CDC’s National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention as saying. “These guidelines represent an important step toward fully realizing the promise of PrEP. We should add to this momentum, working to ensure that PrEP is used by the right people, in the right way, in the right circumstances.”

Mermin was not alone his assessment of the importance of the new guidance.

“HIV infection is preventable, yet every year we see some 50,000 new HIV infections in the United States,” said CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H. in a press release. “PrEP, used along with other prevention strategies, has the potential to help at-risk individuals protect themselves and reduce new HIV infections in the US.”

New Guidances Praised

LGBT and HIV service organizations in Michigan are praising the new guidance.

Bryan Victor, victim advocate at Equality

Michigan and the organizations point person on HIV issues, praised the new guidance as “welcome” and “an incredibly important tool.”

“Both public and private health insurers have already opened a pathway to PrEP use by offering coverage of the drug. We now need health care professionals – and primary care providers in particular – to take these CDC guidelines seriously and begin prescribing PrEP when clinically indicated,” Victor said in a press statement emailed to the organization’s membership. “Transgender women, gay men and bisexual men deserve access to the full

He said the staff at LAAN is keenly aware of people living with HIV who are in serodiscordant relationships - that’s where one partner is HIV-positive and the other is HIV-negative - and the lack of conformity hampers attempts by these couples to access the prevention regime.

Distel noted the new guidance should “alter past processes and decisions” related to PrEP. At the very least, he said, the new guidance should foster a discussion among local and state partners on the prevention.

across the state. Where in the state someone lived often dictated whether or not a person would be prescribed the drugs.

In n-PEP, a physician prescribes a person exposed to HIV a month long course of anti-HIV medications in order to prevent infections. The regiment must be started within 72 hours of exposure to be effective.

After the news reports on the lack of policy came out, it took the health agency 18 months to issue a state guidance on the intervention, and the new guidance was similar to federal guidance on the drug intervention.

Ironically, despite the state’s refusal to



Federal guidance can be found at: www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/guidelines/PrEPProviderSupplement2014.pdf and a supplement for the guidelines can be found at: www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/guidelines/PrEPProviderSupplement2014.pdf

range of options that will allow them to have safe and fulfilling sex. Equality Michigan will continue to work with our partners throughout Michigan to make PrEP as accessible as possible.”

In Lansing, Jake Distel, executive director of Lansing Area AIDS Network, said the guidance was welcome, but noted there remained structural issues to accessing the prevention pill.

“There seems to be no conformity relative to the prescribing of PrEP, nor access to the regimen, through either specialty providers (Infectious Disease Clinics), local health departments or primary care providers,” Distel said. “This appears to be true not only in Michigan but in other states across the country. LAAN case managers report, for example, that the agency has been advised that there are no protocols or guidances in place under which to comfortably prescribe and provide access to PrEP. This is unfortunate.”

On The Ground In Michigan

Unfortunately, the federal guidance may not translate to on the ground support in Michigan. The Michigan Department of Community Health has previously declined to issue guidance on PrEP. The agency said as recently as last week, while the science behind the intervention is interesting, officials are still waiting for more information before committing to PrEP. MDCH officials now say they are reviewing their options on communicating PrEP guidance to providers and stakeholders in the state.

The department had similar problems several years ago when an investigation revealed the agency had no set guidance for prescribe post-exposure prophylaxis (n-PEP) for persons who may have been exposed to HIV as a result of sexual activity, sexual assault or drug use. The lack of state guidance and policy resulted in a mishmash of scenarios

promote the intervention, which can be more than 90 percent effective in preventing new infections if used daily, the Medicaid program will pay for the drug for low-income residents who are prescribed the prevention intervention. The cost of the drug is about \$12,000 a year and requires routine blood work to monitor HIV status as well as the function of internal organs to detect any possible side effects from the drugs.

Angela Minicuci, spokesperson for MDCH, issued a press statement saying they will follow the CDC guidance: “PrEP is an important tool in the prevention of HIV and the CDC guidance in support of PrEP is a major step forward. MDCH will follow the CDC guidance on PrEP and the prevention and treatment of HIV. As we are still reviewing the recommendation, we will be determining how this information will be distributed. On a cautionary note, PrEP does not prevent bacterial sexually transmitted diseases, such as syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia. Condoms reduce the risk of HIV and STDs so we will continue to recommend those as well.”

“Transgender women, gay men and bisexual men deserve access to the full range of options that will allow them to have safe and fulfilling sex. Equality Michigan will continue to work with our partners throughout Michigan to make PrEP as accessible as possible.”

- Bryan Victor, victim advocate at Equality Michigan

The New Little Blue Sex Pill

BY TODD HEYWOOD

In broad new guidelines, federal health authorities say nearly every person at risk for HIV-infection should consider using a once-a-day pill to prevent getting the virus.

Greg is a sexually active 24-year-old gay man in Lansing. HIV and other sexually transmitted infections are definitely on his radar, he says, despite saying he “always” uses a condom with casual partners.

The thin gay man admits, however, he occasionally drinks too much and “gets stupid.”

“I’m afraid of catching something. I’ve had people who were not truthful with me about their HIV status,” he says.

So for him, the idea that there might be a pill that could prevent him from getting infected with HIV in the event a condom breaks gets his attention

There is such a pill-a-day intervention. It’s a little blue pill. No, not Viagra, it’s Truvada. Last week, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control released broad new clinical recommendations to expand use of the intervention for virtually any American at risk of infection. Faced with a steady 50,000 cases of new HIV infections a year, it’s clear that depending mostly on condoms to prevent it isn’t working.

Truvada combines two anti-HIV drugs. In 2012 after a study revealed that taking the drug daily could prevent an HIV-negative

person from getting infected with the virus that causes AIDS, federal officials approved it as a prevention option, known as pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP for short.

Taken daily, it has been found effective 90 percent of the time. Taken less than daily, it drops to 44 percent.

The pill only works against HIV. As a result, condom use is recommended in conjunction with the drug in order to prevent infection with gonorrhea, syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Some opponents of the intervention claim it will lead to gay men, in particular, throwing caution and condoms to the wind. That, opponents claim, will result in Truvada resistant HIV strains increasing in circulation and more incidents of STIs, which facilitate HIV transmission.

However, studies do not show an increase in syphilis incidents (the major STI used to track risk behavior in U.S. studies) or an increase in condomless sex. Factually speaking, the estimated 90 percent efficacy of PrEP beats the efficacy of preventing seven in 10 infections that have been attributed to condoms by CDC researcher Dawn Smith.

Despite the promising science behind the intervention, uptake has been slow. Gilead, the company that makes Truvada, reported in fall of 2013 that fewer than 3,000 prescriptions for the once-a-day prevention option had

See Sex Pill, page 8

BTL Editorial: An Epidemic Solution After 30 Years Should Be Embraced

Daily Regimen Offers Hope To Help End HIV Infection

Let’s be perfectly clear: The announcement last week expanding who should be able to access the HIV prevention technology PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) is a watershed moment in the history of this epidemic. Not only did the CDC put on the full court press, but even the White House got in on the messaging, sending out the CDC’s press release. The White House doesn’t release information unless the White House is behind it 100 percent, and the Obama administration is absolutely spot on to stand behind this.

PrEP is using the incredibly effective drug Truvada, originally designed to treat HIV infection, to prevent infection with the virus in the first place. The drug is taken daily, and if taken daily, can be 90 or more percent effective in preventing infections. That is more effective than any other prevention option – other than complete abstinence – that

we know of.

PrEP has the potential to change how we discuss HIV, and more importantly, it could literally help end the epidemic that continues to disproportionately impact the gay community – even after 30 plus years. PrEP is a revolutionary game changer, and the new CDC guidance places that reality squarely in the hands of our community.

How revolutionary? Well, BTL thinks the science is so strong and the evidence so clear on the efficacy of PrEP that we joined nearly 70 other groups across the country praising the new CDC guidance, and told the naysayers to take a seat.

How revolutionary? The Michigan Department of Community Health had consistently refused to adopt PrEP as a recognized risk reduction option since its approval by the FDA in July of 2012. But on

See BTL Editorial, page 8

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MCCD To Officially Welcome New Senior Pastor

Installation services for Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit Senior Pastor Rev. Roland Stringfellow will take place 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 24 at the Drayton Avenue Presbyterian Church Main sanctuary. The church is located at 2441 Pinecrest Drive. Rev. Elder Jim Mikulski will join MCC Moderator Rev. Elder Dr. Nancy Wilson to celebrate the installation service. A reception in the church fellowship hall will follow.



Senior Pastor Rev. Roland Stringfellow

Stringfellow earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Education and a Master of Science degree in Counseling from Indiana University. He later earned a Master of Arts degree in Ministry from Grace Theological Seminary. In 1990 he became a licensed minister in the Baptist Church. In 2005, he was ordained with MCC, and in 2006, he earned his Master of Divinity from the Pacific School of Religion with a certificate in Religion and Sexuality. He has worked as a pastor in Indiana and California.

In addition to his work within church, Stringfellow also worked in education as a teacher, guidance counselor, college adviser and vice-principal. Creating dialogue on the topic of LGBT equality with church congregations and in religious institutions was an important part of his role as coordinator of the Coalition of Welcoming Congregations in the Bay Area of California with the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Sexuality on the campus of the Pacific School of Religion.

While working with California Faith for Equality, he wrote an adult Bible study to address theological and scriptural rationales for LGBT inclusion in faith communities. His work for LGBT human rights has included overseeing the statewide effort for faith community organizing post Prop 8.

Rev. Stringfellow "hit the ground running" on March 22, when he received an early phone call asking him to officiate at congregants' weddings at the Oakland County Courthouse during the short window when gays and lesbians could obtain marriage licenses in Michigan.

ANN ARBOR

Help Ozone House Celebrate 45 Years

Join the thousands of community members and Michigan youth as they celebrate the 45 year anniversary of Ozone House and its efforts towards helping youth lead safe, healthy and productive lives.

The Backyard Birthday Bash will take place from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday, June 1 at Ozone House in Ann Arbor, located at 1705 Washtenaw Ave. Plan to get wet and have fun with your loved ones by taking advantage of the dunk tank, face painting, music and of course plenty of sugary summertime sweets like lemonade and cotton candy. Festivities are for all ages and are free and open to the public.

"This is our way of saying thank you to our friends and neighbors for their unwavering support, and to welcome back all of the volunteers, staff and clients who have made Ozone House such a special place over the years," said Ozone House Development Director Heather Steenrod.

The Backyard Birthday Bash is sponsored by Zingerman's Roadhouse, Zingerman's Creamery, Mighty Good Coffee Roasting Co. and Go Ice Cream, who will be showcasing a brand new ice cream flavor created specifically for the 45th anniversary.

As the only youth shelter in Washtenaw County, Ozone House provides housing and safety for young kids who have run away from household conflict or were kicked out of their homes.

For more information about the Ozone House visit www.OzoneHouse.org.

- filed by AJ Trager

LGBT And Traveling: International Students Come To Michigan



International Exchange-USA Regional Director Joseph Bissell-Maynard with his husband, Justin Bissell-Maynard and Federico, an international student from Italy, living with the Bissell-Maynard family. Joseph and Justin were one of the over 300 couples married in Michigan on March 22. Photo courtesy of Bissell-Maynard.

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

International student exchange program, International Exchange-USA (IE-USA), is bringing LGBT students from around the world and families together. With their recent renewal from the U.S. State Department, the organization is hoping to find Michigan LGBT families to host two LGBT students from Thailand.

One student is openly out in Thailand and hopes to find an accepting family here in the states. The second student is a trans girl. According to Regional Director, Joseph Bissell-Maynard, trans girls and women don't face the same social stigma as they would in other parts of the world. Metro-Detroit Coordinator Krystal Rowse notes, "Kids in Thailand are considered more androgynous until they develop," hence the more open acceptance of trans persons in the country.

Bissell-Maynard, who spoke with BTL in 2011 when he had recently been hired at International Experience, currently serves as IE-USA's regional director. Together with his husband, Justin, Bissell-Maynard has hosted six different exchange students in Lansing. The couple, who have been together for 15 years, recently married in Ingham county on March 22.

Over the last five years, each student

has stayed with the couple for 10 months at a time. Bissell-Maynard's worked with multiple gay students, though for privacy reasons, their names were withheld. Some LGBT students are not out in the USA or even back in their home countries. Their last student, Federico of Italy, is completely out, and was even able to watch the host couple get married. Federico spoke with BTL, offering the perspective of a young, foreign gay man living in Michigan.

Federico hails from near Venice in northeastern Italy. The 18 year old student notes that coming out back home was a pretty easy process. "I guess it's really easy to notice I'm gay. I never actually had to come out to my mother; she's always known. I did come out to my best friends, but it was to make sure they knew so things would be less awkward. I guess the only people who actually have no idea are my grandparents, but yeah... they're old!"

The United States proved less of an adjustment to Federico than he thought. "I honestly thought it was going to be more difficult than it actually was," he said. "I had some culture shock, which is almost impossible to avoid, but overall, I've been great. I love the people here and their lifestyle. Everybody is really outgoing. As far as being gay, I've never had a single problem here."

Despite Michigan's own challenges

“This experience has helped me so much in believing in myself and in accepting myself for who I am. I’m way more social now, and I’m not ashamed of myself almost at all. I learned that there is no time to waste on trying to please people with what they wish you were. Just be yourself always.”

- 18 year old Federico from northeastern Italy

INFO

Interested in hosting one or more students, LGBT or straight? For more information on the process and IE-USA, call 517-455-7518

>> www.ie-usa.org

with achieving LGBT rights and protections, Federico finds it more welcoming than his hometown. "I do feel more accepted here in Michigan, but I think it's just because I learned how to accept myself better," he suggested. "I've always known I was gay since I was very young, and I always accepted it, but coming from a small town was not really helpful. Although I've spent most of my teenage years in the city, Valdobbiadene was still my hometown. It was never the place I wanted to be in as a gay teenager. The younger people, like most of my friends, were always really supportive. The problem was always the older ones. I do think things are changing, especially with the new generation."

Also different from Italy is the status of LGBT rights in the U.S. "I think that the LGBT community is taken slightly more seriously here in the U.S. In some states here, gay couples are allowed to get married. In Italy, nobody ever

See Students, next page

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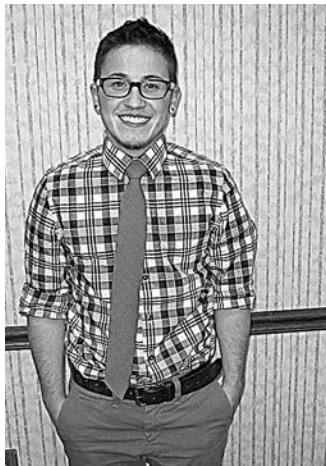
Transgender Community Gathers To Organize And Plan

BY PAULETTE NIEMIEC

LANSING – More than 70 people filled the ACLU Union Hall of Lansing on Saturday for the first ever Transgender Grant & Planning Summit. Transgender leaders Allison VanKuiken and Jay Maddock organized, produced, sponsored and facilitated the first time workshop. The summit focused on providing those who are transgender a chance to create proposals for grant funding and discuss issues relevant to those who identify as gender non-conformists.

For more than three decades, the lesbian and gay community has been organized, held rallies, raised funds, campaigned for equal rights and raised a lot of eyebrows along the way. There have been gay pride marches across the country, several attempts to legalize same-sex marriage, city ordinances passed for equal rights and a list of things which have brought the movement into the mainstream of American consciousness. Organizations like Unity Michigan, Equality Michigan, among others, have long been the voice for the LGBT community, but often, as by their own admission, have forgotten or neglected the “T” in LGBT.

VanKuiken, an activist in the trans community for several years, had wanted to organize something like this for a long time.



Jay Maddock helped organize the event with Allison VanKuiken. BTL photo: Paulette Niemiec

“I pitched the idea to Unity (Michigan), they voted on it, they agreed to it and assigned me the task of getting people there. So I did,” she explained. “We had a team of people with Unity to make it a success.” Maddock and his assistants comprised much of that team.

This workshop was sponsored by Unity Michigan and facilitated by Maddock, a transman who works for the organization. He stressed throughout the seven hour education program the importance of being included when it comes to legal issues and of how change must come from within the transgender community. Maddock repeatedly emphasized the importance of working with lesbians and gays, to be more visible in the community at large and to have a voice when it comes to legal and protection issues.

Maddock gave the specific example of the law commonly known as “ELCRA,” the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1976, which does not include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity. “We don’t support any legislation that doesn’t include both sexual orientation and gender identity,” Maddock explained. “We need to educate, mobilize and empower the masses to fight for our rights to freedom from discrimination in this state!”

Maddock proposed that transgender folks get involved in the community in which they

See Transgender Gathering, page 8

► Students

Continued from previous page

talked about it. A few European countries had legalized gay marriage years ago, but Italy has always seemed to be behind everybody.”

As a result of his Michigan experience, Federico is not going back to Italy to stay. “A few months ago I decided to come back here to Michigan for college,” he said. “I’m going to be living with Joe and Justin for at least two more years while attending Lansing Community College. Joe and Justin support me 100 percent in this decision and they’ve helped to make this possible. My dream would be to move to New York someday... we’ll see, maybe somebody will marry me and get me citizenship!”

Federico’s story is one of many among international LGBT students. As Rowse says,

any Michigander who decides to invite an international student into their home “becomes an average person in public diplomacy, doing their part in promoting peace and culture.” By letting international young adults into their homes with IE-USA, Michigan LGBT couples are able to shape and inspire young minds like Federico, who has grown from the experience: “This experience has helped me so much in believing in myself and in accepting myself for who I am. I’m way more social now, and I’m not ashamed of myself almost at all. I learned that there is no time to waste on trying to please people with what they wish you were. Just be yourself always.”

For more organizations that help or support LGBT children and adults, check out BTL’s Yellow Pages at www.pridesource.com/directory.html.

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► Sex Pill

Continued from p. 5

been written. Half of those prescriptions were written for women.

So why hasn't the pill been readily adopted? Some experts say it is a lack of knowledge about the intervention. Indeed, BTL spent Saturday night at two local gay bars talking to visitors about PrEP. Very few even knew such a prevention option existed. And those who did generally did not have enough information to feel confident in talking on the record about it.

This was only days after the CDC issued broad new clinical guidance on the use of the drug for prevention, in a story that made front-page news in *The New York Times*.

The CDC announcement had an immediate effect here on Michigan policy.

Officials at the Michigan Department of Community Health had called the science behind PrEP "promising" but had refused to endorse the intervention. On Thursday, a day after the CDC guidance was released, MDCH officials abruptly reversed course.

"PrEP is an important tool in the prevention of HIV and the CDC guidance in support of PrEP is a major step forward. MDCH will follow the CDC guidance on PrEP and the prevention and treatment of HIV," wrote MDCH spokesperson Angela Minicuci in an email. "As we are still reviewing the recommendation, we will be determining how this information will be distributed."

Jake Distel runs the Lansing Area AIDS Network. He said getting everyone on the same page about PrEP is going to be essential.

"LAAN case managers report, for example, that the agency has been advised that there are no protocols or guidances in place under which to comfortably prescribe, and provide access, to PrEP," Distel said in an email. "This is unfortunate. We are all keenly aware of discordant couples [one person who is HIV-positive and one person who is HIV-negative] and others at continuing risk of HIV infection who would benefit from PrEP. I would hope that this new guidance from the CDC would provide the protocol and guidance needed to alter past decisions and processes."

Despite the lack of comprehensive protocols or guidances, Ingham county residents do have access to the intervention. Dr. Peter Gulick, an infectious disease expert who runs the county's HIV clinic, has been writing PrEP prescriptions for months.

Ingham is a particularly key location to focus resources. For years, the county has been the highest HIV prevalence rate outside Detroit — a trend that continues. Recent statistics show that one in five of the counties identified cases of HIV are found in people ages 13 to 24, mirroring national trends.

Of course, getting a prescription is only one barrier in PrEP access. The drug averages \$12,000 or more a year. Most insurance plans and Medicaid cover PrEP. Gilead also has a co-pay assistance program as well as a patient assistance program for those without insurance.

For Greg, the intervention is likely to catch on. He became aware of it because of a Facebook group which includes many younger gay men from New York City. There, he said "everyone is on it."

"It's a trend," he says. "It's going to catch on here. Hopefully."

This article was originally published in City Pulse.

► BTL Editorial: Epidemic Solution

Continued from p. 5

the day after the CDC released the new guidance, MDCH announced it would follow the guidance and encourage medical and health partners across the state to do the same. The move came literally a week after the state health officials told BTL there was no chance the department would endorse PrEP in the near term, even though the low income health program Medicaid would cover the prescription for patients.

That's a revolution. It's a game changer. It's an attitude changer. MDCH officials have often been the brunt of criticism on these pages, but this time, we are incredibly proud to call them our partners. We are also pleased that they saw the science, realized that PrEP could benefit the lives of Michigan residents and changed their public stance. That takes guts. That takes leadership.

And as fantastic as that policy shift is from MDCH, we are also cautious. State officials say they are exploring how best to share this information with doctors and medical providers in the state. We know from experience how important policy guidances from the state health department is. When an investigation found that access to post exposure prevention drugs was dependent on where a person in Michigan lived — and that the state had no policy on that intervention in the five years after it was created by the CDC — it still took MDCH 18 months to conceive of and release policy and guidance. Such

communications reach every health care provider in the state of Michigan — no small feat. It is incredibly important to put everyone in the state on the same page when it comes to PrEP. There is not time, nor any excuse, for a months long delay from the state in issuing the PrEP guidance to medical providers.

BTL is watching. This is a lifesaving option and any delay is unacceptable.

While this news is certainly welcome, PrEP is not necessarily going to be readily embraced by healthcare providers. We've heard horror stories about medical professionals who lack basic cultural competency when it comes to LGBT health and that often translates into



► Transgender Gathering

Continued from p. 7

live. "We need to have civil engagement, we need to tell our stories to politicians, we need to talk to others about the laws, get out and vote, attend local city council meetings. We need to do all these things that have been suggested by you people here today," Maddock told the energized crowd participating in the discussion.

In the morning, the workshop focused much of its attention on the idea of writing proposals for a grant sponsored by Unity Michigan. The coalition is offering \$10,000 to the transgender community to educate the public and inform political leaders on issues which are important to transgender men and women. This advocacy includes the passing of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) and other acts of legislation which protect sexual orientation and gender identity.

Six proposals were created and voted on by the group, three of which will be presented to Unity of Michigan for consideration this Friday. All the proposals

were well organized and were based on ideas presented by all those in attendance, with the finished proposals put to a group-wide vote.

The afternoon session was less serious, but no less important, as teams presented issues which are specific to the transgender community. It was agreed that the trans-community faces several difficult issues every day, including housing, unemployment, under-employment, living in or at poverty level, legal battles, social integration and several special interest issues revolving around the military and veterans. Presentations on all these problems, along with possible solutions, were given during the last two hours of the workshop.

As the workshop came to a close, Maddock thanked the crowd who responded with a rousing ovation. "I think this was an excellent day and an important start of new things for us who are transgender," Maddock exclaimed.

VanKuiken, who spent weeks organizing the event, agreed. "I think Jay did a great job," she said, explaining how proud she was of the trans community. "I am so

moralizing judgments about what care and treatment members of our community can have access to. That is unacceptable. If your doctor refuses to prescribe PrEP, find a new doctor.

If you are a medical provider in Michigan who is willing to prescribe PrEP, contact BTL today so we can include you in a database of medical professionals willing and able to provide this revolutionary and lifesaving option to transgender women, as well as gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men.

Several months ago, we challenged this community to take HIV on as the serious crisis facing us that it is. PrEP is part of embracing the challenges and rewards of battling HIV in our community. Together, we can end HIV. Are you going to join us?

pleased to see that something like this can be organized by trans people. We had four goals we wanted to achieve. We wanted to get as many trans activists together in one place at one time as we possibly could, and considering the fact that we had over 70 people, showed we met that goal. We wanted to work together on issues that are important. We did that. We wanted to write a proposal to get a grant for money to fund what we want; we did that. We wanted to discuss trans issues and come up with possible solutions, and we accomplished that as well. I'm so proud of everything we accomplished."

The questions at the end of the day were: What Now? What's next for this highly energized group of new transgender activists determined to have their voices heard? "The next step is for the people to write the grant proposals. There's excitement with this now. We have to stay together and create visibility for the trans community," said VanKuiken.

For more on the Unity Michigan Coalition, visit www.unitymichigan.org. More information on the ACLU Lansing branch can be found at www.aclumich.org/lansing.

My 10 Minutes in Heaven (Pt. 3)



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Footnote: Following BTL publication of Pt. 1 and Pt. 2, several big time book publishers called me with contractual offers. Modestly, I said that as a renegade Christian of ecumenical moral standards and far-reaching readership privilege, I was somewhat tempted.

I gave assurance to all interested publishing parties that I would pray about it, if the proffered price from each is right, and an accompanying flyleaf photo of me attests to the otherworld sincerity of my ten minutes in Heaven occasioned by a Michigan pothole misadventure.

I learn from Bobby Short, SHC concierge and otherworldly pianist, who greets me with a medley of show tunes from Gypsy, West Side Story, Sound of Music, La Traviata and Hedwig and The Angry Inch, that because I am gay, I also have been granted a choice.

I invite all sincere PG true believers to join me in like supplication (although I cannot guarantee financial reimbursement to any or to all, saint or sinner alike, for such efforts).

My beyond-belief experience continues . . . Apparently the powers that be have, so to speak, booked me into the Seventh Heaven Condos.

I learn from Bobby Short, SHC concierge and otherworldly pianist, who greets me with a medley of show tunes from Gypsy, West Side Story, Sound of Music, La Traviata and Hedwig and The Angry Inch, that because I am gay, I also have been granted a choice.

Wryly Bobby smiles, switching from uptempo Broadway renditions, to a rousing delivery of standard fundygelical ditty, Amazing Grace.

Sings Bobby, ad-libbing along now and then, "If you like you can stay here with your rainbow friends and family, or you can spend ten-thousand years 'bright shining as the sun' praising the The Big Guy in the Trinity Broadcast Sky. Fair's fair. It's up to you. It's your choice. Don't say we didn't warn you, Mary!"

Decisions. Decisions. First the book publishers. Now this. My cellphone says it's 12:05.

Seems more like a century since I arrived. I must say, my condo's gorgeous and intriguing.

Walls lined with pictures of myself over the years. My God, the changes I've gone through. And framed pictures of me with friends that I seem to have long forgotten. Oh, my! And, embarrassing to think about: some photos a little too x-rated, a little too candid. The lighting a little too dark for optimal designer decor. One or two photos I turn to the wall.

Outside the sun has turned into a giant disco ball. Its light dances my mood away. Dots of light turn into thousands of faces . . . some old . . . too, too many young . . . 12:06.

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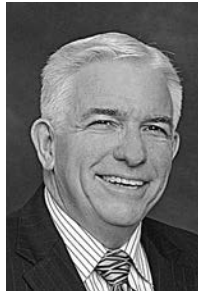
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Creep of the Week

Charles Van Zant

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

It used to be if you wanted to make a right-wing conservative freak out all you had to do was show them a photo of two dudes kissing.



Charles Van Zant

Granted, that still does the trick, but for the past few years, a new boogeyman has been getting a bigger and bigger share of attention. I am speaking, of course, about Common Core.

What is Common Core you ask? Put simply, it's a set of standards for math and English education in Kindergarten through 12th grade. It establishes what students should know in these two subjects at each grade level so that, ideally, by the time each student graduates, he or she is ready to, say, go to college and not be a total failure.

Conservatives don't like this at all. They hate Common Core to the, well, core. Their outrage is mystifying to the casual observer. I mean, sure there are legitimate concerns about Common Core that have been raised by people who are not raving lunatics. Education expert Diane Ravitch, for example, is concerned about how quickly the standards have been adopted and says, "I wish we knew more about how they will affect our most vulnerable students." Which is something that anybody who cares about education should probably be wondering.

But so many of the arguments against Common Core are neither reasoned nor based in reality. Many of these arguments are based in a fundamental mistrust of public education. After all, it's a socialist institution, so it must be terrible and it must be killed (and preferably replaced by Christian charter schools paid for with tax money.)

Glenn Beck, one of the loudest mouths against Common Core, claims that the goal of "this insidious menace to our children and to our families," is to indoctrinate "our kids ... with extreme leftist ideology."

In fact, this portrayal of the standards as some kind of leftist brainwashing propaganda is a common complaint. But why?

All you have to do is Google "Common Core" and "evolution" and

it becomes pretty clear. Much of the opposition to Common Core comes from folks who are also opposed to facts.

But it turns out there's another reason that Common Core is so horrifying. One that Florida State Rep. Charles Van Zant exposed at a recent anti-Common Core event.

According to Van Zant, the people behind Common Core "are promoting as hard as they can any youth that is interested in the LGBT agenda."

Granted, his wording is a little confusing. Is Common Core promoting the LGBT agenda, or is Common Core, like, putting students who list "LGBT agenda" as an

All you have to do is Google "Common Core" and "evolution" and it becomes pretty clear. Much of the opposition to Common Core comes from folks who are also opposed to facts.

extracurricular on a fast track to graduate? Either way, Van Zant no want.

He then laments that Common Core will cost the state of Florida money. "These people, that will now receive \$220 million from the state of Florida unless this is stopped, will ... attract every one of your children to become as homosexual as they possibly can."

That's right. As homosexual as possible. The homosexualist homos who have ever homo'd. Like, Johnny Weir homosexual.

"I'm sorry to report that to you," Van Zant continues. "I really hate to bring you that news. But you need to know."

Damn right, we need to know! If schools are going to start cranking out the homos, then we need to start planning now because homecoming, excuse me, homocoming, is going to be absolutely fabulous!

No wonder the right is freaking out. And I'm inclined to agree. I don't think that schools should be trying to force homosexuality on children any more than they should force heterosexuality. Though I suspect that is where Van Zant and I part ways on this issue.

Oregon Becomes Number 18, Openly Gay Judge Rules Ban 'Completely Irrational'

BY LISA KEEN

On Monday Oregon became the 18th state to allow same-sex couples to marry, bringing the population of the U.S. now living in marriage equality states to 39 percent. Misha Isaak, one of the attorneys for the plaintiff couples challenging the Oregon ban, noted that the Oregon decision comes two days after the 10th anniversary of the *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* decision in Massachusetts, as well as his own 10th anniversary with his husband.

The Oregon ban on same-sex couples marrying was struck down by a ruling from U.S. District Court Judge Michael McShane Monday at noon PDT, effective immediately.

The lawsuit's lead plaintiff couple, Deanna Geiger and Janine Nelson, became Oregon's first same-sex couple to be married following McShane's ruling. According to the *Oregonian* newspaper, the couple, which has been together for 31 years, were married in the Multnomah County building in Portland just minutes after the ruling was issued.

In *Geiger v. Kitzhaber*, McShane, an openly gay appointee of President Obama, said the Oregon ban is "beyond the ambit of *Windsor*," a case many previous federal judges have cited in striking down the bans. In *U.S. v. Windsor*, the U.S. Supreme court struck down the key provision of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) last June. That provision, Section 3, prohibited the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriages for any federal purpose or benefit.

But, like 11 federal judges before him, McShane said the Oregon ban violates the rights to equal protection and due process granted by the U.S. Constitution. And using the lowest level of judicial review -rational basis- McShane said barring same-

sex couples from marrying "is utterly arbitrary and completely irrational."

Oregon ACLU Executive Director David Fidanque said he believes McShane's use of the lowest level of review "insulates" the decision from being overturned should the Ninth Circuit eventually overturn a three-judge panel ruling calling for heightened review when evaluating laws that treat people differently based on sexual orientation. In January, a Ninth Circuit panel in *SmithKline v. Abbott*, ruled that the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *U.S. v. Windsor* "requires that heightened scrutiny be applied to equal protection claims involving sexual orientation." But at least one Ninth Circuit justice has asked that the full Ninth Circuit review that decision.

Unlike a number of other states, in Oregon, the governor and the attorney general have agreed that the ban is unconstitutional; they have stated that they would not appeal a decision striking the ban and would enforce such a ruling immediately. However, the National Organization for Marriage, a group devoted to preventing same-sex couples from marrying, has appealed to the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals to overturn a May 15 ruling by McShane that denied NOM intervenor status to defend the Oregon ban in court.

On Monday, a three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit denied NOM's request for an emergency stay in the Oregon case, *Geiger v. Kitzhaber*. It was the same three-judge panel that last week issued a temporary stay of a federal judge's decision in Idaho, striking down that state's ban in *Latta v. Otter*. Oregon's Democratic Governor John Kitzhaber, through his Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, submitted a brief in opposition to the emergency stay. The state's brief noted that, unlike in Idaho, in Oregon, "no party to

the litigation challenging Oregon's same-sex marriage ban is seeking to stay the proceedings."

"Nor does any party to the litigation intend to appeal," said the brief. "To the contrary, Oregon officials are prepared to follow the court's directives and counties stand ready to begin issuing marriage certificates to same-sex couples otherwise qualified to marry...."

Oregon now joins 17 other states and the District of Columbia in allowing same-sex couples the same right to marry as male-female couples. Bans in 12 additional states have been declared unconstitutional by lower courts - all but one (Arkansas) is federal - and all are on appeal. With Oregon, more than 124 million people now live in states where marriage equality is the law; that is 39.4 percent of the U.S. population.

In McShane's 26-page opinion, he acknowledged that, like other judges, he does not expect his decision to be "the final word" on same-sex marriage, but he said he doesn't see society going down a "slippery slope that will have no moral boundaries." He urged people with such fears to "look less to the sky to see what might fall; rather, let us look to each other... and rise."

McShane, 52, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate just 14 months ago. In his opinion, he shared growing up "in a world in which homosexuality was believed to be a moral perversion, a mental disorder, or a mortal sin."

"I remember that one of the more popular playground games of my childhood was called 'smear the queer' and it was played with great zeal and without a moment's thought to today's political correctness," wrote McShane. "On a darker level, that same worldview led to an environment of cruelty, violence and self-loathing. It was but 1986 when the

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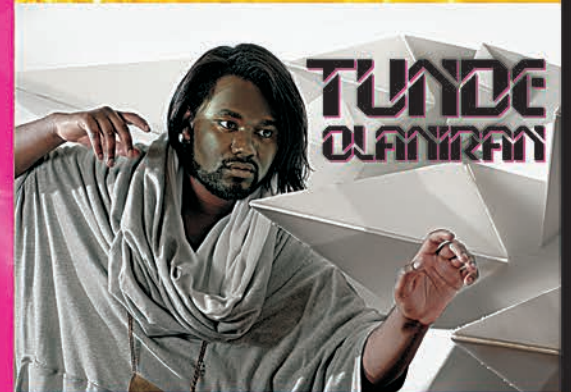
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Marriage Bans Lifted, Marriages Upheld

BY LISA KEEN, KEEN NEWS SERVICE

Utah Marriages Count

U.S. District Court Judge Dale Kimball (Clinton appointee) granted a preliminary injunction Monday afternoon requiring that Utah recognize the marriages of an estimated 1,300 same-sex couples that took place before a U.S. Supreme Court issued a stay in another district court judge's decision in Kitchen v. Herbert, striking down the state's ban. But Kimball, who applied heightened scrutiny in the case, Evans v. Utah, stayed his order for 21 days, to give the state time to seek an emergency stay from the Tenth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. At deadline, state officials said they were considering an appeal but had not yet made a decision. John Mejia, an attorney with the ACLU which sought the injunction, said that, while couples must still await a permanent decision, the preliminary injunction does provide same-sex couples with "the full recognition they deserve as lawfully married couples."

Ninth Circuit Stays Idaho

A three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals on Thursday issued a temporary stay preventing Chief Magistrate Judge Candy Dale's order striking Idaho's ban on same-sex couples marrying from taking effect today. The stay will remain in place until the

panel decides whether the state has met the requirements for a permanent stay while Judge Dale's decision is on appeal to the Ninth. The state's opening brief on appeal is due August 22. The National Center for Lesbian Rights then has until September 22 to file a response. The panel includes Reagan appointee Edward Leavy, George W. Bush appointee Consuelo Callahan and Obama appointee Andrew Hurwitz.

Arkansas Roller Coaster

Arkansas county circuit court Judge Chris Piazza issued an amended and final decision May 15 to make clear he intended to include, in his original May 9 ruling striking down two laws banning same-sex couples from marrying, a third law that prohibits county clerks from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. The next day, the Arkansas Supreme Court issued a one-sentence order, granting the state's request for a stay on Piazza's decision pending the state's appeal before the state high court. Then the Republican speaker of the Arkansas House voted against suspension of House rules to allow for a vote on a resolution to urge the state supreme court to overturn Piazza's ruling. The Arkansas Times reported that House Speaker Davy Carter voted against suspending the rules to allow the resolution on the floor, saying "Judicial intimidation by the legislative branch is not appropriate in this instance or any other."



Supporters of same-sex marriage hold photos of themselves and their family members or partners on the steps of the Wayne L Morse U.S. Courthouse Wednesday, May 14, in Eugene, Ore. A federal judge ruled Oregon's ban on same-sex marriage 'irrational' and illegal on Monday. AP Photo Chris Pietsch.

► Oregon

Continued from p. 10

United States Supreme Court justified, on the basis of a 'millennia of moral teaching,' the imprisonment of gay men and lesbian women who engaged in consensual sexual acts. Even today, I am reminded of the legacy that we have bequeathed today's generation when my son looks dismissively at the sweater I bought him for Christmas and, with a roll of his eyes, says, 'Dad...that is so gay.'

"...I believe that, if we can look for a moment past gender and sexuality, we can see in these plaintiffs nothing more or less than our

own families," said McShane. "Families who we would expect our Constitution to protect, if not exalt, in equal measure. With discernment, we see not shadows lurking in closets or the stereotypes of what was once believed; rather, we see families committed to the common purpose of love, devotion, and service to the greater community."

The Oregonian reported that many couples had already lined up outside the Multnomah County building in Portland Monday when the decision was issued. Many had obtained licenses weeks ago.

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Photo: Warner Bros. Records

'Sheezus' On Her 'Fag Hag' Epiphany, Doing Beyoncé Drag & Writing Women Off As 'Bitches'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Rebellious and fearless, Lily Allen has slayed some egos in her time. But with Allen's recently released third album, "Sheezus," the tabloid target is experiencing the contentment of marriage and motherhood.

Don't think the Londoner's gone soft, however.

Allen doesn't hold back when telling you

that UK journalists are lowbrow, why the music business is a mess, and how "I'm here for the people who like me, not for the people who don't." When she talks to you about her vagina, it's like she's promoting a new horror movie. And though she won't plainly hate on her pop peers, she *will* drop a comment caustic enough to suggest that Lily Allen, for all her attempts at curbing her bitterness, still has no problem being a bad bitch.

What differences do you notice between talking to U.S. and UK journalists?

Uhh, it's actually more pleasurable here (in the U.S.). I find that it's slightly more intellectual in the line of questioning. In England it's very ... it's very obvious what they're trying to do.

Trying to get you to say something controversial?

Yeah, yeah.

You've always been a hot commodity for that. How do you deal with all the media scrutiny?

I mean, I choose to be here. I made my bed and I should lie in it.

Why do you think people are so hard on you?

Because no one else says shit, so that's why. I don't mean they're all hard on me, but no one

else gives them anything.

A B-side of yours, "Fag Hag," attracted a lot of attention from the gay community, for obvious reasons. At what point in your life did you realize you'd become a fag hag?

My husband once turned around and went, "How come all of your friends are gay?" And I was like, "They're not! What are you talking about?" He was like, "Yes, they are." Then I looked around and I was like, "Oh, actually you're right – they are." (Laughs)

I imagine you had gay friends even before you were famous.

Yeah, always.

What's the connection between you and the gay community?

I don't know if I'm the one who can say what it is. I can't speak for gay men. I just know that I love my gays. I've just always had gay friends, and I can't remember when I haven't. My mom always had gay friends as well. There have just always been a lot of gays everywhere! (Laughs)

How much have gay people inspired your act and your music?

Most of my glam squad back in the UK are all gay men, so when things like (my recent performance at) G-A-Y come up they all start hyperventilating with their drag show ideas ... and then, you know, the Beyoncé wigs come out.

On "Fuck You," a single from your last album, "It's Not Me, It's You," you've even gone as far as to make statements regarding homophobia. Why is it important to take a stand on issues like homophobia?

Because talking about any kind of oppression is important if you have a voice and a platform on which to speak. If people are listening, I think it's your responsibility to talk about those things.

Have you ever felt oppressed or like an outsider?

Yeah, since I was a kid. I think that's just more of a personality trait in me, but I think we all feel like that. I wouldn't want to feel any other way. I want to feel different from the idiots. (Laughs)

When you're doing Beyoncé drag, the gays know you're doing Beyoncé drag. But, as you've acknowledged, some people miss the point and use a performance like that as ammunition to stir drama. Do gay people get you better than the average person?

I'm just glad that someone gets it! (Laughs) (That performance) was directed at you guys; it wasn't really for anybody else. I didn't do a show for YouTube. I did a show for my homosexual audience at G-A-Y.

What are some common misconceptions people have of you?

If I speak about them, it makes me sound like

I'm ranting about things. I'm very happy. I'm happy to be here and I wouldn't want anyone to think that I was complaining, because I'm not. I'm happy with myself and I'm very lucky to be here.

Some people don't think you seem so happy, based on "Sheezus." Critics have said they think you're disdainful toward fame and pop music. What do you make of those accusations?

I try not to read it. It's like having an argument with your little brother or your little sister – they know where to get me. People really do just get it wrong and I get the wrong end of the stick. That's when it really upsets me, because I feel like I can't even respond. But, actually, more often than not they have an agenda in the first place. If I respond, it just gives them more ammunition to go deeper and go farther with it, so I just let it lie and just hope that the people who do get me, get me and the people who don't get bored and move on to something else. I'm here for the people who like me, not for the people who don't.

Have you ever wished you weren't famous?

Sure, there are tiny moments where I might wish that, but I have an amazing life, a beautiful house, a beautiful husband and beautiful children. I've had a lot of those things happen to me because they're my circumstances, they're my work, so I can be nothing but thankful.

Why is it that women get pitted against each other, but men don't?

It's easier to make women look stupid if you write them off as being bitches that hate each other. It's a story, isn't it? And it's a believable story! But it's not the case, really, in pop music. I don't think so, anyway.

What do you think of the state of pop music right now?

I think it's amazing. The best it's ever been.

You're full of it.

(Laughs) What do you think? What do you think of the state of the pop music industry? What are your thoughts on it?

Nobody cares what I think. I'm not Lily Allen.

I care what you think. You think it's good?

I think, for me, no era in music will measure up to the '90s.

I think it's difficult. It's hard because essentially a lot of big pop stars bought into record deals when the record industry was working a little bit better and were a bit taken, too, by the people who run the record labels. Really, that is the case. If we were houses we would take mortgages out against ourselves ... we've gotta pay off those mortgages! (Laughs)

It's not fair to blame it all on the artist, and it's equally unfair to blame it on the labels. I just think it's a really difficult time in music and people are adjusting. I hope that things get to a

See Lily Allen, page 25

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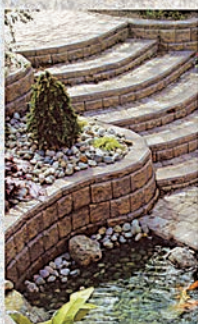
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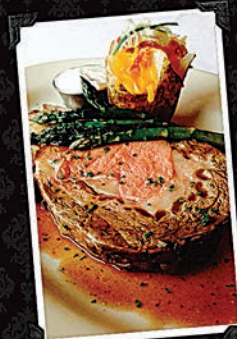
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Hear Me Out

Lykke Li, Lily Allen

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI



Lykke Li, 'I Never Learn'

Because it's Lykke Li, heartache is the obvious impetus for "I Never Learn," a ceaseless outpouring of dire, pillow-soaked woe inspired by the Swedish singer's very public post-breakup brokenness. Though best known for her "Twilight: New Moon" ballad, "Possibility," that anguish has been Li's modus operandi since her 2008 debut, "Youth Novels" (it's telling that the follow-up was called "Wounded Rhymes"). But here, especially, Li is sprawled on the floor in pieces, dead. Lamenting how she's "Never Gonna Love Again" over a rush of melancholy atmospherics, the song is undeniably suited for radio, no matter how un-pop Li claims to be. Similarly ethereal is "Just Like a Dream," an orchestral torch-song serenade best heard with the lights out, in the quiet of the night. Like a lot of "I Never Learn," "Dream" conveys emotional conflict. What she should do isn't what she wants to do: "I'm letting you go, I'm setting you free." On "Silverline," the darkness counters her quest for hope, as she pleads, "be grace, I need it" ... and the cold percussion prevails. This circle of self-defeating torment doesn't allow for a break in the clouds; Li's headspace is constantly flooded with fears and doubts, and only on the beautifully lovely coda "Sleeping Alone" does she sound like she might save herself. All nine songs

are engulfed in dispirited tragedy, but Li's vulnerable authenticity goes a long way toward making "I Never Learn" a hopelessly sad catharsis of moving on and letting go. *Grade: A-*



Lily Allen, 'Sheezus'

Lily Allen has always been accused of being a pop-music contradiction, a tart who wields the same genre clichés she mocks. Since releasing her 2006 debut "Alright, Still," that's been the draw: Allen's the antithesis of everything popular, even though she *is* popular. Some stars prefer to keep their mouths shut, standing quietly on elevators, but not this one. Lily is forthright and unfiltered, and yet, there's still something elusive about this Londoner. Is she panning or praising her female contemporaries on that "Sheezus" title track? Does she hate Beyoncé? Who hates Beyoncé? Where's the Beygency?! It's refreshing to hear Lily leave a little to the imagination (not much, though – she loves to tell you about her period). Her ambiguity incites an inner dialogue – "What does Lily

really think?" – that makes "Sheezus" an amusing tease track. True to her haughty persona, "Hard Out Here" bemoans that a girl can't catch a break. It's a fun little feminist anthem, and it's ludicrous that it's buried at the tail-end. Also spunky is "Our Time," a spirited moment of party liberation that breaks from Allen's perpetual grumblings on, well, just about everyone. Motherhood hasn't zapped Allen's lyrical zing, but musically, too many of these songs dawdle into nothingness. Despite previously mentioned standouts, how something so inconsistently throwaway was produced by top-tier pop producer Greg Kurstin is mind-boggling. When it comes down to it, "Sheezus" needs a Jesus. *Grade: C+*

Also Out



Natalie Merchant, 'Natalie Merchant'

Natalie Merchant hasn't released original music since "Motherland." That's 13 years without the melancholic distress of the songwriter's self-scribed musings. With this self-titled release, Merchant makes up for lost time, recording relentlessly funereal reflections on grief, addiction and global catastrophe that are satisfyingly grim. "The End" is a string-infused war ballad, "Lulu" beautifully tributes late film star Louise Brooks, and "Ladybird" is Merchant at her '90s girl-pop zenith. Welcome back, bleakness.



Disclosure, 'Settle'

When a fire starts to burn, you put it out ... right? If you're the UK duo who snatched a Grammy nod for your polished dance debut, "Settle," though, you let it burn. Still charting with "Latch," a new deluxe edition offers more from the house-beat builders behind the Jessie Ware-assisted "Confess to Me" and the drum-heavy "You & Me." Supplementing the original release are "Together," a funky Prince-era jam, and a second version of "F for You" with, of all people, Mary J. Blige, who throws down and takes you to Babylon.

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Spike Lee, Cinetopia Come To Ann Arbor

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

The Cinetopia International Film Festival is coming to both Detroit and Ann Arbor this June, with a special appearance by Spike Lee. The well-known festival was created for southeastern Michigan and features the best dramas, comedies and documentaries from the world's best film festivals, such as Sundance, Cannes, Venice and Toronto.

Locations for the festival include Ann Arbor's Michigan Theater and the Detroit Film Theatre at the Detroit Institute of Arts, among others. Some featured films include "Bad Hair," the tale of a 9-year-old boy's struggle with straightening his curly hair, and "Hellion," the tale of an angsty teen featuring Aaron Paul and Juliette Lewis. Many other films will fill the festival's roster at varying times.

Lee will be at Michigan Theater on Friday, June 6 to celebrate the 25th anniversary screening of his film "Do The Right Thing" as part of the festival. Known as the first



African American to move to the front ranks of the film industry, the director, producer, writer and actor received his

first Academy-Award nomination for the film. "Do The Right Thing" depicts a neighborhood's racial tension resulting in a tragedy on the hottest day of the summer.

The Lee event is by invite only, and all who purchase Cinetopia passes are entered to win a pair of tickets to the event. The passes will be sold for \$75-200. Those who purchase a personal sponsorship pass at \$1,000 will receive two tickets to the event.

Other media guests at the festival include directors John Sayles and Tommy Oliver, actors Hill Harper and David Strathairn and 30 more guests from various artistic disciplines.

The Cinetopia International Film Festival will run June 4-8 in Ann Arbor and Detroit. Locations and showtimes vary. For more information on Spike Lee's attendance, or the rest of Cinetopia, visit www.cinetopiafestival.org.

For more Ann Arbor events and news, visit BTL's "Cool Cities" page at www.pridesource.com.

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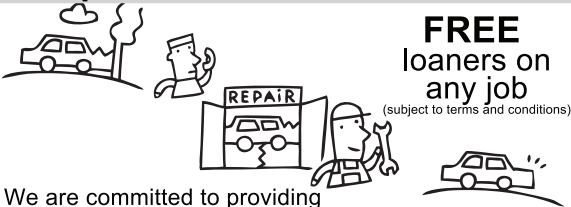


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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, May 22

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

Free HIV Testing 2 p.m. Free, anonymous HIV testing is available at S3 Safe Sex Store every Thursday until 8 p.m. Testing is performed by HARC staff. Call to schedule an appointment, but walk-ins are more than welcome. S3 Safe Sex Store and HIVAIDS Resource Center, 1209 S. University, **Ann Arbor**. 734-741-1434. Info@bak-inc.com S3safesexstore.com

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

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.com

Friday, May 23

Open Mic Night with Michelle Brown 6 p.m. Whether it's poetry, singing or anything in between, this is your opportunity to express yourself on stage. All ages welcome. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Zumba Fitness Party with the Detroit Z All Stars! 6 p.m. All ages and abilities are welcome. No dance or fitness experience necessary. Now accepting vendors! Tickets: \$10-15. Detroit Zumba All Stars, 2934 Russell St., **Detroit**. 313-587-6203. zumbawithchandra@yahoo.com Dzas2014.eventbrite.com

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: In Her Line of Fire-Mariel Hemingway stars in this action thriller as Sgt. Maj. Lynn Delaney, a Secret Service agent charged with protecting the U. S. vice president (played by David Keith) against a band of bloodthirsty guerrillas when his plane crashes near a remote South American island. Led by a madman mercenary (David Millbern), the rogue unit kidnaps the veep, and it's up to Delaney and a beautiful press secretary (Jill Bennett) to save his life Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Movie Night 7:30 p.m. Movies of an LGBT nature. Free. Battle Creek Pride Resource Center, 16 E. Van Buren St., **Battle Creek**. Battlecreekpride.org

Official Movement Pre-Party Lansing 9 p.m. With special guest DJ Minx. Spiral-DanceBar, 1247 Center St., **Lansing**. 517-894-1315. Spiraldancebar.com

Saturday, May 24

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

GLBT AA 8 p.m. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. Jimtoycenter.org

Lavender Party 2014 9 p.m. Express your inner beauty any way you wish.

Bring a cocktail to enjoy. Tickets: \$15-25. Hustle & Flo, 8599 N. Lilley Road, **Canton**. Meetup.com/Hustle-Flo-host-fun-monthly-social-events-for-Lesbians/events/179827082/

Sunday, May 25

Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church 10 a.m. We are a welcoming congregation. Please join us for services every Sunday at 10am. Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church, 23925 Northwestern Hwy, **Southfield**. 248-354-4488. office@northwestuu northwestuu.org

Pronto's for Brunch 11 a.m. Gay Single Men Over 21-Metro Detroit & Canada, 608 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak**. Meetup.com/GAY-SINGLE-MEN-OVER-21-METRO-DETROIT-CANADA

Outpouring 12:30 p.m. LGBT-affirming service. Non-denominational Christian. Affirming Love Ministries, 9550 Oakland Ave., **Detroit**. Affirmingloveministries.webs.com

TransCend TransCend provides support and resources to the Southwest Michigan transgender community, their significant others, family, friends, and allies. Meetings occur twice per month on the 2nd Wednesday and 4th Sunday. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

Pride NA 6:30 p.m. Confidential and anonymous. Open to all individuals impacted by addiction. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

Euchre Tournament 7 p.m. Battle Creek Pride Resource Center, 16 E. Van Buren St., **Battle Creek**. Battlecreekpride.org

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. Delicious, Maria Mirelez, DJ Lipgloss and more. Additional showtimes at 11 p.m. and 12 a.m. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., **Lansing**. 517-894-1315. Spiraldancebar.com

Monday, May 26

Nest Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Monthly Bible study focusing on LGBTQ issues. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 508 Denner St., **Kalamazoo**. 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

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

Tuesday, May 27

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

Because We Are Worth It (Sex Addicts Anonymous LGBTQ Meeting) 6:30 p.m. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. jimtoycenter.org

Circle of Life: Pet Ownership Discussion and Support Group 6:30 p.m. Led by a licensed counselor. Share stories, frustrations, grief and successes. Tail Waggers' 1990, 28402 Five Mile Road, **Livonia**. 734-855-4077. Tailwaggers1990.org

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

Transgender Life Support 7 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile



\$6 at 6 a.m. 6 a.m. Cash only or class passes. Tickets: \$6. Namaste Yoga, 399 S. Troy St., **Royal Oak**. 248-339-9642. Namaste-yoga.net

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

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: \$5-35. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Ferndale Pride BBQ 6 p.m. Free hot dogs & burgers, music, dancing and friends Connect ME, 963 Allen, **Ferndale**. Facebook.com/events/1431414657117156/

857-2399. sc4a.org

Motor City Bear Charity Dinner and Silent Auction 5 p.m. This year's menu will feature a Classic American Homestyle dinner with Roast Pork Loins Chops, Baked Chicken and Roast Beef. The full dinner also comes with potatoes and a vegetable side. Salads, rolls, assorted desserts, ice tea, punch and coffee are also included. All you can eat. Tickets: \$7. 50-15. Motor City Bears, 143 Albany St., **Ferndale**. 313-505-7963. MCBOFFICERS@yahoo.com Motorcitybears.com

Friday Night Socials at the AFF 7

Editor's Pick

"Winged Pharaoh," by community artist and Parting Glances columnist Charles Alexander, is the First Prize winning entry at the Scarab Club's 2014 Bugs' Blooms, Beasts Exhibition, now running through June 28. Alexander also has two other of his intriguing, colorful, art pieces in the show. The Scarab Club is located at John R and Farnsworth, directly behind the Detroit Institute of Arts. Hours open free to the public: Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. For information: 313-831-1250.

Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Karaoke 9:30 p.m. Hosted by KJ Les. aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677. Autbar.com

Wednesday, May 28

Free to be Me Group 12:30 p.m. This is a support group for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning. The Jewish Gay Network of Michigan (JGN), 6600 W. Maple Road, **West Bloomfield**. 248-432-5467. Jgnmi.org

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.org

Ferndale Pride Planning Meeting 7 p.m. Ferndale Pride, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Kalamazoo Pride Euchre Tournaments 7 p.m. Second and fourth Wednesdays. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 411 N. Westnedge Ave., **Kalamazoo**. Kglrc.org/pride

Thursday, May 29

Zoo Brew 6 p.m. 21+. Tickets: \$40+. Detroit Zoo, 8450 W. 10 Mile Road, **Royal Oak**. 248-541-5717. Detroitzoo

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

Bianca Del Rio and Darienne Lake 8 p.m. Of RuPaul's Drag Race Season 6. Featuring Deangela Shannon, Deja Van Cariet, Bentley James and Crystal Harding. Tickets: \$25. Murray & Peter, 42705 Grand River Ave., **Novi**.

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

Friday, May 30

Show Off Your Butch Side-Campit Weekend Weekend theme: Trades Demos and Contests, Beer Tasting. GOAL, 6635 118th Ave., **Fennville**. Meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

SCA Farmer's Market 9 a.m. Those wishing to sell fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, and eggs, including baked goods, cheeses, honey products, flowers, and related food products made regionally or by the vendor should apply. A limited number of hand-crafted items can be included; goods that relate to the serving or enjoyment of food products will be given priority consideration in this category. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., **Saugatuck**. 269-

p.m. Join us every Friday 7pm-9pm. Euchre-First & Third Fridays. Open Mic-Second & Fourth Fridays. Hosted by Michelle Brown. Everyone Welcome! Food & Drink available. The AFF Store & More, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. rich@bsumi.com GoAffirmations.orgArtistic Women's Entertainment 8 p.m. Tickets: \$12. Como's, 22812 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. Meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT/

Detroit Women's Coffee House Revival 8 p.m. A chance for us to celebrate the talent in our community and raise funds for Women musicians and artists and our local non-profit organizations in our community. GIFT, 1641 Middlebelt Road, **Inkster**. 248-943-2411. lindacbrin@gmail.com Womenoutandabout.com/calendar/detroit-womens-coffee-house/

Pride Prom 8 p.m. 21+. Tickets: \$25-30. The Friends of the Ferndale Library, 222 E. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. Ferndalepride.com

Summer Women's Weekend 9 p.m. Featuring Comedian Suzanne Westenhofer and Sami Grisafe. Tickets: \$10-20. Dunes Resort, **Saugatuck**. 269-857-1401. Dunesresort.com

Drag Queen Bingo 10 p.m. A fun alternative to your usual weekend hot spots. Shows get out just early enough for you to hit the local clubs or bars! Refreshments from our full coffee bar (coffee, teas, smoothies), sodas, water, and more. Tickets: \$20. 18+. Five15, 515 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. Five15.net

Leather & Lace Charity Ball 10 p.m. Proceeds go to Ruth Ellis Center. R&R

Saloon, 7330 Michigan Ave., **Detroit**. 313-849-2751. Rnrsaloon.com

MUSIC & MORE

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Comedy Jamm" It's cut-loose comedy as we present the comedy of 12 of the current rising stars in the Detroit Metro area and beyond. Tickets: \$5. Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Aug. 8-Sep. 25. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Sal Demilio" Tickets: \$10-12. Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. May 23-May 24. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

Blind Pig "Paulina Jayne" With Mike Leslie Band & Aeris. 18+. Tickets: \$10. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. May 24. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Blind Pig "Steve Moakler" 18+. Tickets: \$10-12. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. May 22. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Movement "Movement" Electronic music festival. Hart Plaza, Detroit. May 24-May 26. Movement.us

Palmer Woods Music in Homes "Planet D Nonet & Sun Ra's 100th Birthday". Palmer Woods Neighborhood, Detroit. 8 p.m. May 24. 313-891-2514. Palmerwoods

The Ark "Suzy Bogguss" Tickets: \$25. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. May 23. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Katie Herzig" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. May 28. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Magic Bag "James McMurtry & The Bottle Rockets" Tickets: \$20. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. May 29. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

Appointment With a Highwire Lady \$10-12. Emergent Arts at The Mix Studio Theatre, 8 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti. May 21 - June 8. 734-985-0875. www.emergentarts.com

Clybourne Park \$10-15. Peppermint Creek Theatre at Miller Performing Arts Center, 6025 Curry Lane, South Lansing. Through May 24. www.peppermintcreek.org

Les Miserables \$24. Grosse Pointe Theatre at Grosse Pointe War Memorial Fries Auditorium, 32 Lakeshore Drive, Grosse Pointe Farms. Through May 25. 313-881-4004. www.gpt.org

The Great God Pan \$15-25. Redbud Productions at Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. May 29 - 31. 734-763-4186. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Professional

A Steady Rain \$10-20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Through May 24. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

Amy Seeley & The Moline Madman \$25. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. May 23 - 24. 269-756-3879. www.theacorntheater.com

Blum \$12-16. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Through May 25. 810-237-1530. www.flintyouththeatre.org

See Happenings, page 22

www.PrideSource.com

Ixion Launches With Four Original Works

BY BRIDGETTE M. REDMAN

It's hard to go through eternity with the rap of "disgracer." And it takes, perhaps, more than a little courage and foolhardiness to name one's incipient theater company after a mythological villain convicted and punished for hubris.

Ixion Ensemble takes that brave step and then doubles down by making its debut with four original one-acts about mythological bad guys in an evening called "The Four Disgracers." Accompanied by original music sung live, these quick sketches retell the stories of Phaeton, Tantalus, Ixion and Icarus. The founder of Ixion, Jeff Croff, was also the artistic director of the former theater company, Icarus Falling.

The evening started out strong with "Distance to the Son" by O.G. Ueberroth. Ueberroth's script retells the story of a young man who is in his father's shadow, wanting to prove he is his son rather than recreating himself as his own person. Of all the vignettes of the evening, this is the one that most stands alone from the myth it is based on. The themes of making a choice, seeking one's own fortune and taking responsibility for one's choice – even when unaware of the consequences that might befall that choice – are timeless and resonate well.

Helios (Rico Bruce Wade) is Pate's (Joseph Mull) father and is late for his birthday. The relationship between the two is tense – it isn't easy having a busy god who is always absent as a father. Mull and Wade capture this tension: Mull is sullen and resentful, while Wade is successful, busy and contemptuous of his son's complaints. They do the script justice throwing out modern references casually juxtaposed against fine moments like Wade doing an ancient chant.

The second piece, "A Tantalizing Menu" by Sarah Hauck, is the story that most sticks to the original tale. It is a recreation rather than a retelling, with Tantalus (Kris Vitols) feeding his son to the unsuspecting, bickering family of gods: Angharad McGaughey plays Athena, Michael Stornant plays Zeus, Cassie Little is Demeter, and Rikki Perez is Hera. It is best enjoyed if you know your Greek mythology and your classical literature.

All four gods are played in classical Greek style, with the goddesses gossiping about Antigone's brothers when the sketch opens. Tantalus seems almost a side dish, as his complaints are made as asides, ignored and quickly covered by the arguments of Zeus and Hera over his infidelities or Demeter bemoaning the death of her child (though in the actual telling of the myth, she was gone for only six months out of

the year). Perez is sassy, McGaughey tries to make peace and Little is self-absorbed.

The telling of the story is awkward, with no clear theme arising other than that gods can behave as poorly as humans, though their spats pale compared to the creepiness of Tantalus and his cannibalistic menu. Too much of the play is chosen for the best line of the moment, rather than choosing a clear through-line for the story.

Brad Rutledge's "Empty" is next, and this is the one that tells the story of the ensemble's namesake, Ixion. Lesser known than the other disgracers, Ixion killed his would-be father-in-law because he didn't want to pay the bride price. He was exiled to the desert, but Zeus took pity on him and brought him to Olympus. Ixion showed his gratitude by hitting on Hera and trying to seduce her.

Rutledge transforms this tale to modern-day gangsters in a cynical approach that blends modern-day politics, crime, loan collection, adultery and ambition. He gives a modern twist to each of the crimes of Ixion. It hides most of its cynicism behind humor, though still delivers its ironic punch.

Jimmy "Two Suits" Montagna is played by Croff, and Anthony "X-man" Fiama is played by Stornant. Perhaps because he was eager to establish a difference between X-man and the Zeus of the previous sketch, Stornant didn't show as much charisma as he was described as having in the script. Otherwise, the two actors capture the gangster accent and the exaggerated moves and language that speak "mob."

The closing piece by A.S. Freeman, "Icarus Flying" features Paige Duncel as Icarus' mother. Set amid an oppressive regime, she talks about her fears associated with his dreams. Her delivery is beautiful and touching, and she mines the monologue for all that it has. The problem is that the monologue fails to establish the mother as having any maternal connections to the son. Rather, she seems just a provider of wax, a neighbor, someone more concerned



Ixion debuts with the original production "The Four Disgracers." Photo: Ixion

REVIEW

The Four Disgracers

Ixion at REO Town's Art Alley, 1133 S. Washington, Lansing. 8 p.m. May 17, 22, 24 and 4 p.m. May 24. \$15-25.

www.ixiontheatre.com

with her safety than the freedom of her son. The monologue also must be taken outside the context of the original myth, for in this telling, he is not a disgracer, but a rebel folk hero and a martyr. There is no mention of the traditional hero of the story, the one who makes the wings and succeeds in escaping Crete.

The staging was intentionally minimal, set in an art gallery where little was available for lighting options. There were no sound effects, but there was original music written by Ueberroth, the playwright of the first sketch. It was performed live on keyboard as intros to each piece sung by Marian Wilson. The songs tended to be haunting and made for perfect transitions between each act.

Coming in at just over an hour with no intermission, "The Four Disgracers" varies in its pacing, with "Distance to the Son" being most effective in keeping the audience curious about what is happening.

The four plays work as an introduction to the new company as a play on its name and a tribute to its desire to "pursue interesting stories with unique perspectives and innovative styles." Outside of Ixion, the script does not stand on its own or have enough of a unifying theme to give it legs to be performed elsewhere.

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Editor's Pick



Emergent Arts presents "Appointment With a Highwire Lady" by Russell Davis at the Mix Studio Theater, May 21 through June 8.

Having flirted with death, Richard, a young man, has crash landed into a state mental hospital, where he sits silently in the day room. He has lost his sense of touch and his ability to focus his eyes and his attention. Through interaction with Carla,

a fellow patient, and Louise, a young woman from his past, Richard tries to regain his memory and his life.

Show times are Wednesday, May 21 at 8 p.m., and then Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 general admission, and \$10 seniors and students with ID. Bring your day-of-show dinner receipt from Haab's and exchange for \$4 discount/rebate on ticket.

The Mix Studio Theatre is located at 8 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti.

For more information, call 734-985-0875.

▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 20

Boogie Woogie Swingtime \$42 (includes show and meal). Cornwell's Dinner Theatre, 18935 15 1/2 Mile Rd, Marshall. Through June 14. 269-781-4293. www.turkeyville.com

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

Defending the Caveman \$38. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Through May 25. 313-471-6611. www.olympiaentertainment.com

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels \$12-15. Great Escape Stage Company, 155 W. Michigan Ave., Marshall. May 30 - June 14. 269-781-2700. www.greatescapestagecompany.com

Endangered Species \$17-20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. May 29 - June 22. 313-868-1347. www.detroitreptheatre.com

Improv Mondays \$5 at the door. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

Into the Woods \$10-25. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through June 2. 248-545-5545. www.theringwald.com

Love, Loss And What I Wore \$17-20. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. May 30 - June 15. 248-850-9919. www.twomusestheatre.org

Old Love \$20-25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Through June 15. 517-655-SHOW. www.williamstontheatre.org

Rhinoceros By donation. The Abreact, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Through May 31. 313-454-1542. www.theabreact.com

Richard III \$27-46. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through June 1. 734-663-0681. www.performancenetwork.org

Romeo and Juliet \$8-15. Tibbits Opera House, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. 7 p.m. May 28. 517-278-6029. www.tibbits.org

Sundays at Go Comedy! Pay-what-you-can at the door. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

The Four Disgracers \$15-25. Ixion at REO Town's Art Alley, 1133 S. Washington, Lansing. Through May 24.

www.ixiontheatre.com

The Moth Mainstage \$32 and above. Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 7:30 p.m. May 28. 517-432-2000. www.whartoncenter.com/events/detail/the-moth

The PRTC Spring Comedy Festival: Lovers, Liars & Lunatics \$18.50-42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through May 24. 734-433-7673. www.purplerosetheatre.org

Wednesdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

ART 'N' AROUND

Cranbrook Art Museum "Ephemera: Fragments from Cranbrook's Social Life" A rich and varied look at the ephemera that illustrates Cranbrook's social life during the 20th century. Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. May 1-Sep. 28. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) and CCS "Biannual All Media Exhibition 2014". Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. April 18-May 23. 313-832-8540. Detroitartistsmarket.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Samurai: Beyond the Sword" The exhibition looks at how Japan's legendary warrior class sought balance between military and cultural pursuits. Tickets: \$8-16. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 9-June 1. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

Downriver Council for the Arts "Adult Watercolor Class" Facilitated by Shirley Ciungan. Drop-in. Open to beginners to advanced. Students bring own supplies. List available at first class or in DCA office. Admission: \$10. Downriver Council for the Arts, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Aug. 7-June 25. 734-720-0671. Downriverarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Kathleen Gilje: Portraits of Paintings" Meticulously rendered new incarnations of old masterpieces. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. May 2-July 20. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.org

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum "The President's Photographer: Fifty Years Inside the Oval Office" The exhibition features 50 framed images and a text panel with brief biographical information on each

photographer. Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, 7400 Bay Road, University Center. Feb. 3-May 24. 989-964-7125. Marshallfredericks.org/presidents

MOCAD "Mobile Homestead" A permanent art work by the late Mike Kelley. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1-June 30. 313-832-6622. Mocadetroit.org

Museum of New Art (MONA) "Rendering Carbon: The Art of Exploring an Element" A talk with Ian Boyden scheduled for 3 p.m. on May 18. Museum of New Art (MONA), 15655 33 Mile Road, Armada. May 16-June 20. 248-210-7560. Detroitmona.com

Pewabic Pottery "Martha Grover & Kala Stein Exhibition" Executing two different approaches, these artists explore the vessel by creating sculptural forms and installations through their traditionally utilitarian function. Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. May 16-June 29. 313-626-2000. Pewabic.org

Pewabic Pottery "Martha Grover Workshop". Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. May 29-May 31. 313-626-2000. Pewabic.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Material Girls: Fiber Exhibition" Quilts by Judith Jarzembowski. Rugs by Judy Bowman Anthrop. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. April 11-June 6. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

University Of Michigan Museum Of Art (UMMA) "An Eye on the Empire: Photographs of Colonial India and Egypt" The zenith of the British Empire in the later nineteenth century coincided with a unique convergence of cultural, technological, and economic forces. University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. April 1-June 29. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

University Of Michigan Museum Of Art (UMMA) "Three Michigan Architects: Part 2-Robert Metcalf" Robert Metcalf's domestic and commercial buildings represent some of the most important and recognizable modern architecture in Michigan. University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. April 1-July 13. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

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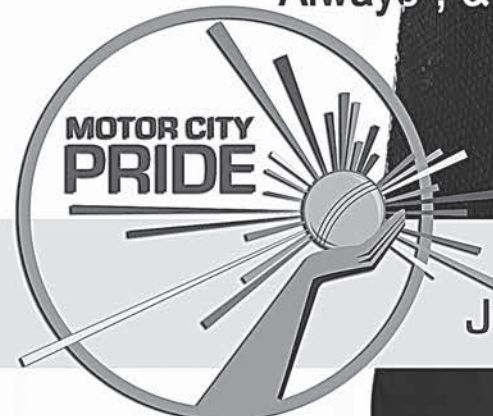
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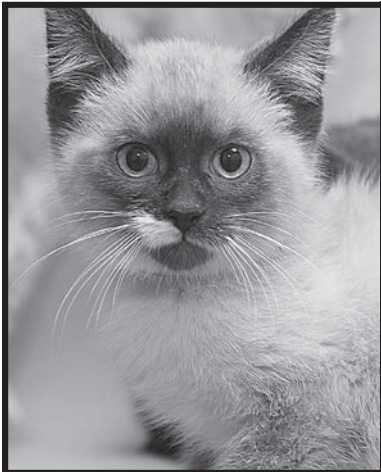
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Ann Arbor-Friday
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Bloomfield Hills-Sunday / Tuesday / Thursday
 8:00 pm, North Woodward Equality, Birmingham Unitarian Church, 38651 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, lower level classroom - enter first walkway off Woodward entrance. Big Book/12 & 12 Meeting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Solution to puzzle from page 26

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



Photo: Warner Bros. Records

► **Lily Allen**

Continued from p. 15

better place quick.

What do you think your female contemporaries think of you?

It's not something I really think about, to be honest.

But the title track on "Sheezus" name drops just about every current female pop artist.

Well, I guess maybe that would insinuate how much I care. (Laughs)

You've said that you're giving up on drinking and drugs. When you look back at those hard partying days, what's been the wildest night of your life?

If I could remember, it wouldn't have been that wild.

Is "Our Time" meant to be a gay anthem?

Yeah, elements of it – "dressing up like we're queens of the night," for sure. There are definitely elements of anthemic behavior going on.

Was kissing yourself in the video for that song the most lesbian thing you've done since making out with those girl twins in San Diego?

(Laughs) I can't believe you even know that!

That's hilarious. But no – that has been my most lesbian experience still to date and will probably stay that way if I live up to my wedding vows ... which I do plan to do, by the way.

Your baggy vagina, noted in your "Hard Out Here" video, has gotten a lot of press lately. Are you happy with your body?

Yeah, I am very happy with my body at the moment.

Now that you've opened up the dialogue regarding baggy vaginas, how often do girls wanna tell you about theirs?

Do people come up and tell me about their baggy pussies? Never. (Asking the people around her) "Hey, how's your bloody, baggy pussy? Yup, good? Lovely, lovely."

Did you say "bloody"? Too far, Lily. Too far.

(Laughs) I know that's not what you wanted to hear. As a gay man, "bloody, baggy pussy" is really not hot.

I'll let you go because I know other people wanna talk to you too.

Crazy.

But one last question: When's the last time you thought, "It's hard out here for a bitch"?

It's hard out here for a bitch when you can't find the bathroom.

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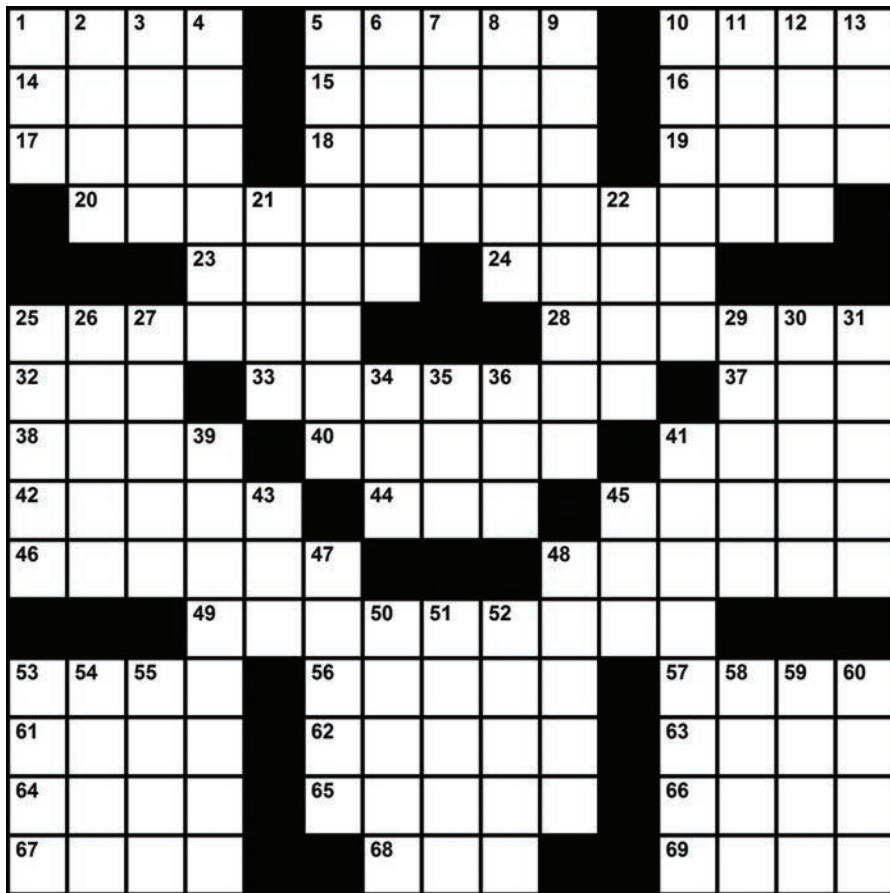
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Lady Gaga, After A Fashion



Across

- 1 "Billy Elliot" epithet
- 5 Sound of oral enjoyment
- 10 Come quickly
- 14 In two parts
- 15 Singer Reagon
- 16 Part of San Francisco's BART
- 17 Regarding
- 18 Husband of a Duke
- 19 Misfire sound
- 20 Start of Lady Gaga's definition of fashion
- 23 Family diagram
- 24 Valhalla VIP
- 25 Many are out of it
- 28 "Keep your pants on!"
- 32 "Thumbs up!"
- 33 More of the definition
- 37 Piece-loving org.
- 38 Ending for auto
- 40 Horizontal line on a graph
- 41 "Boys in the Band" author Crowley
- 42 It may make you rub your head
- 44 Triangle side
- 45 Ouija alternative
- 46 Hottie at a bar, e.g.
- 48 How a male stripper makes a living?
- 49 More of the definition

- 53 De Matteo of "Desperate Housewives"
- 56 Cock and bull
- 57 Type of seaman
- 61 Rhett Butler's final word
- 62 Astronaut Cooper's nickname
- 63 Thoroughfare
- 64 Navy rival
- 65 Guys who use come-on lines
- 66 Art Deco name
- 67 Simpatico sounds
- 68 End of the definition
- 69 Romeo or Juliet

- 25 Vehicle that may be bi?
- 26 "The Wizard of Oz" producer Mervyn
- 27 Oklahoma native
- 29 Kind of drum
- 30 Swashbuckler Flynn
- 31 Subtly spiteful
- 34 Batman portrayed Kilmer
- 35 Program file extension
- 36 Understand, to Kerouac and Ginsberg
- 39 Breakfast place of film?
- 41 Funny Cho
- 43 Scar, in "The Lion King," for example
- 45 Catch some rays
- 47 Ars ____, vita brevis
- 48 Male offspring that goes either way?
- 50 They sometimes swing
- 51 Myanmar, formerly
- 52 Came to a halt
- 53 "Saving Private Ryan" event
- 54 Internally pink
- 55 Thompson of "Angels in America"
- 58 Dimension of a big shooter
- 59 A little behind
- 60 Adam and Steve's locale?

Down

- 1 Palm Pilot, e.g.
- 2 Remove from power
- 3 Scout's recitation
- 4 You ride them in gay pride parades
- 5 Louisiana levy
- 6 Dayan of the land of the cut
- 7 Italian wine center
- 8 Cotton cloth
- 9 Where queens may rule
- 10 Moon of "Frasier"
- 11 Diva's piece
- 12 Pay for a pad
- 13 Touching children's game
- 21 Very, to Verlaine
- 22 Piercing part

Solution on pg. 24

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