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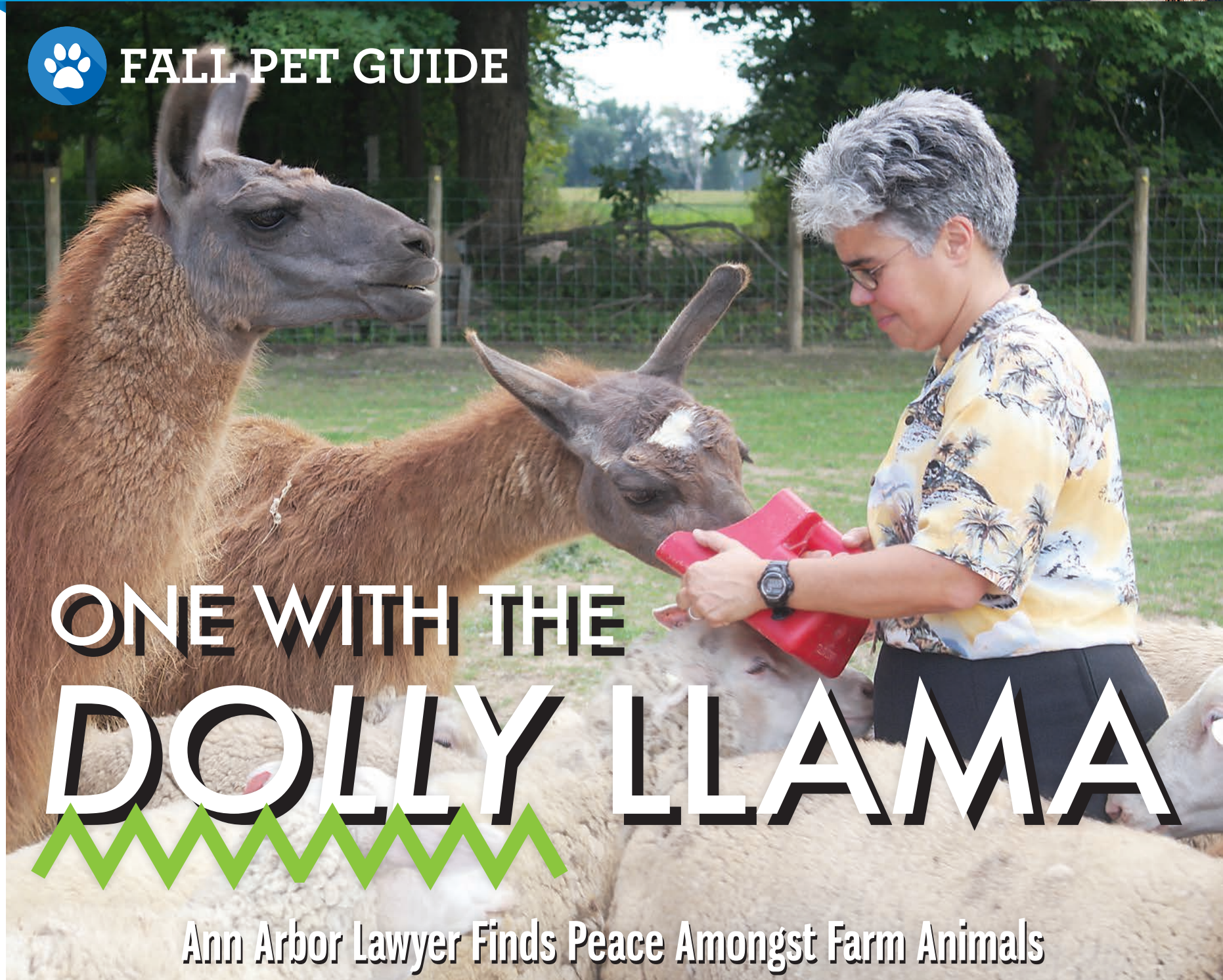
Pregnant Lesbian Fired From Catholic School

“ I just want people to embrace their own weaknesses and their own strengths and just love all of that. Just be. Breathe and be. ”

- Banks, pg. 24



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COVER STORY

16 One with the Dolly Llama

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“Where will the leadership of the **Republican Party** end up on this (amendment?)”

— State Rep. Sam Singh (D-69th District) on the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act amendment, pg. 5



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20222 Farmington Rd., Livonia, Michigan 48152
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PUBLISHERS

Susan Horowitz & Jan Stevenson

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EDITORIAL

Editor in Chief

Susan Horowitz, 734.293.7200 x 12
susanhorowitz@pridesource.com

Entertainment Editor

Chris Azzopardi, 734.293.7200 x 24
chrisazzopardi@pridesource.com

Arts & Theater Editor

Donald V. Calamia,
curtaincalls@pridesource.com

Assistant Editor

Shelby Clark Petkus, shelby@pridesource.com

Calendar Editor

Shelby Clark Petkus, shelby@pridesource.com

Staff Writers

AJ Trager, ajtrager@pridesource.com

CREATIVE

Art Director

Benjamin Jenkins, ben@pridesource.com

Webmaster & MIS Director

Kevin Bryant, kevinbryant@pridesource.com

Contributing Writers

Charles Alexander, Michelle E. Brown,
Todd Heywood, Jerome Stuart Nichols,
Eric W. Rader, Gwendolyn Ann Smith,
Christopher J. Treacy

Cartoonists

Paul Berg, Dave Brousseau

Contributing Photographers

Andrew Potter

ADVERTISING & SALES

Director of Sales

Jan Stevenson, 734.293.7200 x 22
jan@pridesource.com

Sales Representatives

Ed Bohach, 734.293.7200 x 15
ed@pridesource.com

Ann Cox, 734.293.7200 x 13
anncox@pridesource.com

National Advertising Representative

Rivendell Media, 212.242.6863

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Dems Push For Elliott-Larsen Amendment Bills In State House And Senate

No Republican Support - Yet

BY AJ TRAGER

LANSING – Two bills were introduced into the Michigan House and Senate Sept. 10 that would amend the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

State Sen. Rebekah Warren (D-18th District) and State Rep. Sam Singh (D-69th District) introduced similar bills into the House and Senate to amend the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

Current legislation does not include sexual orientation or gender identity among a list of protected classifications of discrimination that include: religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status or marital status.

“Today I once again introduced a bill to

include sexual orientation, gender identity and expression in Michigan’s Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. Updating the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act is about protecting our citizens and their families from being fired from a job or being denied housing because of who they are or who they love,” Warren said in a statement following the release of her bill.

“In addition to this being a matter of basic fairness and equality that enjoys widespread public support, it is also an economic imperative and an important step in making our state a vital and vibrant location as we recruit the top talent and businesses from around the globe,” Warren said.

The senator has introduced amendments to the Civil Rights Act many times, the most recent of which was in 2012. Warren believes that adding sexual orientation to the list of protected characteristics would provide immediate protections for people in their every day lives.

The two bills are extremely similar, Rep. Singh said. They include no religious exemptions or exclusions. Senate Bill 1053 was signed by 11 of the 12 Senate Democrats, with Minority Leader Tupac Hunter as the only Democrat to opt out. The House bill was signed by all 50 House Democrats and received one independent signature.



State Rep. Sam Singh (D-69th District) introduced a bill that would amend the state’s civil rights law to include protections for LGBT citizens. Sen. Rebekah Warren (D-18th District) introduced a similar bill in the state Senate.

“It concerns all of the LGBT community, and from this point forward we will continue conversations with the Republicans,” Singh said when discussing the language of his bill.

Singh has been working on the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act Amendment for the past 16 months and wants to see this legislation move forward. He has been working with other members of the House, including State Representatives Adam Zenke and Jeff Irwin of Ann Arbor, as well as state advocacy groups

and business leaders.

Rep. Frank Foster (R-107th District) from Petoskey had been formulating his own Elliott-Larsen bill that was to be introduced in the House but has now been delayed until after the Nov. 4 elections.

House Speaker Jase Bolger (R-Marshall) told MLIVE he’s trying to find a way to balance individual anti-discrimination protections with “respect for religious liberty.” Some GOP

See Elliott-Larsen, page 7

RELATED OP-ED

BTL Editorial: Snyder And GOP Abandon LGBT Equality - Again, See Page 8

Pregnant Lesbian Teacher Fired From Catholic School

‘I Stand With Barb Webb’ Garners Support

BY AJ TRAGER

BLOOMFIELD HILLS – Two weeks after she was let go, Michigan residents held a second protest Sunday outside Marian High School for the termination of Chemistry teacher Barb Webb.

Marian High School, an all-girls private school in Bloomfield Hills, fired Webb for what she claims is getting pregnant by non-traditional methods. The mother to be is 16 weeks along and approached the administration with the news before any signs of pregnancy would occur, per the school’s teacher contract on “public display.” Shortly after speaking with the school, she was fired.

Webb and her partner, Kristen Lasecki, have



Marian High School fired chemistry teacher Barb Webb, left, in late August where she taught for nine years. She is seen here Sunday with her partner of five years, Kristen Lasecki. BTL photo: AJ Trager.

been together for five and a half years. They got married in Windsor in 2012 and earlier this year made official plans to have a child together.

“Marian was unwilling to offer me any type of leave, and of course they were not willing to grant me the same right that half a dozen other teachers are enjoying this year while

starting their families. In fact, Marian’s options to me, after 9 years of dedication including league winning coaching, 4.0 averages in AP chemistry scores, PD for the school based on my personal best practices and dozens of students and family testimonials is 1) resign or 2) we will terminate you,” Webb said in a Facebook post shortly after her termination.

The school offered her \$4k worth of health insurance on the terms of her resignation and silence with no paychecks or other benefits. The second Sunday protest was held on Sept. 14 with a record attendance of 120 community members, Marian alumni and former Marian staff. Standing out front of the high school, lining Lasher road, the group held signs that said “I Stand With Barb Webb,” “Mary’s pregnancy was non-traditional,” “Honk For Barb Webb,” “#IStandWithBarbWebb” and “Sister Lenore: Your Silence is Deafening!!!”

Together, the group met to discuss their next steps. Webb won’t be returning to her job at Marian, but the call for change was heard loud and clear. Organizers are looking into setting

See Fired Teacher, page 7

Walking For HIV, Sponsoring Acceptance

View the Online Gallery
www.pridesource.com

BY AJ TRAGER

ROYAL OAK – Hundreds met for the 23rd Annual AIDS Walk Detroit this past weekend in downtown Royal Oak.

Over the past 23 years, AIDS Walk Detroit has raised \$3.7 million to benefit HIV/AIDS services here in Michigan. This year, the organizers raised a total of \$136,515 and ambitiously set a goal of mobilizing over 3,500 participants. AIDS Walk Detroit has evolved into the largest grassroots HIV/AIDS fundraiser in the state.

The Sept. 14 morning slowly turned into a mildly warm and sunny day. For some, the walk is a chance to come out in support of loved ones who have been affected. For others, the event is a chance to see how many in the community are powered up to fight the disease and end the stigma.

Tammy Boccomino is no stranger to speaking up about HIV and the harm it can cause to a household. She was there with her sister, brother-in-law and a handful of nieces and nephews.

Her son, Michael Volante, passed away in 1995 at the age of eight. He contracted the disease from her, and this year Boccomino and her family came out to honor his memory.

“All his cousins are here that never met him, and we are keeping his memory alive so that he is not forgotten,” Boccomino said.

Michael loved Batman, so the entire family dressed in t-shirts and hoodies depicting the Dark Knight. They held matching signs with Michael’s photograph that read “I’m walking for my cousin.”

She came out in the ‘90s as being

HIV positive and had spent many years touring Michigan giving talks in high schools and other community spaces. Boccomino was even featured on Oprah in 1992 with her dialogue titled “Close to Home: The Tammy Boccomino Story.”

“The ignorance was rampant in the ‘90s, so I decided to do speaking no matter what, because I didn’t want my son to feel embarrassed or ashamed for what he had. It’s just a disease,” Boccomino said.

She worries about maintaining a job and says that she has been let go in the past for what she believes as the employer finding out about her status.

“Now that I have a job, it’s still hard because nowadays people will still Google you, and the first thing that pops up is what I have. It’s very hard on me, because I think people still have some issues with it.”

One of the seven Gold Sponsors of the event, Delta, has been involved for years but became a corporate sponsor in 2009.

“We have so many employees that are affected by the disease, so we wanted to make sure that we are supporting them. Not only here, but at work as well,” Bernard Rawles, the base manager of New York, said.

It’s been a cross divisional effort since 2009 and Rawles believes it’s “the right thing to do.”

Delta is increasing its awareness throughout the organization and continues to see growth and development. The company has Delta Cares, a support group for anybody in need, not just HIV patients. The company has a complete non-discrimination policy and brought 102 members to walk in the name of the company.



Tammy Boccomino, left, is no stranger to speaking up about HIV and the harm it can cause to a household. She was there with her sister, brother-in-law and a handful of nieces and nephews. Her son, Michael Volante, passed away in 1995 at the age of eight. BTL Photos: AJ Trager

This year’s sponsors included Future Help Designs, Delta, Hartland Medical Building Pharmacy, Jana Pharmacy, Crown Pharmacy and Genisys Credit Union as gold sponsors; Whole Foods as a silver sponsor; Starbucks, SEE and Westborn Market as bronze sponsors and Leon & Lulu, Beaumont, St. John Providence Health System, The Karmanos Boys and Walgreens as copper sponsors. BTL served as a media sponsor.



One of the seven Gold Sponsors of the event, Delta, has been involved for years but became a corporate sponsor in 2009.




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► Elliott-Larsen

Continued from p. 5

members want to see a religious exemption, either in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act itself or through companion legislation.

Jim Murray, president of AT&T Michigan and co-chair of the Michigan Competitive Workforce Coalition, which is calling for an amendment to the civil rights law, told MLIVE, "I don't think it's necessary to introduce a bill that's got a second component we don't even know about yet."

Murray advised Foster to wait on the bill and introduce it later in the year during the lame duck.

"It's not going to be ready before the election, and there's really no reason to rush it out in September," Murray said. "It was just one of those windows we had. It looks like that window is closing, so we're looking at lame duck," MLive reported.

The workforce coalition is pushing to expand the law and has grown to include Blue Cross Blue Shield, Consumers Energy, Dow Chemical Co., Herman Miller, The Detroit Regional Chamber and the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce along with other business groups from Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Flint and Saginaw.

► Fired Teacher

Continued from p. 5

up a Town Hall meeting and are seeking out institutional change. Through the continuous honks bellowing down the street, the group focused the conversation on the students. "What does this mean for the adolescent girls as they are being shown this as good role models? How does the rejection of support for the LGBT affect the young students?" they asked. Surly, with roughly 10 percent of any given community identifying as LGBT, the open representation of discrimination will affect those students at the school that identify as LGBT.

"It's part of Marian's mission to educate women about human diversity and in this have really missed out on a true life opportunity to set an example. Instead, they are perpetuating hate," Webb said. "It's a shame, because Marian is an amazing school with a wonderful staff and a very promising student body. I feel horrible for the students that I was forced to leave behind and wish them only the best. I feel sickened for my colleagues who are disgusted with this decision but are forced into silence for fear of their own jobs"

Leighann Patel attended Marian as a freshman in '90. She feels that if the Catholic Church had had a problem, they could've made it known five years ago when Webb was hired. Patel was there with her best friend, her best friend's husband and their child who was born into a "nontraditional" household from a Christian-Jewish marriage.

"I think there are a lot of different issues

Murray said that he hopes to see action when lawmakers return to Lansing after the campaign season in November.

Gov. Rick Snyder, when speaking with Crain's Detroit Business on Sept. 10, said he anticipated action on Elliott-Larsen despite Foster's loss and that he would look at Elliott-Larsen.

"One thing as governor I've learned is it's not good to tell the Legislature what to do too much," Snyder told MLIVE. "I really do recommend they look at it. In terms of the timing, I leave that to their decision."

Some Republican lawmakers may be uncomfortable with adding in gender identity protections to the civil rights bill, according to Murray. The final proposal may focus solely on sexual orientation, meaning it may not hold protections for the transgender community, something most coalition members are opposed to.

Both the Senate and House bills include protections for all members of the LGBT community. Singh said his bill will not include a religious exemption.

"Frank Foster has had a similar bill that he was looking at. But where will the leadership of the Republican Party end up on this?" Singh asked. "We have some time. We will be working hard over the next couple of months, but after the elections in November, we would like to have a vote.

with it. I don't think that it is right that she [School President, Sister Lenore Pochelski] isn't speaking out. Which is what my sign says. So, 'Sister Lenore your silence is deafening.' Make a statement. I don't think it's right. I think the Catholic Church is currently being run by people who don't necessarily speak the word of God. And I think the word of God is love," Patel said.

Bob and Susan Ufer are proud parents of a gay son. Their daughter's good friend Courtney attended Marian but passed away 17 years ago in flight 800. They said Courtney would've been out front and center protesting for Webb, so they came out because that's what Courtney would do.

"We felt that our son in his high school years had not come out, and it was a difficult experience for him. And for the kids here that are gay and that witness this type of treatment of somebody who has done nothing but spent their life doing wonderful things in every regard... kids have a tough enough go at it. We are coming out to overturn whatever we can about this injustice, so it makes an easier environment for the kids too," Bob said.

A petition was created on Change.org asking that Marian High School and Immaculate Heart of Mary rethink their policies and start supporting LGBT staff and students. As of Sept. 16, the petition was signed by 47,300 people, just 2,700 signatures away from the goal.

Visit the official website at www.standwithbarb.com.



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DETROIT

Gender Neutral Bathrooms May Come To City

Equality Michigan and Connect2Protect - Detroit have launched an Indiegogo campaign called the Safer Sign Bathroom Initiative (www.indiegogo.com/projects/safer-sign-bathroom-initiative-detroit) to increase the number of gender neutral bathrooms in the city. If successful in raising its \$1,500 goal, the organizations will reach out to local businesses with gender-segregated bathrooms, supplying them with free gender neutral signs.

According to a 2013 report from the Williams Institute at UCLA, 70 percent of trans* people surveyed have experienced denial of access to facilities, verbal harassment or physical assault when trying to use a gender segregated bathroom.

Equality Michigan and Connect2Protect intend to upgrade 10 or more bathrooms in the Detroit area depending on the campaign's success. The campaign ends Oct. 13 and has already raised over 20 percent of its goal.

For more information or to donate, go to the Indiegogo campaign at www.indiegogo.com/projects/safer-sign-bathroom-initiative-detroit.

OAK PARK

Inclusive Congregation Celebrates National Coming Out Day

Congregation T'chayah will celebrate National Coming Out Day and Sukkot on Saturday, Oct. 11. The Reconstructionist Jewish, inclusive congregation will host the event which includes a service from 10 a.m. to noon, with a visit to the sukkah (weather permitting). It's recommended that attendees arrive about 15 minutes early to meet, greet and find seating.

At 1 p.m., a dairy/vegetarian potluck luncheon will be held in conjunction with a discussion titled, "Coming Out as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender or Ally." Guests at this discussion include Transgender Michigan's Rachel Crandall-Crocker and Susan Crocker, Michelle Fox-Phillips of Gender-Identity Network Alliance, Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays, Jay Hack of NEXTGen Detroit, former 36th District Court Judge Rudy Serra and Michael Phillips, previous chairperson of the Jewish Gay Network of Michigan (JGN).

The casual attire celebration will be held in the David & Miriam Mondry Building on the campus of the Oak Park Jewish Community Center, 15000 W. Ten Mile Road, Oak Park. For more information, call 248-542-0900 or visit www.tchayah.org.

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

In Apology To Trans Community, HRC Pledges Push For Broad LGBT Bill

BY CHUCK COLBERT

In a gracious and surprising move, the president of the nation's largest LGBT organization offered an apology to the transgender community at the same time he said the group would take a lead in advocating fully comprehensive federal LGBT civil-rights legislation.

"I want to cut right to the chase here today," said Human Rights Campaign (HRC) president Chad Griffin in Atlanta Sept. 5, addressing several hundred people at the annual Southern Comfort conference, a major gathering for transgender people.

"There's an elephant in this room, and, well, it's me," he said. "So I am here today, at Southern Comfort, to deliver a message... HRC has done wrong by the transgender community in the past, and I am here to formally apologize."

He explained further: "I am sorry for the times when we stood apart when we should have been standing together.

"Even more than that, I am sorry for the times you have been underrepresented or unrepresented by this organization. What happens to trans people is absolutely central to the LGBT struggle. And as the nation's largest LGBT civil rights organization, HRC has a responsibility to do that struggle justice, or else we are failing at our fundamental mission."

Griffin's speech also decried violence against transgender people, calling it a "national crisis." He listed a number of ways HRC is working toward transgender equality in the workplace and toward raising the visibility of transgender persons through story telling. Griffin asked that both he and HRC be held "accountable."

He reaffirmed that HRC would continue to press for a fully inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would ban workplace bias on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

But Griffin also pledged support for broader protections.

In the next Congress, he said, "HRC will lead the campaign for a fully-inclusive, comprehensive, LGBT civil rights bill. A bill with non-discrimination protections that don't stop at employment, but that finally touch every aspect of our lives - from housing, to public accommodations, to credit, to federal funding, to the education we all need to succeed and thrive.

"And I'm going to keep being honest with you, this is not going to be an easy fight."

HRC posted the text of Griffin's 2,400-word speech on the organization's blog.



HRC President Chad Griffin addressing the annual Southern Comfort conference Sept.5. The full speech can be found online at HRC.org along with a video.

“I am sorry for the times you have been underrepresented or unrepresented by this organization. What happens to trans people is absolutely central to the LGBT struggle. And as the nation's largest LGBT civil rights organization, HRC has a responsibility to do that struggle justice, or else we are failing at our fundamental mission.”

-HRC President Chad Griffin

A Healing Speech

HRC has long had a fraught relationship with the transgender community. Former leader Elizabeth Birch made some progress in 2003 when the organization added the "T" to its goals and ostensibly included the entire LGBT community. But HRC has regularly been criticized for not reaching out to trans groups and not having many trans people on its board. Currently, HRC has at least one trans-identified board member, Meghan Stabler of Dallas.

In addressing Southern Comfort, Griffin aimed to heal the most recent rift between HRC and the transgender community, which dates back to 2007. That year, then president Joe Solmonese told Southern Comfort attendees that the organization would advocate federal employment protections, fully inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity.

But when former U.S. Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.) said that ENDA with gender identity provisions would not pass in Congress, HRC

followed his lead and supported a measure inclusive only of protections for sexual orientation. Many transgender people felt betrayed by HRC's backing of Frank, and a deep, if not bitter, divide ensued.

More recently, ENDA passed the Senate on Nov. 7, 2013 by a 64-32 vote, marking the first time that legislative body approved federal civil rights legislation banning anti-LGBT employment bias; House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) has said repeatedly that he would not bring ENDA to a vote, claiming the legislation is unnecessary and would lead to frivolous litigation.

Meanwhile, a growing number of national and statewide LGBT organizations, including the Transgender Law Center and National Center for Lesbian Rights, have come out against the proposed ENDA, saying that while it bans workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, the federal law also would allow religious organizations to discriminate against LGBTs

See HRC Apology, next page

► HRC Apology

Continued from p. 8

even in non-ministerial or pastoral capacities.

Currently, 21 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have laws barring workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation, with 17 states and D.C. also barring discrimination based on gender identity.

Transgender Activists, Leaders Pleased

Although not in attendance at the Southern Comfort conference, several transgender activists and organizational leaders said they are heartened by Griffin and HRC's reconciliatory outreach.

"I believe Griffin's speech may well prove a milestone in the relationship between HRC and the trans community, if the organization follows through on its promises," said Rebecca Juro, a transgender woman, freelance journalist and radio talk show host out of North Brunswick, N.J., who has often been critical of HRC.

In email correspondence she added, "I think the greatest sense of betrayal felt by the trans community about HRC revolves around the organization's advocacy in the past of legislation that didn't include gender identity and expression protections. Griffin not only pledged that the organization would only support fully-inclusive legislation, but also announced an effort to pass an omnibus bill that would include protections not only for LGBT people in employment, but also in housing, health care, credit, public accommodations, federal funding and education. I believe that's important, particularly because it challenges the notion that the piecemeal approach to LGBT rights we've seen thus far at the federal level is the only way to go."

Transgender activist, blogger and columnist Autumn Sandeen of San Diego also voiced praise for HRC's bridge-building gesture.

"Chad Griffin apologizing to trans people, identifying a path to change the relationship between the HRC and trans community and then asking to hold the HRC and him to account is important," she said in an email. "That he made the apology where one of the HRC's most significant breakings of faith toward trans community began as well signals a real sincerity. I'm hopeful - I'm optimistic - that Chad Griffin and the HRC will make good on this Southern Comfort conference delivered promise to the trans community."

One national trans leaders said the apology was "overdue."

Masen Davis, executive director of the Oakland, Calif. based Transgender Law Center (TLC), said in a phone interview that he was "very impressed by the content and what seemed to be the spirit behind the speech at Southern Comfort," even though "it was in many ways long overdue to approach the transgender community and apologize for what happened in 2007."

"While that debacle did not happen on Chad's leadership, I thought it was an important step forward to acknowledge it and pledge to work differently with the transgender community," Davis added.

With respect to ENDA, Davis said TLC is supportive of "any effort to secure strong (employment) non-discrimination protections for LGBT people at the federal level" provided that the protections "are strong and that they stand the test of time and protect all members of our community, including those who work for religious institutions."

He also voiced support for Griffin's



Masen Davis, executive director of the Oakland, Calif. based Transgender Law Center, said the HRC apology was long overdue.

call for an omnibus, federal LGBT civil rights measure.

"I am a big believer that we have an important responsibility to ensure that our communities get the protections that they need," Davis said. "Obviously, employment is so critical, but employment is just one of the many areas that we need to make sure our people are protected."

Davis cited other areas, including housing discrimination, health care discrimination and discrimination in credit.

"All areas of life where LGBT people run into challenges and to the extent that the federal government has any jurisdiction," he said.

Davis acknowledged that it would

likely take time before a broader LGBT civil rights law is passed in Congress.

"It may take time for that to be crafted and get the champions we need for its passage," Davis said. "But it wasn't that long ago that people were concerned that marriage would not get the support it needed, and here we are with a slew of marriage victories. I think we need to set high standards for ourselves and our community and start putting forward the kinds of legal support we need and deserve."

Shannon Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, said Griffin's speech was "an important moment in HRC's relationship with the transgender community."

"It took guts for Chad to acknowledge that HRC has made some past mistakes without attempting to gloss over the pain and mistrust those mistakes have caused," Minter said in an email. "I give him huge credit for stepping up and taking that on, even though he was not at the helm when those mistakes were made. That shows true leadership and foresight. I think his remarks

were heartfelt and that he is genuinely committed to including transgender people in HRC's work, which is essential if we are to continue to make progress."

Looking beyond Griffin's Southern Comfort speech, Minter said that "the biggest challenge for HRC and all of the national organizations in doing effective advocacy for transgender people is to find ways to stay in touch with what is happening on the ground and to support local transgender activism and leaders, especially transgender leaders of color who far too often are passed over when it comes to funding, visibility and credit."

In his remarks, Griffin mentioned the leadership of Davis and Minter, among others, as an "inspiration" to the LGBT movement and to himself.

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Hearing Voices: Ruth Ellis Center's 15th Anniversary Raises Awareness And Funds

DETROIT - A large, celebratory crowd gathered at the College for Creative Studies for Voices, the annual benefit for the Ruth Ellis Center. With an auction, donations and corporate sponsorships, the event raised over \$100,000 for the LGBTQ homeless youth facility in Detroit.



REC Executive Director Jerry Peterson welcomed attendees and thanked them for supporting their important work. He said an estimated 1,000 LGBT youth are homeless most nights in Detroit. REC is there to provide services and shelter to the ones they can help.

REC youth Tayvon Lyles, right, performed before and during the entertainment event.



Egypt Peguies, one of the REC youth, dazzled the crowd with his dance moves.



LaRonnie King & Khalique Nash, both REC youth, danced a poignant story line



Patrick Yankee, the director of the HIV/AIDS Detroit Department of Health & Wellness HIV/AIDS Programs, and Greg Nickert share a special moment with their little friend. Photos courtesy of Andrew Potter/REC

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Full Truth's four surviving pastors pose for a photo after the 25th anniversary celebration Sept. 7. Pictured are (from left) Rev. Darlene Franklin, current pastor Rev. Ronchele Andres, Bishop Allen Spencer and founder Rev. Dr. Renee McCoy. Rev. Darren McCarroll, who pastored the church from 1996-1999, died in 2011. (Photo courtesy of Full Truth Ministries)

Full Truth Ministries Celebrates 25 Years Black LGBT Church Founder Celebrates In Detroit

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

DETROIT – She no longer lives here, but Rev. Dr. Renee McCoy came home this month to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of the church she founded. She spoke at a Friday night revival service Sept. 5 – part of a three day anniversary celebration the church hosted – and later spoke with Between The Lines about the church's early days and how far it has come.

A Detroit native, McCoy began her church leadership career at MCC-Detroit in 1976. She served as a deacon before relocating to New York to finish her training. It was there that she was licensed and ordained as a minister and where she started her first church, Harlem MCC, in 1981; it was the first openly LGBT congregation anywhere led and administered by black LGBT persons.

In 1987, McCoy moved to Washington to become executive director of the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays. She stayed there until late 1988, when she moved the NCBLG national offices to Detroit and returned home. She continued to do denomination level work with MCC-D, but was not on staff there.

"My ministry was NCBLG and HIV/AIDS," McCoy recalled of that time. "Around February 1989, a group of folks from the local NCBLG Detroit met with me to talk about the spiritual vacuum they experienced as black LGBT persons. We began meeting as a Bible

study group. As that group explored the truth of the scriptures, it became apparent that more black LGBT persons could benefit from a positive and affirming support system beyond the bars and underground party community."

But to many, a black, gay church was a hard sell.

"The hardest part for me was convincing other blacks that we were not going to hell because we had the church," said McCoy. "Homophobia had been internalized for so long and operationalized so deeply that it was hard for many to believe they were worthy to be loved by God. Many were afraid something terrible would happen."

A couple years in, McCoy made the decision to join forces with Carl Bean and his Unity Fellowship Movement.

"At that time, Unity was a single congregation in Los Angeles and a second church was about to start in New York," McCoy remembered. "Carl Bean and I had been friends and had worked together around HIV/AIDS since I was in New York. He wanted to begin a national faith based movement and the members of Full Truth decided to become part of that effort. It made sense."

Then, in 1995, McCoy made the decision to retire from parish ministry and begin graduate school.

"Every Sunday morning, I told our

See Full Truth, page 14

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'Tricky Dick' Tapes Gay



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

I was working at a discount records shop in downtown Detroit in 1959, the year two ill-fated contenders – Senator John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Vice President Richard Milhous Nixon – campaigned for the 1960 presidency.

I stood about 50 feet from the flag-decked podium in Campus Martius when J.F.K. spoke that summer. I was impressed by his youthful good looks and commanding speech delivery.

For a moment, I thought he specifically pointed in my direction – Why me, God? I joked to myself – and I pledged him my vote.

Later that campaign season, I took a coffee break and walked to a coffee shop just down the hall from my discount job. Gathered at the Washington Boulevard entrance was a noisy crowd. I stood in line, and moments later Nixon began shaking hands. He reached out to take my hand. I stepped back, reluctant to accept his offer...

But I was aware that he looked directly at me and our eyes locked intensely for milliseconds too many. To this day, I wonder if it was a “gaydar moment.” (Believe it or not: I was quite cruisable at 23. Nixon, however, wasn't my type. Politically or otherwise). Perhaps my fleeting impression is not far-fetched...

Nixon, elected in 1968 as 37th president, was good friends with gay Cuban wheeler-dealer, handsome Bebe Rebozo, and closeted queer J. Edgar Hoover, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. A 2011 Nixon biography by Don Fulsom, veteran Washington reporter, suggests gay intimacies with Bebe Rebozo.

It's recently come to light that President Nixon held – by Republican, conservative standards – flexible attitudes about homosexuals. A recently published collection of Nixon's confidential discussions with advisors – “The Nixon Tapes” – contains passing, offhand remarks on gays.

Comments were made in 1972, three years after the Stonewall Riots. (Tape conversations began in 1971 and end in '73, when word of the taping became public knowledge).

“Let me say something before we get off the gay thing. I don't want my views misunderstood. I am the most tolerant person on that of anybody in this shop. They have a problem. They're born that way. You know that. That's all. I think they are. Anyway, my point is, though, when I say they're born that way, the tendency is there.

“And, if you look over the history of societies, you will find of course that some of the highly intelligent people – Oscar Wilde, Aristotle – were all homosexuals. Nero, of course, was in a public way, in with a boy in Rome.” Nixon's caveat: “Once a society moves in that direction, the vitality goes out of that society.”

Both Nixon and J.F.K. were ill-fated. Kennedy was assassinated – murdered by a multifaceted conspiracy – three years after defeating Nixon in 1960. Nixon's hit-and-miss presidency ended in 1974 for his part in equivocating about the Watergate Break In. Elected in 1969, ‘Tricky Dick,’ as he was infamously nicknamed, resigned, rather than face an impeachment trial. Sic Transit Gloria Mundi.

“So much for worldly fame and glory.” Democrat. Republican. Or, tricky who, whenever or whatever comes T-fagging next.

Charles@pridesource.com



BTL Editorial

Snyder And GOP Abandon LGBT Equality - Again

Governor Rick Snyder and the GOP legislative leadership abandoned the LGBT community last week when they could not muster even one co-sponsor of an amendment to the state's civil rights bill. All of the House (50 out of 50, plus one Independent) Democrats co-sponsored a bill to amend the state's civil rights law to include sexual orientation and gender identity. Eleven of the 12 Senate Democrats voted to support the Senate version of the bill (with Tupac Hunter not voting for it.) Not one Republican has signed on, and Snyder did not come out and support the bill or encourage any of his party's members to reach across the aisle last week when he could have.

“One thing as governor I've learned is it's not good to tell the Legislature what to do too much. I really do recommend they look at it. In terms of the timing, I leave that to their decision,” Snyder told MLIVE.

The 1976 Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Bill makes it illegal to discriminate in employment, housing and public accommodations based on religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status or marital status, but it does not include protections on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Over the past 18 months, a coalition of LGBT activists, civil rights groups, business leaders and some moderate Republicans lobbied the Republican leadership – including Gov. Snyder, House Majority leader Jase Bolger and Senate Majority leader Randy Richardville – to support a bill to amend Elliott-Larsen to include sexual orientation and gender identity. They thought they had a deal to introduce a bi-partisan bill

The Governor could have shown tough leadership, like he did when he (unfortunately) supported Right To Work, or when he pushed through a tax on retiree's pension benefits, or eviscerated education funding, or attacked women's rights. When it comes to dealing with issues that impact the people of Michigan – the elderly, the young, working people, women, vulnerable minorities – Snyder can't be bothered.

last week, but at the last minute, the Republicans blinked. The Michigan GOP just couldn't bring themselves to support equal rights for LGBT people.

So the Democrats did it on their own with no Republican participation – yet. With no support from the majority party,

See Snyder, next page

Heard On Facebook

Now that the governor's race is heating up, people are making their voices heard on Facebook. Governor Snyder has been the direct target for angry Michiganders, while Mark Schauer (running for Governor) and Lisa Brown (running for Lieutenant Governor) are stirring up hope.

“ I got married 3/22/2014 in Ann Arbor. At what point, Nerd, will you recognize my marriage that you have ALREADY stated in print occurred legally? I'm waiting... *crickets* ”

“Michigan needs Lisa Brown.”

“The problem here is the base that Snyder appeals to is the 'Pray the gay away' crowd. He needs those votes so he favors their backwards ideology.”

“Love you Lisa and Mark!”

“This one of the primary reasons why persons (gay & straight) with the skills desperately needed by companies, governmental institutions are leaving the State of Michigan. I came from New York and have lived here for 25 years...it's time to move on to a more progressive environment.”

“Oye, someone who gets it? Could it be Michigan is going progressive?”

“I'm really sick of seeing his face on TV taking credit for the economy coming back when all he did was allow right to work in our state so unskilled labor can come in and work for less. The economy was helped with the money infused into the system via stimulus.”

- Join the conversation on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BetweenTheLinesNewspaper

► Snyder

Continued from p. 12

there is almost no chance for the bill to pass this session.

Snyder could have shown his tough “nerd” leadership, like he did when he (unfortunately) supported Right To Work, or when he pushed through a tax on retiree's pension benefits, or eviscerated education funding or attacked women's rights. He certainly has proved he can be tough when it suits him and his far-right funders. But when it comes to dealing with issues that impact the people of Michigan – the elderly, the young, working people, women, vulnerable minorities – he can't be bothered.

There is some talk about introducing a bi-partisan version of the bill after the November election in the lame duck session. The hope is that some Republicans might find the courage to stand up for equal rights once the threat is gone of losing their seat due to an anti-LGBT, Tea Party backlash. But they seem tempted to “compromise” on an unacceptable bill that either excludes the transgender community or includes a sweeping religious exemption, or both. Such a compromise would leave the transgender community even more vulnerable to discrimination

because they would be specifically excluded, and the religious exemption would give bigots a free pass to discriminate against any person they didn't happen to like. It would be better to have no bill than such a flawed “compromise” bill.

We don't want Snyder, who defines leadership as being tough on LGBT people, seniors, education, women and working people, to win a second term. We need Mark Schauer to be our next governor, a man who recognizes that social issues are the very ones that impact the lives and well-being of all people living, working and supporting families here in Michigan. That is why BTL has strongly endorsed Mark Schauer for Governor and Lisa Brown for Lieutenant Governor. We encourage readers to vote for them and to tell your families and friends that Snyder continues to abandon the LGBT community in favor of political expediency.

The people of Michigan don't fare well on Snyder's balance sheet. We need a governor that values people, not a spreadsheet analyst that abandons the people when they most need his leadership.

Mark Schauer and Lisa Brown will not abandon the LGBT community or our allies. We need them to win in November, and we need to know that we will have a governor willing to represent all the people of this great state.

Creep of the Week

Monte Neil Stewart

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Ah, money. Or, as we like to call it in America, “Free Speech.” Somehow there just never seems to be enough to go around. This is especially true if you're poor. Sure, “speech” is “free,” but only if you can afford it.

Americans don't like to talk about money. Granted, we love to worship the rich and famous, but we tend to couch our discussions about money in abstractions. We'll fawn over the “super-rich,” but when it comes to people who fall into the ever-shrinking middle class or the ever-growing lower class, we get shy. It's “nobody's business,” after all.



Monte Neil Stewart

Stewart argued that recognizing gay families would be a drain on public resources and thus the (marriage) ban was justified for the sake of the budget.

This cultural attitude gets in the way of real, substantial discussions and considerations about what working people earn and the cost of living. And it is in this silence that America's democracy has morphed into a plutocracy, a.k.a. government

by the rich. And while average Americans are just scraping by and fantasizing about winning the lottery, the rich buy elections to make sure that the laws are forever in their favor. The system is rigged.

So while \$71,477 might not seem like much to America's rich, that much money would be a windfall

for the majority of us. It could lift a family out of poverty, pay for medication and shelter and mental health care and food. You know, the kinds of things people living paycheck to paycheck, or living with no paycheck at all, often have to do without.

\$71,477 would also be a sizable chunk of change to put toward infrastructure repair or public school funding or paying firefighters' salaries.

Some might argue then that the state of Idaho had essentially thrown \$71,477 into a toilet by using it to fight the repeal of their anti-gay marriage ban. Most of this total went to Monte Neil Stewart, the attorney arguing the state's case before the courts. As Think Progress has pointed out, Stewart's arguments are terrible. He has essentially said that if same-sex couples get married, then fathers will stop bonding with their kids. He also argued that recognizing gay families would be a drain on public resources and thus the ban was justified for the sake of the budget.

A federal judge rejected their arguments in May. She wrote in her opinion, “Idaho's Marriage Laws deny its gay and lesbian citizens the fundamental right to marry and relegate their families to a stigmatized, second-class status without sufficient reason for doing so.”

Damn right.

The state is appealing, of course, because it can't let go of being terrible. Which means more expenses.

According to The Spokesman-Review, that \$71,477 doesn't “include salary costs for state employees who did the work as part of their existing jobs,” which means that \$71,477 is a conservative estimate at best and will only grow.

But you know, I bet if you, say, asked a child living in poverty in Idaho what they would rather have, tens of thousands of dollars or a law “defending” marriage on the books, that child would say, “So long as the gays can't marry, I'm rich as can be.” And then, digging under the threadbare blanket she received from the City Light Home for Women & Children in Boise, she might produce a crumpled dollar bill and add, “Give this to Mr. Stewart. Tell him thank you for fighting for the children.” And then she'd die of undiagnosed and untreated asthma.

I'm kidding, of course. There's no way that child would have a dollar.

But as for Mr. Stewart, he is literally doing jack shit for children and should be, but isn't, ashamed of himself.

Couples, Firms Take Sides In Gay Marriage Debate

BY DAVID FALCHEK

Stay Issued In Indiana Gay Marriage Ban Case

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) – Same-sex couples hoping to get married in Indiana will have to wait until the U.S. Supreme Court addresses the question of whether gay marriage bans are constitutional.

The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago on Monday stayed its Sept. 4 ruling that Indiana's ban is unconstitutional. The court also found Wisconsin's gay-marriage ban unconstitutional, but that state has not requested a stay.

Gay marriage is on the U.S. Supreme Court's Sept. 29 agenda for a closed-door conference, but it's unclear if the justices will decide then whether to take up the issue.

Kyle Megrath with Hoosiers Unite for Marriage says the group hopes the high court takes up gay marriage cases this month. He says gay marriage bans "harm Hoosier and American families."

Arkansas AG Asks Court To Uphold Gay Marriage Ban

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) – The attorney general's office is asking the Arkansas Supreme Court to uphold the state's gay marriage ban, arguing a county judge was wrong to say it violated the state and U.S. constitutions.

Attorney General Dustin McDaniel's office on Monday asked justices to uphold the 2004 constitutional amendment and an earlier state law defining marriage as between a man and a woman. Pulaski County Judge Chris Piazza struck down the ban earlier this year, and 541 same-sex couples were married before the ruling was suspended by the state Supreme Court pending appeals.

McDaniel's office argued that a constitutional amendment cannot be ruled unconstitutional, and is arguing the state's voters have the right to define marriage.

A group of same-sex couples is also challenging the ban in federal court.

Attack On Gay Philadelphia Couple Leaves One Injured

PHILADELPHIA (AP) – Philadelphia police are investigating a downtown attack on two gay men that left one with a broken facial bone.

Police are investigating the assault blocks from Rittenhouse Square as a potential hate crime.

Capt. Frank Banford tells The Philadelphia Inquirer (<http://goo.gl/5XC200>) that a gay couple was approached Thursday night by two men and a half-dozen females.

Banford says the men were asked if they were a couple, and beaten when they said they were.

Authorities say a 27-year-old victim suffered a bone fracture in his face that will require surgery. Banford says one assailant also took a bag one of the victims dropped before the group fled.

Detectives are checking surveillance video to try to track down the suspects.

SCRANTON, Pa. (AP) – In the midst of a debate over whether businesses should be allowed to discriminate against gays and lesbians, more straight couples are inquiring about venues' same-sex wedding policies.

The importance of the issue has gone beyond same-sex couples looking to tie the knot. Straight couples don't want to send a message to LGBT friends or family that they condone or support venues that discriminate. In Pennsylvania, LGBT people have no legal protection against discrimination in employment, housing or public accommodation. In July after a Scott Township wedding venue, the Inne of the Abingtons, rebuffed a lesbian couple who wanted to have a reception there, at least one straight couple is suing the Inne, trying to recoup a deposit made before the venue stance was publicized.

For several years Gus Genetti's Best Western in Wilkes-Barre hosted "Commitment Ceremonies" for same-sex couples, sharing event photographs on the company's Facebook page. Event manager Lindsay Bezick said most wedding clients are aware of Genetti's record on equality. In recent months, she noticed more straight couples have specifically inquired about the venue's policy.

"We think most people know that Genetti's offers an accepting environment," she said. "We've had two straight couples who felt strongly enough about the issue to ask about it. They want to make sure that our facility is open to all and that all of their guests can expect the same standard of service."

The attention and debate that followed

the Inne's decision forced the local wedding industry to confront the same-sex marriage issue, said Danielle Pasternak, of DPNAK Weddings, a Scranton-based wedding planner.

"Suddenly, same-sex weddings were legal and businesses had to step back and consider how they were going to deal with this," she said. "It may be awkward now to ask about a vendors' policy, but as that information is given freely, the discussion will become less awkward."

She's not aware of any vendor in the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area that staked out a position as adamant as the Inne's. Pasternak has a list of vendors with a track record of service to gay and lesbian couples.

Vendors rushed to sign up for the "Wedding Tent" at PrideFest in Kirby Park in Wilkes-Barre in August. The Hilton Scranton & Conference Center became a partner with Equality Pennsylvania, an LGBT policy and advocacy group.

A Gallup poll in May showed 55 percent of Americans support marriage equality. The Public Religion Research Poll released in March found that 65 percent of Americans know someone who is gay. Both polls noted the percentages are much higher among young adults – those in the marrying demographic.

In early July, Barb Giarratano placed a \$1,000 deposit on her daughter's Oct. 15, 2015 wedding reception at the Inne at the Abingtons. Her daughter is engaged to a man and the issue of gay marriage had not come up. A week later, the social media firestorm around the Inne's policy broke out.

With gay and lesbian friends and family who are likely invitees to the wedding, and a personal commitment to LGBT equality,

Giarratano and her family knew they could not have an event there. Giarratano and her daughter Ashley Giarratano sued the Inne at the Abingtons, hoping for a refund of their deposit or a transfer of the deposit to an acquaintance having an event there.

"Discrimination goes against everything we believe in as a family," Giarratano said. "Our conscience wouldn't allow us to invite our gay and lesbian friends and family to a wedding at a place they know openly discriminates against them."

Her chances of success in court are slim, said attorney Robert Schenk, who represents wedding industry professionals and maintains a blog, weddingindustry.com. Schenk noted the standard contract includes the nonrefundable deposit as the agreed upon damages the vendor would incur in the event of a cancellation. Unless a contract says something is transferable, it is assumed to be nontransferable, he said.

While the Inne may have the legal footing to pocket the deposit, Schenk said he would advise a client in such a situation to refund the money to avoid cost and trouble and make it contingent on a non-disparagement agreement to prevent the family from causing more social media problems. A venue has a 90 percent chance of re-booking a date, he said. Such a staunch stance against same-sex couples may not be in the businesses' best interest.

"If federal or state law doesn't step in to stop these practices, the free market will and is," Schenk said. "All around the country there are websites that say here are the gay-friendly venues and here are the ones that are not. Let those places that take a hard line against marriage equality to just go out of business."

► Full Truth

Continued from p. 11

congregation to reach for their dreams and live up to their full potential," said McCoy. "I was not doing that in my personal life. I wanted to do more in my own life."

So the church decided to install McCoy's assistant pastor, Allen Spencer, to lead the church. Spencer's tenure as pastor was to be a short one however. Bean decided to relocate him to New York and replace him with someone who had studied under him directly, Detroit native Darren McCarroll, in 1996. McCarroll remained with the church for three years until members from Full Truth made the decision to pull out of the Unity Fellowship Movement.

Briefly, McCoy returned.

"I was only there for a few months to help the church resolve a massive debt," she said. "We managed to raise enough to get things back on track, and I went back to dealing with my life."

But before she left, McCoy ordained Darlene Franklin, a longtime deacon with the church, as minister. Franklin provided Full Truth with some much needed consistency and went on to lead the church for nine years. In 2010, she stepped down and Ronchele Andres, an assistant under Franklin, became the church's fifth pastor.

For her part, Andres saw to it that McCoy and the other two surviving pastors, Franklin and Spencer, were included in the 25th anniversary celebration.

"The weekend went beautifully," Andres said. "The best part is we had all four pastors. We had a good time all weekend. Everything just turned out great."

Somewhat fittingly, when McCoy spoke to the church, she spoke not about what the church had accomplished over the past 25 years but about the work that still needed to be done.

"I think the work of Full Truth continues," said McCoy. "My message to the congregation while I was there is that Full Truth is still

standing but must resist standing still. The challenge for the church and, especially the black LGBT community, is how to move forward and really live the love of God.

"Full Truth was the first LGBT organization to buy a building in Detroit," McCoy continued. "My dream has always been and continues to be for that building to be a place where healing and growth happens for our community. The abiding charge for Full Truth is to bring the good news of God's all-accepting love for all to the world and to demonstrate that loving presence through robust and effective ministries. We must do the simple work of the Church: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the homeless, etc. In a city so damaged by despair, it is my belief that this is the best time ever to witness the power of love, hard work, humility and compassion. This is the best time ever for the black LGBT community in Detroit to live the Full Truth of their lives, which is a commanding awakening to the beauty, power and capabilities emerging in each of us every day."

Extended briefs are available online at:

>> www.PrideSource.com



THE BEST OF ENEMIES

BY: MARK ST. GERMAIN
DIRECTED BY:
DR. ARTHUR J. BEER

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Angie Martell, BTL Photos: AJ Trager



Nearing Agricultural Nirvana With Dolly The Llama

BY AJ TRAGER

Following a path that has taken her from working in civil rights in the big metropolis of New York City to owning dozens of sheep, chickens, pigs and other rowdy farm animals, Angie Martell seeks a full life of balance and tranquility in Chelsea.

She and her partner, Kelly, have been together for nearly 20 years and have over 150 animals on their farm. Martell passes her free hours helping Kelly, who works days, nights and weekends, while tending squawking and hopping

characters. In 2011, the couple moved from NYC with their two children to the small town outside of Ann Arbor.

Martell is a holistic lawyer working in divorce and family law, business, criminal defense, estate planning and elder law, LGBT issues, civil litigation, employee rights, workers' compensation and immigration law. She wants to shift the mindset from the old realities into a more natural and spiritual way of relating to the nature of law and people. She sees conflicts as opportunities for growth.

"The old worldview of how

things have always been done doesn't work," Martell wrote in an Op Ed this summer. "The holistic approach focuses on the whole person and the whole problem in order to find more healthy and sustainable legal solutions."

The lawyer and daughter of two deaf parents grew up in poverty in the South Bronx and has lived in the city for most of her life. Prior to college, Martell was homeless before she lived with a teacher who convinced her to go to school.

"At the time I said 'Well, if there is room and board, I'm there,'" Martell notes.

She studied Spanish Literature at New York University where she received her bachelor's degree and went on to get her master's degree in media studies from The New School for Social Research in Manhattan. Martell wasn't yet done with school, and after receiving her master's degree from the City University of New York School of Law, the llama caretaker finally finished her school path receiving a graduate degree from Harvard.

Martell is a Reiki professional, meaning that she works hard at incorporating positive energy into her work, both in her law practice

and at home. A lot of her life is about energy healing and she often finds herself meditating with the animals on the farm. Martell doesn't "own" any of the creatures she takes care of; they are under her care, on a journey with her into the next day.

"The animals really teach me how to be a better person and a better lawyer. Whatever issues they have between one another, they learn to get along and figure it out. You learn from them what is important, what is not, how to get

See Angie Martell, page 20



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Hunter the Hero.

Heroic Hound Sparks MHS Support At Mega March For Animals

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

The Michigan Humane Society is celebrating its Ninth Annual Mega March for Animals this fall, raising funds to support homeless animals like "Hunter the Hero."

Hunter, a husky-mix puppy adopted from the Michigan Humane Society, helped rescue his Grosse Pointe Woods family this past March. Jill McLarty and her family were sleeping when the rescued dog began whining around midnight. McLarty let him out, thinking the dog needed to go out; instead, Hunter remained sitting outside while he continued to whine. Letting him back inside, she was surprised when the dog wouldn't follow her to the bedroom, but instead ran in circles before leading her to the kitchen. McLarty then discovered that one of the gas stove burners had been left on low, without a flame, causing gas to leak into the house; the family estimates the gas had been leaking for the six hours since dinner had been cooked.

"Hunter is definitely our little hero!" said Tim McLarty. "We look forward to participating in the Mega March for Animals to give homeless pets a second chance and possibly rescue their people in some way, large or small."

"The Mega March for Animals is the largest walk for animals in Michigan, and the funds raised by the event are critical to helping MHS change animal lives," said Kelly Roe, MHS Regional Events Manager. "We are fortunate that Hunter's family and so many others are passionately participating in this effort and paying forward all that our pets do for us."

Three different marches offer different views for participants. The Belle Isle walk will feature a two-mile walk around the island, the Kensington route will take walkers along the scenic shores of Kent Lake and Stony Creek walkers will travel through the woods. Those walking with a pet are asked to bring the pet's current vaccination records. Pets must be leashed or in a carrier at all times. Water stops will be provided along the routes for people and pets.

Two of the marches will be held at the same time on Sunday, Oct. 5. in Milford Township's Kensington Metropark and Stony Creek Metropark in Shelby Township. The third march will take place on Sunday, Oct. 12 at Belle Isle State Park in Detroit. All of the events will run from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

To register for the walks, visit www.michiganhumane.org/MEGA. For more information, contact the MHS at 248-283-5643 or megamarch@michiganhumane.org.

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Pick Up A Furry Friend This Weekend

BY BTL STAFF

The Michigan Humane Society (MHS) and the Detroit Zoological Society are hosting their fall 2014 "Meet Your Best Friend at the Zoo" event this weekend. The adoption event has placed over 20,000 homeless animals in homes since 1993. This year, over 1,000 adoptable kittens, puppies, cats and dogs from 38 animal welfare organizations will be available.

"Meet Your Best Friend at the Zoo is the perfect event to find that special dog, cat, kitten or puppy to add to your family," said Michael Robbins, MHS vice president of marketing and communications. "With so many adoption groups from around the state and beyond, you're sure to find your new best friend."

Adoption fees and policies are set by each participating group and not by event hosts or sponsors. Only qualified homes will be able to adopt animals. Adopters must present a driver's license or state ID card. All dogs and cats will have received a medical check-up and age-appropriate vaccinations. For health and safety reasons, please leave current pets at home.

Because puppies are often in high demand, "puppy passes" will be given each day to the first 25 adoption event guests who specifically want a puppy.

The event will take place from 1-7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 19 and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 20. The Detroit Zoo is

located at 8450 W. 10 Mile Road, Royal Oak. There is no charge for admission or parking for the event, which takes place under large tents in the front parking lot. For more information, visit www.michiganhumane.org or call 248-283-1000.

Meet Your Best Friend at the Zoo is presented by Purina ONE and sponsored by PetSmart, PetSmart Charities, Imagine Theater, Genisys Credit Union and Walgreens.



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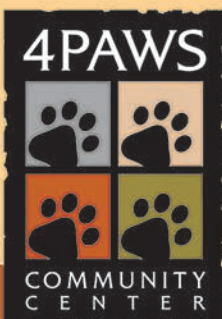
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► **Happenings**

Continued from p. 16

along in life and how to really be with the land. When I am out there, despite what is going on in my life, they always teach me something,” Martell says.

Not every animal on the land gets along, but the small community makes it work. The two male rams, for example, are kept apart because they would butt heads. The sheep, all named after famous women like Hilary Clinton and Anne Frank, the mini-goats and two llamas are all free to roam in one area.

Dolly the llama is Martell’s favorite animal on the farm. She got him almost two years ago with the purpose of being a guard, watching over the sheep and goats that are susceptible to attacks from coyotes and other predators. For added protection, she has installed an electrical fence.

Other animals on the farm had like-companions, and soon Martell realized that Dolly seemed lonely. That’s when she got Abby. Both llamas come from the same Michigan locale. And like many relationships, they had to figure out who was going to be the dominant



partner. “Abby is clearly the one in charge,” Martell laughed.

She connects best with Dolly because he comes from Latin America. Martell is Puerto Rican and her heritage is very important to her.

“I identify with Dolly in many ways because he is there to help the rest of the flock find balance, and I feel that is what I try to do in my life, help others find their way,” Martell said. “If you look into his eyes, you really see the soul.”

Kelly works the land the hardest and spends the daylight hours feeding, milking and tending to the animals. They’re working to produce their own goat cheese from the goat’s milk that they are already harvesting and have set up a creamery in what used to be the garage. The environment that the couple has is always changing, whether through expanding the roaming area for the herd or through building their home by adding new personalities to the farm.

Moving to Michigan was a bit of culture shock for Martell. In the city, she rarely drove, and she was scared to find some Michigan speed limits reach 70 mph. But while Michiganders might drive fast, NYC is known for its own characteristics that differ from the Midwest.

“Being from the east coast, people say I talk loud. Cannot say if that’s because I am Puerto Rican or a New Yorker. Midwesterners are more reserved. But what the Midwest has to offer is the people are so generous, open, honest and forgiving, and it has an amazing energy... and the connection with farming. I have come to respect farmers in ways that

I never thought I would. It’s a hard job,” Martell says.

She’s always been an “out” lesbian and jokingly mentions that she knew at the age of five that she liked girls. The most difficult thing about moving to Michigan was the prejudice and harassment she has seen her kids go through.

“Having your kids be bullied because they have two moms or being treated like second-class citizens because of our marital status is one of the hardest things,” Martell shares. “The biggest challenge is standing up and saying ‘I am a lesbian and I will always be a lesbian, and I’ll be here for the community.’”

She’s confident that Michigan’s laws will change and is seeing a shift in the minds of legislators and community members.

“I really am fortunate that this holistic peace has come together,” says Martell. “Fortunate that I meet interesting people all along the journey that open my eyes to things that I want as part of my life and have helped me along the way. The next piece is all about... well who knows? We’ll see. But I love living in the area and being a part of the group.”



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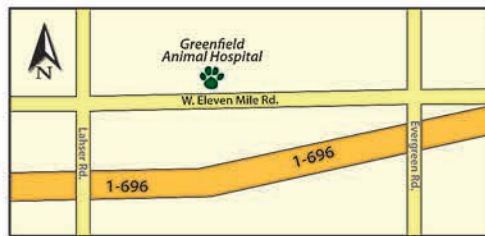
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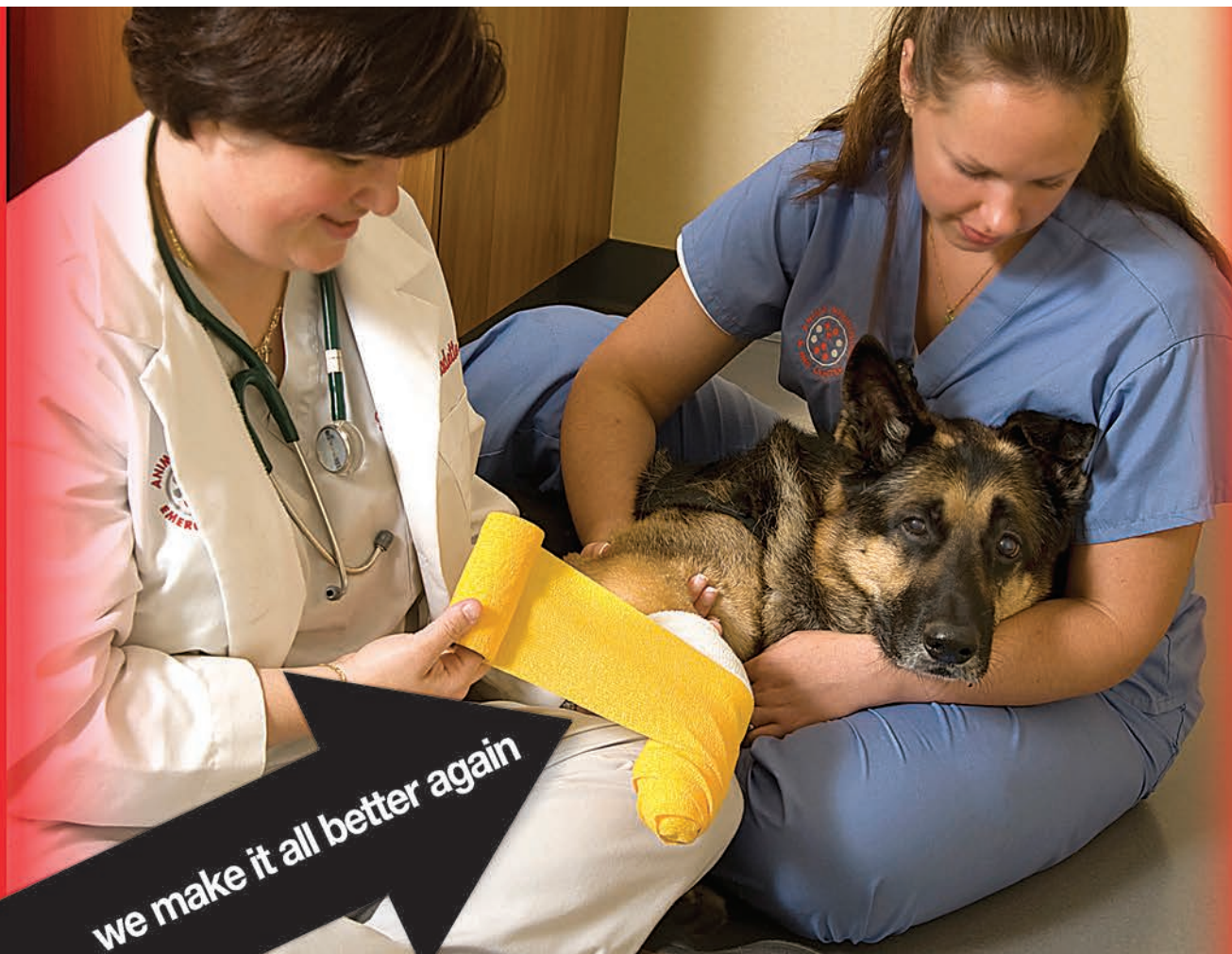
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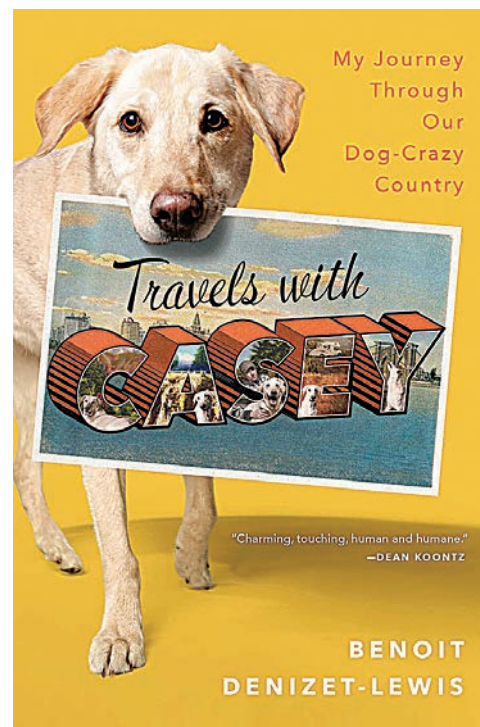
Memoir Chronicles Gay Writer's Journey With Dog

BY SHELBY CLARK
PETKUS

Openly gay author Benoit Denizet-Lewis brings his observational writing to the world of pets with his recently published memoir, "Travels With Casey."

Denizet-Lewis begins his work with "I don't think my dog likes me very much." The dog in question? Casey, a nine-year-old, moody Labrador-mix who accompanies the writer on a 13,000-mile roadtrip over 32 states. During the four months trip, Denizet-Lewis chronicles the dogs and dog-obsessed humans he meets, including wolf-dogs in Appalachia. Other adventures on the journey include searching for stray dogs with a dedicated rescuer in Missouri, visiting "Dog Whisperer" Cesar Millan in California, spending a full day at a "kooky" dog park in Manhattan and getting pulled over by a K9 cop. Other characters that make an appearance in the work include pet psychics, hitchhikers with dogs in tow and two women who took their neighbor to court for allegedly failing to pick up her dog's poop.

The publisher of "Travels With Casey" describes the work as "a delightfully idiosyncratic blend of memoir and



travelogue coupled with an exploration of a dog-loving America. What does our relationship to our dogs tell us about ourselves and our values? Denizet-Lewis explores those questions – and his own canine-related curiosities and insecurities – during his unforgettable road trip through our dog-loving nation."

Denizet-Lewis, a San Francisco native and dual-citizen of both France and the United States, has penned multiple works on sex, gender, youth culture and dogs. He's known for his ability to spotlight trends, such as the emergence of adolescents coming out as gay or bisexual. He's also written pieces on sex, ex-gays, NAMBLA, lesbians and gender dysphoria. He's been awarded the Excellence in Journalism Award from the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association and received the GLAAD Media Award for "Outstanding Magazine Article" for his work on "Coming Out in Middle School," featured in the New York Times.

"Travels With Casey" is available through various booksellers, including Barnes & Noble, Amazon and Apple's iBookstore. For more information on Denizet-Lewis' travels with Casey, visit www.travelswithcasey.com.

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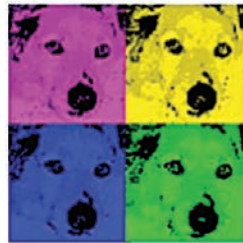
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BIRTH OF A GODDESS

Breakout Musician Banks Talks Prison Fans, Tracy Chapman's Gender & Newfound Fame

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Jillian Banks is a long way away from being a gay icon, but she's off to a good start. Like Madonna and Cher, the moody Los Angeles songstress is a one-name phenom: Banks. A touchstone of 2014, her debut, "Goddess," is an intoxicating hybrid of James Blake-esque electronica and old-school R&B.

Before performing Oct. 4 at Saint Andrews Hall in Detroit, Banks rang to chat about the calls she gets from prisoners, mistaking Tracy Chapman for a man and her mission to make everyone feel like a "goddess."

How did you become known as Banks?

Growing up people called me Banks, and my music is very fragile at points, and also very powerful and almost aggressive. I feel like Banks has masculine and feminine qualities to it, so I think it's the representation of my music in a word and a name.

Have you always embraced your masculine tendencies? Were you a tomboy?

I went through stages of being a tomboy when I was little, definitely. For me, it's more about feeling really strong and powerful in what I do. But yeah, definitely growing up I went through stages where I was in the mud constantly. (Laughs)

When it comes to your persona, what's different about you on stage versus off?

I mean, it's still me. But everybody has layers to them, and different attributes are magnified in different settings. Definitely when I'm on stage, I feel my most pure form. I'm just me. I just sing my music. I dive into my music and whatever comes out is what comes out on stage.

Do you harness a fiercer persona when you're playing music? Is that something you've always done?

Yeah, I would say so. I mean, I'm fierce as a human, and it comes out on stage. You can't be walking down the street and, you know, singing your songs and strutting.

Why not?

(Laughs) OK, you could! But, yeah, it's just like I said: I dive into music onstage and I'm very in tune with what each word means and that comes out with strength, maybe. You could say that, I guess.

Gay men are drawn to strong people. How aware are you of a gay following at this point in your career?

I don't know. I don't really think of whether my fans are gay or straight or whatever. I just think of all of them as people who connect with my music, and that's incredible.

How did you decide on "Goddess" for the album title?

Embracing your own human characteristics is a big theme in my music. I write about feeling weak. I write when I'm feeling strong and sexy and spicy. I write when I'm feeling angry and aggressive. And it's just human. You're not a robot. I feel like I'm a goddess

INFO

Banks

7 p.m. Oct. 4
Saint Andrews Hall, Detroit
saintandrewsdetroit.com

because of that. And every woman is a goddess, and every man is a god. Everyone is so powerful. I just want people to embrace their own weaknesses and their own strengths and just love all of that. Just be. Breathe and be.

I know many men who feel like goddesses too.

(Laughs). Yeah, I was gonna say every man and woman is a goddess!

You've always been a big Tracy Chapman fan, and when you were younger, didn't you think she was a man?

I thought she was a man! I thought she was a male! I was listening to her in my mom's car and I saw the album cover and it was a woman. I was just completely mesmerized by her. I was infatuated with her. I couldn't believe this guttural, crunchy, layered, dark tone was coming from a woman. I was a young girl hearing that and it was incredible. People are not just one thing. It doesn't matter what you look like or what people think of you – people are so layered, and you can never sum somebody up by how they look. You just have to experience their energy, and so I was just in love with her.

Did you have that epiphany about people being multi-faceted because of Tracy Chapman?

I don't know if that was the only reason, but I was definitely wowed by her voice. She was definitely one of the first. Her, Fiona Apple, Lauryn Hill – I just connected to them so much growing up. But out of all of them, I was the youngest when I discovered Tracy Chapman. I mean, I feel like my legs didn't even touch the floor when I was in my mom's car listening to her. Like, then, my legs were dangling off the seat!

How long did it take for you to figure out she was a woman?

A month or two. I was just listening to this buttery voice I kept hearing – I knew all the words – and I was always like, "Play that song." But I never knew her name. Then I heard her name was "Tracy," I looked at the album cover and I was like, "Wow – amazing!"

How are you dealing with your sudden fame? Do you have any reservations about it?

(Sighs) I don't know. I'm trying to just be in the moment and experience things. Being known – it's a very new thing for me, definitely. I kept my music very private for such a long time. I didn't have a Facebook or an Instagram or a Twitter. I was comfortable not being open about my music. Now, all of a sudden, people are hearing it and they're seeing my face. It's a new thing for me, but I'm just so fulfilled being able to even do this. And the fact that people are connecting with it – it's incredible. It's amazing. I'm just excited.

Because you're not engaged with social networking, you famously gave out your phone number and told your fans to call you. Tell me

about the best call you've received from a fan.

I get some really emotional ones, and I get some really silly ones. At one point, somehow, I think I was on prison radio, and then I was just getting calls one day out of nowhere. I got six calls from six different prisons. Now I get calls from prison all the time! So I don't know – those are kind of cool.

Usually when you get messages from people in prison it's just that collect call voice – "If you accept this call from whatever prison, press pound" – but my favorite message was from one inmate who got through. This message he left was so crazy: "I've been in prison for 12 years. We're not allowed to watch TV or have phones or anything in here, but I read a magazine you were in and you must be really special for them to be talking about you like that." It was one of the most genuinely beautiful messages. I played it for my management and we were trying to find out who this guy was. I was so intrigued by him! I wanted to know about him! But his name was generic, so we never really found out.

Most people would probably consider random prison calls creepy, but you call it "cool."

(Laughs) Yeah, I mean, it's pretty crazy – but it's still cool! "Orange Is the New Black"!

Are there personal experiences or feelings so sacred to you that you leave them out of your music?

No. You were asking me about being more public now and I have to make a conscious decision to never change how I write. My music is the safest place for me. It's the one place I can say anything, and so I have to make a conscious decision never to hold anything back even though there's this new thing happening where people know me and they're hearing the music, which is crazy. But there's a song on the album called "Someone New" that was really hard for me. It was the first song that I wrote that I couldn't listen to for a few months – it just hurt my heart. With music, I put everything into it. It's what keeps me sane. I don't think that'll ever change.

You have a psychology degree from the University of Southern California. How does that knowledge of human emotions play into your songwriting?

I was writing songs before I got my degree and I don't really think it affects my writing at all. I've always been interested in adolescent development and how your brain needs certain chemicals to function at certain levels. Different relationship dynamics have always intrigued me too. That's why I got my degree in it. But in terms of my music – my music is all heart. There's nothing in my head that creates my music. It's just my heart and my gut, and it comes out how it does.

How is your heart feeling right now?

Happy.



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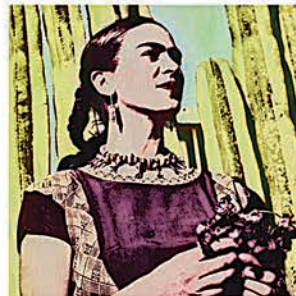
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Coming Sept. 22: The 2014 Wilde Awards It'll Be One 'Wilde' Night At The Berman Center

BY BTL STAFF

It will indeed be one "Wilde" night when Michigan's professional theater community comes together Sept. 22 for The 13th Annual Wilde Awards. "Although the number 13 may be considered by many to be unlucky, it will prove to be anything but for more than a couple dozen thespians who are competing against their peers from across the state for honors at this year's ceremony," said Donald V. Calamia, co-creator and host of The Wilde Awards. "Michigan is blessed with an abundance of talent, and it's a privilege to help the community celebrate and acknowledge the excellence found in theaters big and small and from one side of the Mitten State to the other."



Wilde Awards founder Don Calamia presenting an award at the 2011 Wilde Awards. BTL file photo: Andrew Potter

Established in 2002 by Pride Source Media Group and produced by EncoreMichigan.com, the premier source for news and information about the state's professional theater industry, this year's Wilde Awards honor the best performances, productions and technical accomplishments of the recently concluded 2013-14 theater season. "And what a season it was," Calamia said. "Our team of professional critics visited 49 theaters, saw 225 shows, and then had to winnow down the work of hundreds and hundreds of artists into a handful of nominees in 27 categories. To say it wasn't an easy task is an understatement!"

Now, with the hard work over, the fun begins. Often referred to as Michigan's version of the Tony Awards, The Wilde Awards is a delightfully prestigious event filled with food, drinks and camaraderie. "And a ceremony that's equal parts solemn and irreverent, fun and serious, comedic and drama-filled – with musical numbers interspersed throughout," Calamia said. "It's a night where the unexpected can happen – and it usually does, which gives attendees something to gossip about for days to come."

The ceremony, co-hosted by noted actress Naz Edwards with music direction by R. MacKenzie Lewis,

PREVIEW

The 2014 Wilde Awards

The Berman Center for the Performing Arts
6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield
248-661-1900
www.theberman.org
Monday, Sept. 22, 2014
Hors d'oeuvre and cocktail reception begins at 6:30 p.m.

Awards ceremony starts promptly at 8 p.m. Dessert afterglow immediately follows. \$21 per person, or \$46 VIP admission per person (which includes unlimited bar service). Recommended for ages 18 and above only.

Sponsored by Pride Source Media Group

will once again be held at The Berman Center for the Performing Arts in West Bloomfield. "And every year we're there, the show gets better and better. Why? That's easy to explain," Calamia said. "The Berman's managing director, Elaine (Hendriks) Smith, is wonderful and easy to work with, and technical director Eric W. Maher always comes up with new twists and turns for us, and this

year is no different. This will likely be the most high-tech and visually appealing theater awards show ever produced in the state. Together, they and their staff work very hard to make the evening a smashing success. And this year will be the best yet!"

Plus, he said, having Edwards produce the musical numbers with Lewis on the keyboard and choreography by Phil Simmons mean the entertainment will be top-notch. "An amazing troupe of performers has been assembled from all across the state, and I can't wait to see what they've come up with."

Ultimately, the night will be one of memories and magic, Calamia said. "While both the good and not-so-good will be acknowledged, our main purpose is to share an evening during which all of the great work over the past season will be celebrated and honored. And then we can start all over again in anticipation of yet another great year of theater to come!"

For more information about The 2014 Wilde Awards: www.encoremichigan.com/article.html?article=8822. For the complete list of nominations and honorable mentions: www.encoremichigan.com/article.html?article=8824

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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Sept. 18

The Dog Filmed over the course of a 10-year period by co-directors Allison Berg and Frank Keraudren, and interweaving extraordinary archival footage on the robbery, 70's era interviews and the early gay liberation movement in which "The Dog" played an active role, the documentary captures the many sides of John Wojtowicz's larger-than-life persona: he is, by turns lover, husband, soldier, lover, activist, New Yorker, mama's boy and bank robber. Draft House Films, **Multiple**. Draffhousefilms.com/film/the-dog

Cocktails by Design 6 p.m. Part of DIFFA. Tickets: \$100. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), **TBD**. michiganidscoalition.org

Candidates Night 7 p.m. An opportunity to speak with candidates and to discuss their positions on issues of profound importance to the feminist community: equal pay, marriage equality, violence against women, right to vote, Equal Rights Amendment, the environment, LGBT considerations. Oakland/Macomb NOW, 3179 Livernois, **Troy**.

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

Friday, Sept. 19

Artistic Women's Entertainment 1 a.m. AWE is female entertainment group in SE Michigan (largely lesbians) who sing, dance, perform spoken word and more. The show is a chance for women of all skills to get on stage with a supportive audience AWE, **Inkster**. 248-943-2411. lindacbrin@gmail.com Artisticwomensentertainment.org

Pride Media Exhibition Come and check out all the great local talent in Southeast Michigan! Interested in being one of our featured artists? Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Artworks Detroit 6 p.m. Part of DIFFA. Tickets: \$75. Michigan AIDS Coalition

(MAC), **TBD**. Michiganidscoalition.org

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Round Trip-When two women move to Tel Aviv to build better lives for their children, they end up finding each other -- and a surprisingly intimate friendship. While Nurit (Anat Waxman) is working to keep her children away from her deadbeat husband, Mushidi (Nthathi Moshesh) has left her son behind in Africa so she can easily look for work. Nurit's subsequent decision to hire Mushidi as her children's nanny helps them both in their quest for change. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org/

Bitch 8:30 p.m. Artistic Women's Entertainment (AWE), 22812 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. Artisticwomensentertainment.org

My Big Funny Peter 10 p.m. Beary Poppins, featuring Peter C. Bisuito. Tickets: \$25. Emagine Royal Oak, 200 N. Main St., **Royal Oak**. 248-943-2411. Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Sept. 20

AIDS Walk Great Lakes Bay Region AIDS Walk, **Saginaw**. 989-941-1458. pflag@pflag-mbs.org

Cocktails by Design/ArtWorks Detroit Auction Original works of art by 150 artists, silent and live auction, entertainment, free valet parking, and appetizer stations by Epicurean Group. Tickets: \$75-100. Michigan AIDS Coalition, **Detroit**. mmills@michiganidscoalition.org michiganidscoalition.org

Meet Your Best Friend at the Zoo Dogs, cats, puppies and kittens from more than 30 animal welfare organizations will be available for adoption. Free (standard admission rates into the zoo apply). The Michigan Humane Society and The Detroit Zoo, 8450 W. 10 Mile Road, **Royal Oak**. 248-283-1000. Michiganhumane.org

Come Hungry, Leave Happy Strolling and tasting food tour.meet at Rocky's or Mootown Ice Cream. Tickets: \$29. Feet on the Street Tours, 2489 Russell St., **Detroit**. 248-353-8687. Enjoythed.com

Meet Your Best Friend 10 a.m. Hundreds of dogs, cats, puppies and kittens will be available for immediate adoption to loving homes at one of the nation's largest off-site companion animal adoption events. Detroit Zoo,

8450 W. 10 Mile Road, **Royal Oak**. 248-541-5717. Detroitzoo.org

Puppy Mill Awareness Day 12 p.m. Join a human chain that will be made to raise awareness of community stores selling puppies and dogs from puppy mills. Puppy Mill Awareness of Southeast Michigan and HSHV, **Novi**. Michiganpuppymills.com

Dining By Design Detroit (DIFFA) 6 p.m. First night: Cocktails by Design. Tickets: \$100. Second night: Artworks Detroit. Tickets: \$75. Final night: Gala Dinner. Tickets: \$250. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), 160 W. Fort, **Detroit**. Michiganidscoalition.org

Gala Dinner 6 p.m. Part of DIFFA. Tickets: \$250. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), **TBD**. Michiganidscoalition.org

Sunday, Sept. 21

Wags and Wishes Drop off HSHV wish list items in specified drop boxes or donate at register. Humane Society of Huron Valley, **Various**. Hshv.convio.net

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

Bisexual Peer Group 4 p.m. Our group meets monthly on the third Friday & discussion relates to bisexual identity. Building is handicap accessible using ramp to rear entrance. Bisexual Peer Group, 319 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-678-2478. Biprideannarbor@gmail.com Facebook.com/groups/110918256984/

Ballroom Dance Classes 5:15 p.m. All are welcome-singles, couples, LGBT, Allies. Anyone can learn to lead or follow! Tickets: \$10. GOAL, 247 W. Nine Mile, **Ferndale**. 248-514-0330. Meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

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

Regardless Of (Narcotics Anonymous Meeting) 7 p.m. This is a closed meeting for addicts or those who think they might have a drug problem. This may be a Common Needs meeting, but any addict

See Happenings, page 33

Editor's Pick



The premier fall event raising funds for AIDS awareness comes to Detroit this weekend with Dining By Design Detroit (DIFFA). Michigan AIDS Coalition's event will feature different themes each evening.

Tonight's event, Cocktails by Design, is \$100 to experience designer tables hosting 25 local chefs' works and a silent auction. Tomorrow night's evening, Artworks Detroit, will display 150 pieces of art work complete with elegant appetizers, wine and cocktails; tickets are \$75. The Gala Dinner will be held on Saturday and include dinner, appetizers, silent auction

and live entertainment for \$250.

Each event of DIFFA begins at 6 p.m., running Sept. 18-20. Activities are all held in the Former Federal Reserve Building, 160 W. Fort, Detroit. For more information, visit www.michiganidscoalition.org.

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9/24	LILTING	11/5	EAT WITH ME
10/1	THE WAY HE LOOKS	11/12	DROWN
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Take Hope In Health

Relationship Skills Classes Focus On Wellness

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

After its earlier success this year, Affirmations will again host a series of relationship skills classes along with HAVEN and Turning Point. Themed around health and wellness, the classes will have a different topic each session. The skills class is based on a curriculum development by the Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse in Seattle. (Space is limited for each session, so advanced registration at www.goaffirmations.org is recommended.)

Regardless of relationship status or history, the event (which is also BDSM and poly inclusive) will cover a variety of relevant skills for LGBTQ and their allies. Topics include personal accountability, healthy conflict resolution, relationship values and building community connections.

The following outline summarizes the program's different evening themes:

Session 1: Anti-Oppression

The meeting will entail basic concepts about relationships that are the foundation of the series, including an anti-oppression framework that will guide the rest of the conversations.

Session 2: Values

This session will involve talking about the role of values in building healthy relationships. Individuals will explore and clarify their own values and discuss how such values impact their relationships.

Session 3: Expectations & Negotiation

Session attendees will look at identifying their expectations and negotiating from them as ongoing and essential components of building relationships. Skills will be explored for

making agreements in relationships and for creating relationships.

Session 4: Accountability

The session will consist of accountability and "what it is and what it isn't." Several models of accountability will be examined, including ways to bring this skill to relationships.

Session 5: Boundaries

Boundaries are an essential part of healthy relationships. Guests will explore their choices about whom to set boundaries with and examine the tools used to set and maintain healthy boundaries with the people in their lives.

Session 6: Conflict

Negotiation, communication and boundary-setting skills that were discussed in earlier sessions will be applied to topics like sex, money, resources and jealousy.

Session 7: Community Connections

Relationships exist within the context of other relationships. In this last session, the importance of maintaining and supporting community connections will be discussed.

Each session will run from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday evenings, beginning on Oct. 9 and running until Nov. 20. The cost for the program is \$35 for the entire series. Prices are per person. Specific sessions for therapist training on these topics will be held in November. For more information, contact the health & wellness manager at Affirmations, Lydia Ahlum Hanson, at lhanson@goaffirmations.org or 248-677-7223. Affirmations is located at 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale.

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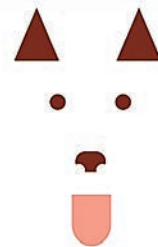
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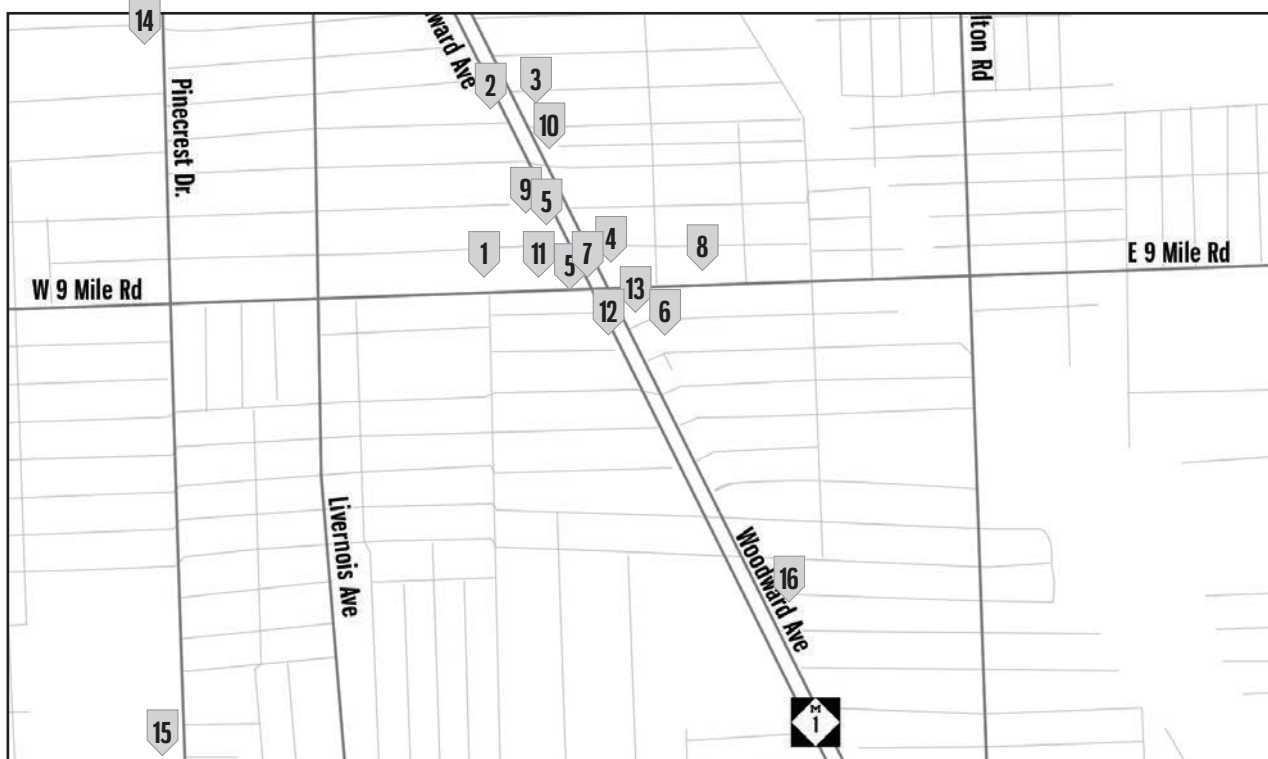
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Editor's Pick

Common Ground and The Guild of Artists & Artisans brings the Birmingham Street Art Fair to South Old Woodward this weekend. The event, celebrating its 40th anniversary, will feature unique shopping and fabulous restaurants. More than 130 juried artists will be featured in this elegant setting. More than 80,000 fairgoers attend annually.

The Guild of Artists & Artisans is known for its work on the award-winning Ann Arbor Summer Art Fair. The non-profit, membership association is composed of multiple independent artists.

The Birmingham Street Art Fair will begin at 10 a.m. on Sept. 20-21. Saturday's event will run until 6 p.m., Sunday's until 5 p.m. The fair is located on South Old Woodward between Maple Road and Frank Street in downtown Birmingham. For more information, visit www.theguild.org/fairs/common-ground-art-fair/.

► Happenings

Continued from p. 28

seeking recovery is welcome! The time has come that any addict seeking recovery in the Washtenaw area can find it. The more diverse the fellowship, the more members we are able to reach! The goal is to make the message of recovery available to all so that any addict can come to NA and feel that they too belong in this fellowship! Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. jimtoycenter.org

Drag Queen Addictions 10:30 p.m. LaBelle and Aretha Franklin impersonator April Summers brings her big personality to the stage as she introduces a lineup of drag stars. 18+. Inuendo Nightclub, Corner of Nevada St. and Southbound I-75, **Detroit**. <https://facebook.com/inuendonightclub?rf=118209121607517>

Monday, Sept. 22

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

New Member Night 7 p.m. Washtenaw County's original mixed LGBT chorus. Opportunity to join LGBT chorus group. No commitments, just see if we're the right group for you. All are welcome--LGBT & allies. No sight reading skills or audition are required. Out Loud Chorus, 1400 W. Stadium Blvd, **Ann Arbor**. 734-265-0740. outloudchorus@gmail.com OlOnline.org

Tuesday, Sept. 23

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

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

DTMC Open Auditions 7 p.m. The audition requirement is simple, consisting of a vocal range check and placement with the Artistic Director. Entrance is through the glass doors in the rear of the building. Detroit Together Mens Chorus, 2441 Pinecrest Dr., **Ferndale**. 248-544-3872. dtmcorg@gmail.com Dtmc.org

Wednesday, Sept. 24

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

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-Sept. 25. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

The Ark "Concert Sound Production Classes" Led by veteran audio engineer Kaia Skaggs, the fundamentals of audio production will be covered through a combination of lecture and a few hands-on exercises. Fee: \$150. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., **Ann Arbor**. Sept. 8-Oct. 5. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

Woodside Church "Monthly Jazz Vespers" Alternative worship service featuring local musicians from Flint and surrounding area. Presented in coffee house setting; refreshments will be served. Woodside Church, 1509 E. Court St., **Flint**. Sept. 20-Nov. 21. 810-767-4911. woodsidechurch.net

Benefits/Social Events

Downriver Actors Guild "Three Men and a Tenor" Theater fundraiser. Tickets: \$20. Theatre on the Avenue, 2656 Biddle, **Wyandotte**. Sept. 20-Sept. 21. 313-303-5269. Downriveractorsguild.net

Taylor Reading Corps "First Annual Oktoberfest" Tickets: \$20. Taylor Conservatory, 22314 Northline Road, **Taylor**. 5 p.m. Sept. 20. Taylorreadingcorps.org

Classical

Chamber Music Society of Detroit "Signature Chamber Series". Sellgman Performing Arts Center, 22305 W. 13 Mile Road, **Beverly Hills**. Sept. 20-Jan. 17. Chambermusicdetroit.org

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Chamber Series 1: Trio Andiamo" Piano Trios of Debussy & Ravel. Molly Grove Chapel, First Presbyterian Church, 510

W. Ottawa St., **Lansing**. 3 p.m. Sept. 21. Lansingsymphony.org

Comedy

The Ark "Laith Al-Saadi" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., **Ann Arbor**. 7:30 p.m. Sept. 21. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Mix Studio Theater "The Uncle Hippy Show" Starring Chilli Challis, Germaine Gebhard, and Thaddeus Challis. Tickets: \$10-15. The Mix Studio Theatre, 8 N. Washington St., **Ypsilanti**. 8 p.m. Sept. 20. 734-985-0875. Emergentarts.com

Concerts

AEG Live and The Ark "moe." Tickets: \$25-45. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., **Royal Oak**. Sept. 19. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "My Brightest Diamond" Tickets: \$18. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 8 p.m. Sept. 19. 313-576-5111. Dso.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Janis Siegel" Tickets: \$42. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., **Saugatuck**. 8 p.m. Sept. 19. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

The Acorn Theater "Janis Siegel of the Manhattan Transfer" Nine time Grammy winner. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., **Three Oaks**. 8 p.m. Sept. 18. 269-756-3879. Acorntheater.com

The Ark "Janiva Magness" Tickets: \$21. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., **Ann Arbor**. 8 p.m. Sept. 19. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Jill Barber" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., **Ann Arbor**. 8 p.m. Sept. 22. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Magic Bag "Living Colour" Tickets: \$25. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. Sept. 19. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

Acting: The First Six Lessons \$12-15. Emergent Arts at The Mix Studio Theatre, 8 N. Washington St., **Ypsilanti**. Sep. 24 - 28. 734-985-0875. emergentarts.com

Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo \$10-15. Peppermint Creek Theatre at Miller Performing Arts Center, 6025 Curry Lane, **Lansing**. Sep. 18 - 28. 517-927-3016. peppermintcreek.org

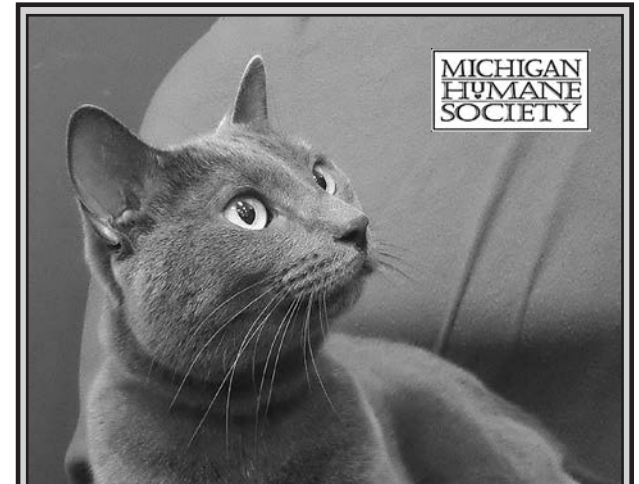
Guys and Dolls \$12-17. Richmond Community Theatre, 69619 Parker St., **Richmond**. Through Sep. 21. 586-727-9518. richmondtheatre.com

My Fair Lady \$13-24. Kalamazoo Civic

See Happenings, page 37

Puzzle solution on pg. 34

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



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Q Puzzle

Top Musical With Seven Bottoms

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13				14				15			
16			17					18			
19				20				21			
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	46			47		48		49	50	51	
52				53	54		55				
56				57			58				
59				60				61			
62				63				64			

Across

1 "Six Feet Under" creator Ball
5 Sounds of relief
9 Sophie B. Hawkins' "As ___ Me Down"

13 Seasoning for Rick Rodgers
14 Lagging behind
15 Quote as a reference
16 "___ and the Seven Bottoms" (Disney spoof off Broadway)
18 Where to watch a NY Liberty game

Down

1 Analyze for gold
2 Jessica of "Tootsie"
3 Place where a Greek would speak
4 Most like Mr. Right Now

19 "Hollywood Squares" choice
20 They bear many loads on trains
22 You can get a rise out of them
24 "The Velvet Fog"
25 Peter the Great, and more
28 Will and Grace shared one
30 Where to stick your baloney
33 Britten's raincoat
34 Like cornstalks that bear
35 Hero in this puzzle's musical comedy
39 Place name in New York
40 Meat source Down Under
41 Hot time for Colette
42 Dull finish
43 Composer Ned
46 Gettysburg general with the same name as Margaret
48 Becomes erect
52 Looked like
55 Bisected
56 R.E.M.'s "The ___ Love"
57 Villain in this puzzle's musical comedy
59 What Sam twitched on "Bewitched"
60 Sperm homophone?
61 Polo of "The Fosters"
62 They're performing, in "Fame"
63 Foursome after a desertion
64 "Lohengrin" soprano

5 What hangs from a Cuban
6 A, in Arabic
7 Lanford Wilson's "The ___ Baltimore"
8 Result of a good, hard workout
9 Split stuff
10 Daughter of the King
11 Currently
12 Longs, to a Samurai?
17 Waters down
21 Chan portrayal Sidney
23 ___-sex marriage
26 Stock car driver
27 Dumb-ass
29 "___ of Seventeen"
30 Broadway opening for a lot?
31 Bear of the night
32 Most likely to make you spit
36 Official witnesses
37 Belief summary
38 Star quality
44 La Salle of "ER"
45 Teeny-weeny
47 Standing up straight
49 Man of ___
50 Big jugs
51 Rutstein of "Disappear Fear"
52 Da Vinci's Lisa
53 At least once
54 Conn of "Grease"
58 Matthew in "The Producers"

Solution on pg. 33

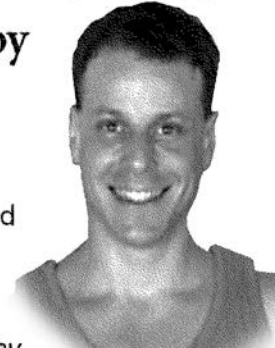


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Classifieds

112 ANNOUNCEMENTS - VOLUNTEERING

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Necto Dance Party
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Editor's Pick

The Village Players will premiere an original short film, "On the Line," on Sept. 26. The movie is based on the stage play "Twilight," written by Royal Oak playwright Barb Schmitt. The plot follows an elderly mother, Marjorie, who is being forced to leave her home by her grown son, and the mysterious phone call that alters the plan.

Gertrude Fox plays the role of Marjorie. Marc Rosati portrays the son, Alan. The film is a first

for 93-year-old Fox, who has appeared onstage throughout the metro community for the past 80 years. "When I was a teenager I used to dream about how wonderful it would be to be a movie star," laughs Fox. "I just didn't think it would take this long."

"On the Line" will be shown at the playhouse of The Village Players, 34660 Woodward Avenue in Birmingham. The doors open at 7 p.m.; the film begins at approximately 8 p.m.

Admission is \$10. Tickets can be obtained by calling 248-644-2075.

▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 33

Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Sep. 26 - Oct. 12. 269-343-1313. kazoocivic.com

My Fair Lady \$20-22. Stagecrafters at Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Through Oct. 5. 248-541-6430. stagecrafters.org

Secret Society of Twisted Storytellers \$16-20. The Society for the Re-institutionalization of Storytelling at Charles H. Wright Museum, 315 E. Warren, Detroit. 8 p.m. Sep. 19. 313-744-6037. Secretstorytellers.org

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown \$20. Village Players, 34660 Woodward Ave., Birmingham. Through Sep. 21. 248-644-2075. birminghamvillageplayers.com

Young Frankenstein \$19-22. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Through Sep. 21. 517-482-5700. riverwalktheatre.com

Professional

Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches \$10-29. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Sep. 27. 248-545-5545. theteringwald.com

Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika \$10-29. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Sep. 29. 248-545-5545. theteringwald.com

Annie \$35-85. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Sep. 26 - Oct. 4. 313-872-1000. broadwayindetroit.com

Boeing Boeing \$10-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Sep. 19 - Oct. 4. 313-577-2972. hilberry.com

BoxFest Detroit Workshop \$5. BoxFest Detroit at Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley, Detroit. Sep. 19 - 20. 313-967-0999. boxfestdetroit.com

Buried Child Donation only. The Abreact Theatre Collective, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Sep. 19 - Oct. 11. 313-454-1542. theabreact.com

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

Driving Miss Daisy \$27-41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Sep. 25 - Oct. 26. 734-663-0681. pntheatre.org

Grey Gardens \$12-15. Great Escape Stage Company, 155 W. Michigan Ave., Marshall. Through Sep. 21. 269-781-2700. greatescapestagecompany.com

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

Kevin Lepine: Hypnosis Unleashed 18+. \$15. Comedy Castle, 310 S. Troy St., Royal Oak. 8 p.m. Sep. 23. 248-542-9900. vegashypnosisshow.com

Laundry and Bourbon and Lone Star \$20. The Snug Theatre, 160 S. Water St., Marine City. Through Sep. 21. 810-278-1749. thesnugtheatre.com

Michigan Burlesque Festival \$15-25. Fancy Pants Arts and Entertainment, Hastings Street Ballroom/Tangent Gallery, 715 Milwaukee Ave., Detroit. Sep. 19 - 20. Brownpapertickets.com/event/820304

Spamalot \$15-32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Sep. 18 - Oct. 12. 734-268-6200. theencoretheatre.org

Sylvia \$15-20. Open Book Theatre Company at Penelope's Venue, 12219 Dix Toledo Road, Southgate. Sep. 26 - Oct. 4. 734-288-7753. openbooktc.com

The Big Story of Lazarus Small \$10-20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Through Sep. 27. 313-365-4948. planetant.com

The Gravedigger, A Frankenstein Story \$15-35. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Sep. 25 - Nov. 2. 517-655-SHOW. williamstontheatre.org

The Secret Garden \$32-34. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Sep. 19 - Oct. 12. 269-343-2727. farmersalleytheatretel.com

The Tempest \$25. Shakespeare in Detroit at Marlene Boll Theater inside the YMCA Detroit, 1401 Broadway St., Detroit. Sep. 20 - 21. shakespeareindetroit.com

The Value of Names \$41-48. The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company at Aaron DeRoy Theatre on the campus of the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Through Oct. 12. 248-788-2900. jetttheatre.org

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike \$27-32. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Sep. 18 - Oct. 19. 248-347-0003. tippingpointtheatre.com

ART 'N' AROUND

Art Detroit Now "3rd Thursdays in Detroit" 45+ local galleries and retail locations stay open until 9 p.m. to offer the

best in contemporary art. Multiple, Detroit. Aug. 15-Oct. 16. Artdetroitnow.com

Common Ground and The Guild of Artists & Artisans "Birmingham Street Art Fair" More than 130 juried artists will be featured in this elegant setting; more than 80,000 fairgoers attend annually. Downtown Birmingham, South Old Woodward, Birmingham. Sept. 20-Sept. 21. Theguild.org

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) "Abstraction and Landscape: Contemporary Woodcut" Curated by Endi Poskovic. Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sept. 12-Oct. 18. 313-832-8540. Detroitartistsmarket.org

Detroit Design Festival "Detroit Design Festival". Detroit Creative Corridor Center, 485 W. Milwaukee St. #100c, Detroit. Sept. 23-Sept. 28. Detroitdesignfestival.com

Ferndale Public Library "Menagerie A Group Exhibition" Artists reception is Thursday, Aug. 28th from 7-9 pm. Ferndale Public Library, 222 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. Aug. 28-Oct. 11. 248-546-2504. Ferndalepubliclibrary.org/index.php/art-exhibitions

Flint Institute of Arts "Diann Benoit and Suzanne Rock" Featured artists for September and October. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Sept. 7-Oct. 31. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.org

MOCAD "The People's Biennial" It examines the work of artists and other creative individuals, who operate outside the conventional art world. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sept. 12-Dec. 31. 313-832-6622. Mocadetroit.org

Padzieski Art Gallery "100 x 500". Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, 15801 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Sept. 1-Sept. 26. 313-943-3095. Dcacarts.org

Pewabic Pottery "Maker/Master". Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. Sept. 5-Oct. 19. 313-626-2000. Pewabic.org

Saline Antiques & Vintage MarketET "Saline Antiques & Vintage Market" An ever changing array of upcycled, recycled, and repurposed one-of-a-kind treasures, cool stuff, great local food and exciting shopping. Leashed pets welcome. Free parking. Tickets: \$6. Washtenaw Farm Council Roads, 5055 Ann Arbor/Saline Road, Ann Arbor. Sept. 20-Dec. 7. 937-875-0808. Facebook.com/pages/Saline-Antiques-Market

The Scarab Club "United States". The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Sept. 10-Oct. 18. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

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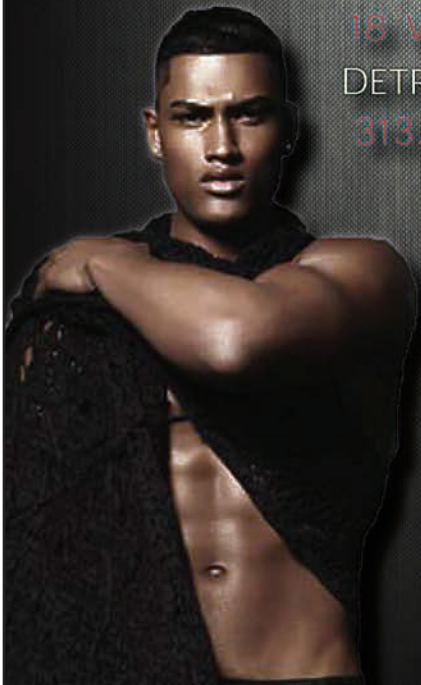
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