

MICHIGAN'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993



School To Re-Examine Discriminatory Policy

Sterling Hts Asks Lansing To Lead On Elliott-Larsen

“ It really burdens my heart, and it saddens me in a huge way because I feel like it's not our place to judge at all. ”

- Nick Jonas, pg. 26



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## COVER

4 The accidental activists of Ann Arbor's homoplex

BTL photo: AJ Trager



“The hardest part of this fight is the message that it sends: these 6,000 people signed something to repeal it (the ordinance) to say it's OK to discriminate and bully. So if the parents are saying 'it's OK,' the kids are saying 'it's OK.' It's going to continue.”

– Julie Bondy, Co-Chair  
of 1 Sterling Heights, pg. 5

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VOL. 2240 • OCT. 2, 2014 • ISSUE 883

#### PRIDE SOURCE MEDIA GROUP

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Phone 734.293.7200

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#### MEMBER OF

Michigan Press Association  
National Gay Media Association  
Q Syndicate



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# The Accidental Activists Of Ann Arbor's Homoplex

BY AJ TRAGER

**ANN ARBOR** – “First you have to ask, what is the Braun Court Community?” Keith Orr says.

Nearly thirty years ago, the area had an ethnic restaurant identity with Chinese, Middle Eastern, Mexican and Japanese cuisine filling the court with scents of curry and wasabi. Now, Braun Court, located directly across the street from Kerrytown and the Farmer's Market in Ann Arbor, is the center of what Orr describes as a “Gayborhood” and is home to the Jim Toy Community Center (JTCC), Trillium Real Estate, Shout, \aut\Bar and Common Language Bookstore.

This year, \aut\Bar was voted Best Neighborhood Bar in Washtenaw County, and Linda Lombardini was chosen as Realtor of the Year by the Ann Arbor Board of Realtors. Lombardini's award reads “Representing integrity, individual achievement and recognition from your peers in the real-estate industry.”

The impact Orr, Lombardini and their partners in life and business, Martin Contreras and Sandi Smith, bring to Ann Arbor and the statewide LGBT community is extraordinary and seemingly tireless.

Contreras has been a part of the Braun Court development since the mid '80s when he and his mother owned a Mexican restaurant called La Casita de Lupe in the center of the area. In 1995, nine years after they got together, Orr and Contreras decided to turn the “wolf's cottage” into a gay bar, forever changing Ann Arbor's gay scene with \aut\Bar.

“We wanted to do something that was very bright with open windows, and (be) all welcoming. We always advertise that we are serving the men and women of the gay community, their families and friends,” Contreras said.

When the bar opened, the Court was losing money and many of the buildings were empty. Today, the couple owns four of the buildings and have created a Gayborhood community where LGBT people can feel safe and have fun.

“It's a proud thing. We've had this profound effect on an entire area. That in itself is pretty profound. It's not just like, ‘Oh, we make people happy by giving them good food and drinks,’” Orr said.

Together they are pioneers within the LGBT community of eastern Michigan, even getting a visit by Westboro Baptist Church Leader Fred Phelps (an event that fundraised \$7,500 for the Jim Toy Community Center). They've had the attention of politicians – some local and some national – who have come out to support the community and served on other Ann Arbor Community boards such as the HIV Service

Center Board, Performance Network Board and The Ann Arbor Downtown Development Council and have helped plan events such as OutFest, The Wine Cellar and have fundraised for the Great Lakes Board of Colleagues and Spectrum, to name a few.

Contreras explains his experience as “exhausting” but notes his work, activism and volunteer opportunities are all a high priority. They work daily in \aut\Bar planning menus and managing the staff, rarely with a day off. But Orr and Contreras enjoy their work and are not making any plans to slow down.

In 2003, the couple bought Common Language, one of the last eight remaining LGBT bookstores in the country, Orr says, and

six months to get the space ready to house a business, the couple re-opened and branched out to work on property management. “I felt like being a lesbian owned business, it felt like this is the right place to be by giving back to the community by being directly in the middle of it,” Smith said.

Smith and Lombardini have been leaders in the LGBT community for over 20 years. Smith was president of the Washtenaw Rainbow Action Project (WRAP), the group that became the JTCC in 2010; they have also been hosts to numerous fundraisers and get-togethers and hosts for many LGBT positive “political” that have come to Braun Court. They've worked on building a community with the JTCC

an Equality Cabaret event that, in one day, raised \$17,000 that went directly towards the DeBoer-Rowse family and the Michigan Marriage Challenge.

For 19 years, Lombardini and Smith have been together, seeing big changes and growth within the LGBT community. They fought the Michigan Marriage Amendment in 2004 and were a part of the March on Washington in 1993.

“It's been, for me, a personal evolution. As much as I would've said I was an out lesbian in '93, I didn't know what out was until I found myself on the front page of the paper with my partner, fighting Proposal 2 in 2004,” Smith said.

Coming out is a long drawn out process, according to Smith, who says it was difficult when she came out in the '90s. She has friends who have been together for 40 years and tell her stories about how bad it was in the '50s and how terrible the police were.

“I think it's a lot different for younger people, for the work that has been done. I hear people talking about it when they were 12. If I had known at 12 what I now know at 50, you know, life would've been a lot simpler. The visibility is so much broader and the isolation is minimal,” Smith said. “And I think the internet has a lot to do with it – and television.”

## Marriage Battle

Orr agrees that much has changed in the past 20 years since the development of Braun Court. He and Contreras were married this past March in the wake of the DeBoer v Snyder ruling and have marriage equality on the forefront of their minds.

“Some things have so dramatically changed, and then you can be so surprised with how things haven't. With marriage equality, we look around and see how many states are

recognizing marriage equality, but you look at Michigan and go, ‘but we aren't one of them.’ There is real suffering for folks that are parents and cannot both be legally parents. So many things about marriage are important, and we have a hostile government,” Orr explains. “You have to celebrate the victories, no question. But there are some ways that we are still living the same life as quite some time ago.”

Inter-community fighting is a challenge Orr would like to see eradicated. He says the community is big enough that all should be respecting of one another's differences.

“Isn't this our problem, that we cannot get society to respect our differences? So let's



Keith Orr addresses the crowd gathered at Braun Court in June 2013 after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act. Braun Court will be the site of another gathering soon, at 5:30 p.m. on the day the 6th Circuit Court rules in Michigan's marriage case. BTL file photo.

moved it to Braun Court in '05. In recent years, they've changed their hands-on approach, supplying books during the Fall and Winter semesters for University of Michigan students and adding events like authors' forums.

## Recession Not A Barrier

In the midst of the recession, Linda Lombardini and Sandi Smith bought a building at the edge of Braun Court directly across from the JTCC and converted it into an office space for their business: Trillium Real Estate.

“We took our own advice and bought the building because deals were not making it to the selling table,” Lombardini said. The place had no dividing walls, and after working for

as the center piece, serving on the board of directors. Smith served on the City Council, the Washtenaw Housing Alliance and the Downtown Development Authority.

They were a part of the JTCC when, in 2006, the center was asked to assist in updating the Ann Arbor Non-Discrimination Ordinance to include updated language for one of the first non-discrimination ordinance to pass in the state.

“We've fallen back and allowed others to take charge in the language and all that. The center has been involved with the Human Rights Commission to make sure that the word choices were done right. The city turned to us for help,” Smith said.

And just this year, the couple organized

See Accidental Activists, page 8



# Sterling Heights Looks To Lansing To Take Lead On Elliott-Larsen

BY AJ TRAGER

**STERLING HEIGHTS** – Three months after it was passed, the Sterling Heights City Council repealed the non-discrimination ordinance that broadened protections to include gender identity and sexual orientation.

The ordinance was first introduced in May



Julie Bondy, Co-Chair of 1 Sterling Heights BTL. Photo by AJ Trager

of this year and before it was signed into city law by Mayor Richard Notte, the council heard over 10 hours of community comment. It passed with a 7-0 vote and included a religious exemption for protections of religious liberty, something Councilman Doug Skrzyniarz says is extremely important to him.

“It was one of the proudest days of my life,” Skrzyniarz wrote in an Op-Ed in September.

With other council members, Skrzyniarz looked at the threshold of the city and found it to be high, meaning that there was a high likelihood that if it came to a vote, city members would support LGBT protections on a non-discrimination ordinance.

But was he incorrect?

The ordinance passed in June, and shortly after, a group called the Sterling Heights Referendum Petition began collecting signatures for a petition calling for a public vote to repeal the ordinance. A month later, the signatures were collected and the city council – that had voted unanimously – repealed the ordinance from city law.

Julie Bondy was a big part of the process from the start. She was contacted by Skrzyniarz and Nate Shannon, co-chair of a group of advocates and activists pushing for the ordinance to pass called 1 Sterling

Heights (1SH), and a few Sterling Heights city workers to work on community involvement and education of the proposal.

Bondy passed out fliers at Ferndale Pride, Motor City Pride and she walked through Royal Oak and neighboring cities talking to the community to garner support. Her partner works for the City of Sterling Heights, which is the fourth largest city in Michigan, and for a brief three months was able to celebrate inclusion.

“She couldn’t be out at work, then she could, and now she can’t anymore,” Bondy said in near disbelief. “The firefighters that came out and did their speeches, they’re vulnerable now. So many people saw me that, if I walk around there (Sterling Heights), I could be discriminated against. We’re trying to sell our condo right now; if we go to buy a house and I walk in, I could be discriminated against. I, too, am vulnerable now.”

Bondy said that, while she was at a city council meeting with her son, the Referendum Petition called the LGBT community “sick, unnatural, immoral” and that they “get special rights” and are “impinging on their religious beliefs.”

“It was extremely liberating to stand there,” Bondy explained. “You saw the hatred in the room.” She delivered a speech, as did her son Mitchell, 21. And they were excited to see that the ordinance passed soon after.

“The question is, do we repeal it or put it up for a vote,” Skrzyniarz said. “Unfortunately, we cannot put it up for a vote this November.”

The deadline for anything to be placed on the November ballot passed on Sept. 5 so the Sterling Heights City Council voted to repeal the ordinance. Skrzyniarz says that a lot can happen in Lansing by the end of the year, and if not, the ordinance can go up for a statewide vote again in November of 2016. The council could have chosen to put it up for a vote in 2015, but they are looking towards the state legislature to make a decision. In the next meeting, the city council will look at a resolution to support a statewide amendment to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

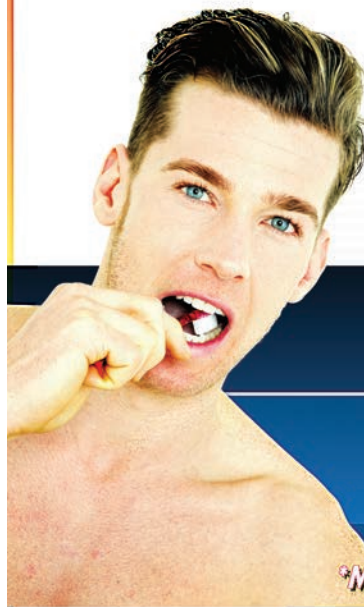
“The council is unanimous in terms of supporting LGBT rights,” Skrzyniarz said.

The Mayor Pro Tem, Michael Taylor, taking over for Notte while he is on sick leave, even picketed the Referendum Petition with Skrzyniarz and Bondy when they heard they

See Sterling Heights, page 8

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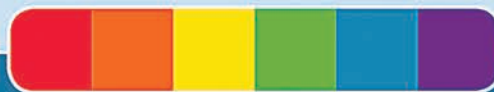


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# Trial Date Set For Pugh Case

## Former Council President Calls Allegations 'Outrageous'

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

**DETROIT** – Former Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh has come out swinging in a recent court filing, and he's taken aim at the mother of his accuser, Tamu Gaines. Through his attorney, Pugh had little to say about the young man he used to mentor, Frederick Douglass Academy for Young Men graduate Khody Sanford, but plenty to say about his mom.

"This case exists solely in the minds of plaintiff's mother and her attorneys," Pugh lawyer, Marc Deldin, said in the papers he filed. "Charles Pugh denies the factual allegations and the outrageous allegations that he committed criminal acts or violated Plaintiff's civil rights."

Plainly said, Pugh alleges that there is no real case against him.

"Plaintiff must, but cannot, prove any set of facts that show Mr. Pugh violated his personal security or infringed on his civil rights," the filing reads.

Pugh asked that the civil suit against him be dismissed, but U.S. District Court Judge David Lawson declined to do so. Instead, he set a trial date for Oct. 13, 2015.



Charles Pugh

The filing marked the first time that Pugh had an attorney speaking for him. Citing financial hardship, Pugh was representing himself until recently.

Much has been made about the text messages exchanged between Pugh and Sanford. They were explicit and show that Pugh did have a fascination with his former mentee.

"Truth is, I had a crush on you all year," Pugh texted Sanford on June 3, 2013, just days after Sanford, then 18, finished his senior year of high school.

"I just couldn't say or do anything about it until now. I think you kind (of) knew tho (sic). LOL."

"Yes, I did," Sanford answered.

"YOU DID!!!!!!!"

"OMG how?!!!!!"

"Did anybody else notice?"

"Yeah," Sanford told Pugh. "EVERYBODY knew."

Text messages reveal that Pugh paid Sanford to make a video of himself masturbating and made promises of more cash and video games if Sanford let Pugh perform oral sex on him. General consensus is that Pugh's actions were in poor taste and not befitting his status as Sanford's mentor – not to mention as president of the Detroit City Council. But the real question is whether anything Pugh did rose to the level of criminal.

Community activist and Pugh friend John Trimble thinks not.

"I think a lot of this controversy was fueled by the mother more so than the young man," Trimble told *Between The Lines* for a February feature on Pugh. "Was it inappropriate? Absolutely. Was the young man old enough to make his own decision to contribute to this situation? Absolutely."

# School To Re-Examine Policy That Led To Dismissal Of Lesbian Teacher

BY BTL STAFF

**BLOOMFIELD HILLS** –

The Congregation of Catholic nuns that operate Marian High School have signaled that they will re-examine school policies that led to the firing of Barb Webb, the former Chemistry teacher who says she was let go because of her nontraditional pregnancy.

"Pope Francis has brought a sense of hope to our lives and encourages us to look at our Church with new eyes," Sister Mary Jane Herb, president of Monroe-based Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM), said in a letter to alums that was shared by the "I Stand With Barb Webb" Facebook page.



Supporters of fired Chemistry teacher Barb Webb have brought pressure on the school. An online petition of over 67,000 signatures has also been gathered in support of Webb.

"No, it is not likely that doctrine will change, however the Pope emphasizes that the values of mercy, inclusion and

compassion need to be included in our response to complex situations."

Webb was not referred to specifically by the letter, however, Herb did say that the IHM leadership council "will work with the Executive Committee of the Marian High School Board to re-examine policies and procedures in light of Catholic identity and IHM values."

Shortly after she approached the Marian School Administration with news of her pregnancy in August, Webb received notice of her dismissal. While the termination letter Webb received did

See Fired School Teacher, page 8

## BRIEFS

**FERNDALE**

### Queer Labor Book Presentation Comes To Ferndale

Former Detroit resident, Miriam Frank, will return to the area to present her new book, "Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America." The book tells the story of queer American workers from the mid-1960s through 2013. Frank interviewed 100 LGBT labor activists who came out on the job and in their unions; several of these individuals hailed from Metro Detroit.

With this information, Frank studies the evolution of labor politics with queer activism, carefully detailing how queer caucuses in local unions were instrumental in implementing domestic partner benefits and union-based AIDS education, acts that have influenced the U.S. workforce as a whole. Also chronicled in the book are campaigns for marriage equality, organizing drives at queer workplaces and other LGBT civil rights issues.

Frank, who will hold a community conversation on the gay labor heritage of working-class Detroit in addition to presenting her book, lived in Detroit during the 1970s. She founded the Women's Studies program at Wayne County Community College and taught Humanities courses at Wayne State University. She's been living in New York City over the last several decades where she teaches Labor History in union education programs and Humanities courses at New York University.

Miriam Frank's presentation will be held at 7 p.m., Monday, Oct. 13 at Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. For more information, call 248-398-7105 or visit [www.goaffirmations.org](http://www.goaffirmations.org). Copies of the book will be available to purchase (at a discount) and for signing.

### AUBURN HILLS Pride Night At The Palace

In an upcoming game against the Toronto Raptors, the Detroit Pistons will celebrate a night of pride.

The exclusive Club 300 will host a Pride Night Dec. 19 at the Palace of Auburn Hills that will include fun and entertainment in a private room. Participants will have the chance to enjoy private access to Club 300's two bars as well as private restroom facilities.

"We do so many of these nights (themed nights)," Abe Alcodray, account executive at Palace Sports and Entertainment said. "The sports world is coming around and society as a whole, too. San Francisco hosts a Pride Night, so does LA. Why not bring it to Detroit, which has a vibrant LGBT community?"

Alcodray has been working throughout 2014 to set up a Pride Night. He has spoken with the big three (GM, Ford and Chrysler) and says that they are all ecstatic about the Pride Night event. Attendees will have a third floor view of the court, a visit from a Pistons Legend and a special appearance by members of the Detroit Pistons entertainment team.

Tickets cost just \$45 and include entry into Club 300, an all you can eat and drink menu (beer and wine included) and a shot on the court following the game.

Hosted by the Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce, this event is open to the LGBT community of Michigan as well as its allies.

To purchase tickets, call Abe Alcodray at 248-371-2014 or email him at [aalcodray@palacenet.com](mailto:aalcodray@palacenet.com).

Extended briefs are available online at:

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## DEARBORN

### Beyond The Binary: Looking Into LGBT Identities

BY AJ TRAGER

National speaker and award-winning activist, Robyn Ochs, is coming Oct. 7 to the University of Michigan–Dearborn to talk about bisexuality and the multifaceted experiences of the LGBT community in her presentation, “Beyond the Binary.”



Robyn Ochs

The bi activist will speak about the landscape of sexual orientation and how we “map” out those experiences.

“No two people are exactly alike.

Given that, how do we assign labels to our complicated and unique experiences?” Ochs writes on her website.

The talk is interactive and will ask the audience where they fall on the sexuality continuum and how they identify and label themselves. Ochs’ will explore the different experiences of identity, the complexity of attraction and other topics.

Ochs has been a bi activist since 1985 and was a pioneer for bi individuals identifying as lesbians and gays who felt unable to come out as bisexual. She is an educator, speaker and an award-winning activist as well as the editor of a 42-country anthology called “Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World” and the Bi Women newsletter.

Ochs’ work focuses on increasing awareness and understanding of complex identities and mobilizing people to be more powerful allies to one another within and across identities and social norms.

Some of her other courses include topics such as History, Community, Politics: Emergence of Sexual Minority Voices in the US (A.K.A. The Gay Agenda), Transgressing Binaries: Sex, Gender, Race and Sexual Orientation, Beyond Bisexuality 101, Loosening the Gender Girdle: How Gender Affects You, Challenging Heterosexism and much more.

The presentation will begin at 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 7 in Kochoff Hall C, located inside of the University Center Building at 2122 University Center, 4901 Evergreen Road, Dearborn. The event is free and open to the public.

To read more up on Robyn visit her website at <http://robynochs.com>

### ► Accidental Activists

Continued from p. 4

find ways to respect the differences within our community. When we do get past those differences, amazing things happen,” Orr said.

“And the visibility of the trans community – people are striving for more inclusion,” Contreras agreed.

These power couples are not going to stop here. They plan on continuing their work within the community for years to come and want to see LGBT leaders within the LGBT community and in high positions within the state and federal governments.

“I think that the more opportunities that we have to have people in elected and appointed positions throughout the state, the better off that we are as LGBT persons in a position of leadership,” Smith said. “Now, we have no representation in Lansing. We have some

“Accidental Activists. You find yourself in that position before you find yourself becoming a leader. What are the qualities? Persistence, commitment, visibility – tremendous commitment.”

– Keith Orr

opportunities to fill some seats this time. We have got to step up and take these opportunities to be in elected office if we want change beyond just Elliott–Larsen.”

“One of the things we think about, but don’t

spend enough time thinking about, is how do we look ahead to the future in how we, and other generations, are going to be involved,” Orr said. “One is often thrust into positions that one doesn’t count on being thrust into. And I think that is probably true in wide ranges of leadership roles. Accidental Activists. You find yourself in that position before you find yourself becoming a leader. What are the qualities? Persistence, commitment, visibility – tremendous commitment.”

Join Braun Court on the “Day of Decision,” date to be determined, at 5:30 p.m. for a rally or a celebration, when the 6th Circuit Court determines marriage cases from Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky. Stay connected with BTL online and on the Facebook Page to be one of the first people to know the Court’s outcome.

### ► Sterling Heights

Continued from p. 5

would be seeking signatures at the library, Bondy said.

“Regardless of anything else, it is the right thing to do. In our country’s history, we have been working every few decades on trying to make ourselves a more perfect union. It took us a long time in terms of women’s and other minority rights, and unfortunately it is taking us a long time to make it so that sexual orientation and gender identity is protected under the same vane. In America, if you work hard, if you follow the rules, then you are able to participate in achieving the American dream. That is the basic creed that we have

in our country. You should have the same opportunity as anybody else to succeed,” Skrzyniarz said.

“I believe this is one of those things that helps define a community. If it comes out as a closed community, it will be a closed community. If you see communities that are diverse and appreciate the diverse resources that people bring, people will be attracted to that. We want to be a leader in Macomb County. That said, it is wrong to discriminate. We want to be welcoming of people from all sorts of backgrounds, so they know this is a community that your rights are protected.”

Bondy works for Chrysler and is part of their Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA). The company has been providing domestic partner benefits to its employees since 2000

and is one of few companies to receive a 100 percent score on the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index. There are 15 thousand people that work in the Chrysler building with Bondy. GALA meets with other Employee Resource Groups from GM and Ford. She doesn’t understand why they can gather support for GALA, a group in an organization that employs thousands, but the same cannot be done in Sterling Heights.

“The hardest part of this fight, I thought, was going to be coming out to the public,” Bondy pressed. “The hardest part of this fight is the message that it sends: these 6,000 people signed something to repeal it (the ordinance) – to say it’s OK to discriminate and to bully. So if the parents are saying ‘it’s OK,’ the kids are saying ‘it’s OK.’ It’s going to continue.”

### ► Fired School Teacher

Continued from p. 7

not specify the reason of her dismissal, Webb believes it was previous conversations with administrators that pointed to a morality clause allowing the school to fire over public conduct of “lifestyle or actions directly contradictory to the Catholic faith.”

Webb told the Detroit Free Press Sept. 23 that a member of the IHMs reached out to her the previous week and asked her to share details about what happened. When she read Herb’s letter, she wasn’t entirely surprised.

“When I read it, I was happy,” Webb told the Free Press. “I was relieved that someone had responded. To me, it was a response for a positive outlook for change. It just opens the door for a new conversation, and that’s what I was hoping for from the beginning. It opens the door for change, and I think that’s

definitely the first step.”

Webb has been married to her wife, Kristen Lasecki, since 2012, and the two are expecting their first child. Since the news broke in late August, Webb has received great support from the community, including previous Marian students as well as a former school board member.

A petition was written to “take a stand against discrimination and show through our actions that we value human diversity and declare that ‘We Stand With Barb Webb.’” The petition, as of Sept. 25, has been signed by 67,281 people from around the country, with some international signatures.

Jeff Detweiler of Seattle, Wash. wrote on Sept. 25 that Marian should “Join other Catholic schools and churches that are realizing that gay and lesbian people can also be Christian. Revoke your policies that discriminate against them, and be proud of your teachers and students who are gay and

lesbian.”

“As a Marian alum(na), I am appalled at their decision to fire this teacher. As the mother of a seventh grader currently in Catholic education in Metro Detroit, I fear for her influences surrounding this and will absolutely not be sending her to Marian as I once thought,” Laura Mack from Livonia said with her signature on the survey.

Colleen Sullivan of Beaverton, Ore. said “What is this Morality you value that allows you to discard a teacher, a coach and a family as if they were nothing? Tell me of this moral code that promotes sending a message to your students (current, future and past) that some humans are worth less in your eyes. I’d like to know because I want no part in it. I value humans, our diversity and our equality!”

To sign the petition, visit [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) or go to the Facebook page “I Stand With Barb Webb.”





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# 'Decision Day' Gatherings To Be Held Throughout State

Michigan For Marriage has called for citizens across the state to join together on the day the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals issues a ruling in the Michigan marriage case, Snyder v DeBoer.

All locations will gather at 5:30 p.m. in cities including Allegan, Ann Arbor, Detroit, Ferndale, Flint, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Marquette and Saginaw. The following locations have been identified as gathering places:

**ANN ARBOR:** Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Ct.

**DETROIT:** Location TBD

**FERNDALE:** Affirmations Community Center, 290 W. Nine Mile Road

**FLINT:** Location TBD

**GRAND RAPIDS:** St. John's UCC, 1934 Bridge St. NW

**KALAMAZOO:** Bell's Brewery, 355 E. Kalamazoo Ave.

**LANSING:** Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River

**MARQUETTE:** Location TBD

**Mt.PLEASANT:** UU of Central Michigan, 319 S. University Ave.

**PLAINWELL:** Bigby Otsego, 1307 E. M-89

**SAGINAW:** Location TBD

**TRAVERSE CITY:** Cass and Washington Streets, Legion Park

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# Pioneering Voices Exhibit To Feature Transgender Photos, Stories

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

**SOUTHFIELD** - A new exhibit from the creators of "Love Makes a Family" is coming to the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church in Southfield. "Pioneering Voices," a museum-quality traveling exhibit featuring photographs and interviews with transgender persons of all ages, as well as with their partners and children, will be on display for the entire month of October.

Through first-person accounts and positive images, Pioneering Voices seeks to challenge damaging myths and stereotypes about the transgender community and to educate people about this marginalized and often invisible group of people. The exhibit explores the many aspects of gender identity and variance by sharing important, groundbreaking stories and celebrates a range of views, opinions and experiences that are unique and empowering to transgender people everywhere.

The exhibit is coming to the church thanks to its minister, Kimi Riegel.

"I knew about the organization, Family Diversity Projects, from the 1990s when the church I was working with at the time hosted their very first display, Love Makes a Family," said Riegel. "So I've known about them for years. I just happened to check and found they had this new display."

Northwest UU is presenting the exhibit

**“***The issues of the transgender community are so hidden that it seemed to me that having personal stories and pictures was one of the better ways of educating and helping people to have some empathy.***”**

- Minister Kimi Riegel, Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church

as part of a month-long theme at the church.

"We do theme months, sometimes two or three times a year, and I wanted to do a theme month on gender," Riegel said. "The issues of the transgender community are so hidden that it seemed to me that having personal stories and pictures was one of the better ways of educating and helping people to have some empathy."

The photo-text exhibit consists of 15 framed photographs and accompanying text panels. It was created by Smith College intern Jack Pierson, who took the photographs and interviewed the individuals.

"I hope that it develops some awareness,"



A photo of Brianna that accompanies the exhibit Pioneering Voices

## INFO

### Pioneering Voices

The exhibit will be open to the public on Wednesdays from 7 - 9 p.m. and Sundays from 1 - 4 p.m. throughout the month of October. There will also be an open house and community reception for the exhibit at 6 p.m. on Oct. 10. Northwest UU is located at 23925 Northwestern Hwy. in Southfield. For further information on the exhibit, visit [www.familydiv.org/exhibits/pioneering-voices](http://www.familydiv.org/exhibits/pioneering-voices).

Riegel said of the exhibit. "We have a culture that reinforces gender as a binary and this is oppressive to all of us, but especially to people who don't fit into that binary. I hope the exhibit will develop empathy and foster partnerships between Unitarian Universalists and advocacy organizations like Transgender Michigan and Affirmations.

"Building community connections is also something that happens when you do something like this," Riegel continued. "And that's great."

So far, it looks like Riegel's plan is working.

"I think what the church is doing is awesome," said Michelle Fox-Phillips, executive director of Transgender Detroit. "I think what they are doing as an ally is really immense."

Rachel Crandall, executive director of Transgender Michigan, agreed.

"I am so excited that this one-of-a-kind exhibit is coming to the Detroit area," Crandall said. "It will educate people about the transgender community in a way they have never been educated before. I think it will get people to understand how much we all have in common."



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## Were You Ever 'Known'?



### Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Just a few generations ago, the term homosexual was often qualified by adjectives. Alleged. Avowed. Rumored. Known! The descriptions were used by cautious media, police enforcement agencies and courtroom attorneys.

Not many are aware that, until as recently as 35 years ago, Michigan's Liquor Control Commission prohibited bars and "licensed premises to be frequented by or to become the meeting place, hangout or rendezvous for known homosexuals."

It was never clear what was a "known homosexual." Was it a person who had a sex offender arrest record, someone who habitually dressed in clothes of the opposite sex, someone who swished or gossiped in a high-pitched voice, someone brave enough to tell the straight world he or she was gay, lesbian or queer?

It was never clear what was a "known homosexual."

The term was so vague that, if nothing else, it provoked bar and nightclub owners, bartenders, waitstaff to insist that possible

sexually deviant clientele be warned to behave themselves, not to 'camp it up,' never to hold hands, dance and – throw the miscreants out at once! – kiss or fondle in public.

Presumably, sipping drinks through a straw, ordering Shirley Temples, a Gin & Tonic with cucumber or a cutesy drink topped with a cherry or a paper umbrella was acceptable, if one behaved oneself and didn't too obviously follow a straight client or two into the john.

(I can remember when cautious bartenders at the "discrete" bar in the downtown Detroit Statler Hotel would hand too obvious gay patrons a terse note, "Your patronage is no longer welcome here. Do not return.")

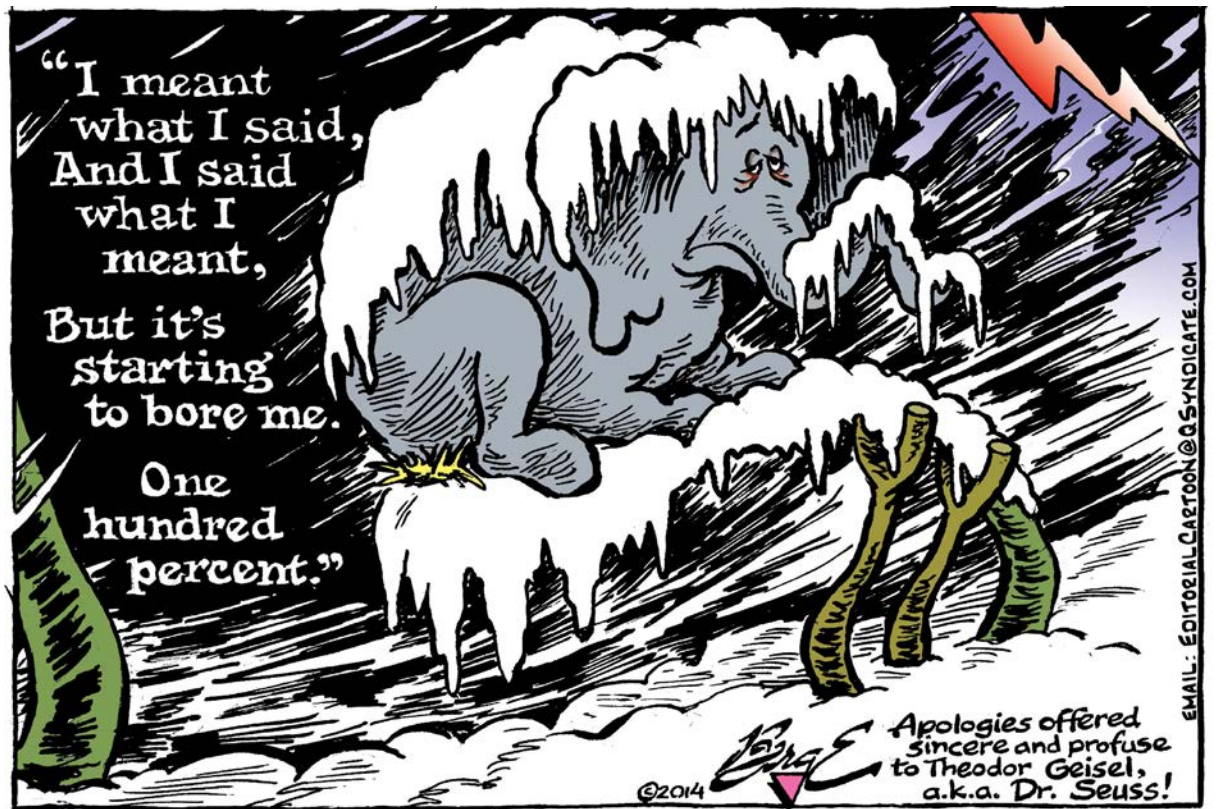
This somewhat egregious prohibition of gays and lesbians from Michigan's bars and nightclubs was rescinded under Republican Gov. William Milliken's administration in 1979, thanks to the efforts of the Michigan Organization of Human Rights.

Interestingly enough, in spite of the Liquor Commission's admonition to keep gays and lesbians from spending hard earned, ribbon clerk cash on getting inebriated, tipsy, occasionally downright drunk and disorderly, since Prohibition ended in 1933, the number of drinking establishments serving "known" or "suspected" homosexuals is, it turns out, in the hundreds.

According to the "Historical Directory of Gay & Lesbian Bars in Metro Detroit," by recent Yale University Ph.D. graduate (and former associate editor of BTL) Tim Retzloff, the listing is about 300. (Of that number, I'm pleased to say – or, is it embarrassed to admit? – I've been in about a tenth of these at one time or another, with varying degrees of success at making out or making a fool of myself.)

Among the earliest listed is the Sweetheart Bar, dating back to 1938. The oldest operating gay bar is the Woodward Lounge, still shaking its booze and booty since 1954. Menjo's, which over recent years has hosted changes of clientele and settings,

See 'Known,' next page



NEWS ITEM: MICHELE BACHMANN DECLARES ISSUE OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY IS NOW "BORING."



### Viewpoint

OPINION BY SUSAN HOROWITZ

## 'Known Homosexuals' I Love

A picture of the late Barbara Gittings has been in my collection of top five favorite photos for decades. You can find a snap of it in this issue of BTL on page 14 – it still brings tears to my eyes when I look at it. Gittings and several dozen pioneers of the modern U.S. LGBT civil rights movement – including John James in the same story – bravely took to the streets to demonstrate four years before Stonewall took place. They did so in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, some willing to be 'known homosexuals.'

As we begin October, and kick off LGBT History Month, we begin it by remembering the Annual Reminder demonstrations. Nothing we have accomplished in the past 50 years would have been possible without the courage of these early pioneers.

I met Gittings a number of times in my younger years while living in NYC. I was in awe of her accomplishments back then. She challenged the American Library Association to include books about gay and lesbian people in libraries across America and succeeded. She helped

lead in the fight to have the American Psychological Association remove the stigma of defining homosexuality as a disorder through her work with the National Gay Task Force (now NGLTF). Gittings taught me and many others that the only way to live my life was out and proud, and her own brave and early stand gave me the courage to do that when I came out in 1972.

Our modern LGBT civil rights movement will be 50 years old next year – beginning with these early demonstrations in 1965. And with time as a marker, we have grown to see three generations of LGBT people bravely come out and support one another – through local, national and international community building – often making tremendous sacrifices along the way.

In our own backyard, many individuals have led the way across the state over the past 50 years. In this issue, we say thanks and take a look at the tireless dedication and commitment of two Ann Arbor power couples, Keith Orr and Martin Contreras and Linda Lombardini and Sandi

See Viewpoint, next page



► **Viewpoint**

Continued from p. 12

In this issue, we say thanks and take a look at the tireless dedication and commitment of two Ann Arbor power couples, Keith Orr and Martin Contreras and Linda Lombardini and Sandi Smith. The four of them have been a force for change for close to twenty years.

Smith. The four of them have been a force for change for close to twenty years. They have put their time and money on the line, and most importantly have said yes when it would have been far easier to say no, anytime the community needed their leadership. That willingness to lead has given us the fabulous “homoplex” – Braun Court. It is a wonderful local example of what community building and support look like. I am certain they have inspired so many along the way – the same way Barbara Gittings did for me so long ago.

LGBT History Month ... Take a moment during October to research the people who put time and energy into making this world we live in ... a world that may soon include full marriage rights (OMG) ... a better place for the next generation of LGBT souls. And speaking of LGBT history, please take a moment to read Charles Alexander’s piece on ‘Known Homosexuals’ and his important nod to our own Dr. Tim Retzloff, whose recent dissertation on LGBT Detroiters is a gem and major accomplishment in the field of LGBT history.

BTW – you can check out some great reads on LGBT history at Braun Court’s LGBT bookstore, Common Language!

► **‘Known’**

Continued from p. 13

got started in 1974. (Three pieces of I.D. – including picture – once kept anticipated outsider problems and racial mixing to a minimum.)

Many, many of the bars and clubs in Retzloff’s 2010 Directory are now but fading memories of a vibrant Detroit gay past. The 1011, Rio Grande, Silver Dollar, LaRosa’s, Barrel Bar, Foster’s, Royal Showbar, Palais were all within walking distance of each other – and to the nearby 1st Police Precinct jail, bullpen and adjacent courtroom.

In passing, let me gratefully say that my friend Tim Retzloff has done Detroit’s LGBT community a service that is truly dedicated, amazing in its research endeavor, scope and detail. In addition to his Bar Directory, Tim has reviewed over 15,000 arrest records of gays since 1940 and has completed a 680-page dissertation of Detroit’s LGBT History.

On behalf of countless gays, lesbians, transgendered persons both present and past: Thanks, Dr. Tim. A loving documentation, well undertaken, meticulously done. OUR history preserved for future generations. I eagerly await publication in book format soon. A real pleasure to know you!

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# Revisiting Annual Reminders, Nearly 50 Years Later

OCTOBER IS LGBT HISTORY MONTH

BY JEN COLLETTA

On July 4, 1965, John James traveled to Philadelphia to march among a group of gay and lesbian demonstrators calling for liberty for LGBT people. Nearly 50 years later, James is again surrounded by LGBT people in the City of Brotherly Love — this time in a very changed world.

Earlier this year, James, 73, moved into the John C. Anderson Apartments, an LGBT-friendly senior-living facility in the heart of Philadelphia — more specifically in the “Gayborhood” section. The building, just one of a few affordable LGBT senior-living complexes, is the largest publicly funded LGBT building project in the nation’s history. The complex is home to a vast cross-section of the LGBT elder community — businesspeople, artists, activists, researchers, social workers and everyone in between — who lived through, and at times led, the birth and growth of the modern LGBT-rights movement.

That movement is largely thought to have begun at the Stonewall Inn in New York City in 1969. But, four years earlier, a different sort of protest calling for LGBT freedom germinated on the steps of Philadelphia’s Independence Hall — fittingly, the birthplace of American freedom.

The 1965 Annual Reminder March was conceived of by Craig Rodwell and organized by such pioneering activists as Frank Kameny, based in D.C., as well as the Philly-based Barbara Gittings and Kay Lahusen. The demonstration was set for Independence Day to call attention to the notion that gays and lesbians were being deprived the basic rights guaranteed to them in the nation’s founding documents.

At the time of the march, James was a 24-year-old working as a computer programmer at the National Institutes of Health. He moved back to D.C., where he grew up, in 1963 after earning his undergraduate degree from Harvard University.

James’ father was a federal anti-trust attorney, and he followed in his footsteps in seeking federal employment after abandoning his plan to pursue medicine.

“I was always interested in science and went to college intending to do pre-med, but I decided it wasn’t for me,” he said. “I had

a summer job at Sloan Kettering and just wasn’t impressed with what I saw there, with all the bureaucracy. So I figured I needed to make a living and got into computers; in those early days, there was no possibility of home computers, but over the years things changed totally.”

James said he began coming to terms with his sexuality in his early 20s and, upon returning to D.C., joined the fledgling Mattachine Society, a “homophile” group



The 1965 Annual Reminder March was conceived of by Craig Rodwell and organized by such pioneering activists as Frank Kameny, based in D.C., as well as the Philly-based Barbara Gittings (above) and her partner, Kay Lahusen, who took photos of the demonstrations.

whose Washington chapter was the brainchild of Kameny and Jack Nichols.

At group meetings, James said he was more of an observer, while Kameny and Nichols ran the show.

“Jack went on to be a well-known gay writer but, at the time, he used a pseudonym: Warren. His father was an FBI agent, and Hoover had a real thing about homosexuals. His father told him he’d kill him if the FBI found out about (his being gay), so we always used the name Warren,” James said. “So he and Kameny and some others came up with the idea for the demonstration.”

As plans began circulating for the Independence Hall picket, James said he decided to join up despite not being a strong backer of demonstrations.

“It was kind of the thing to do; I went along and did it because that was the thing to do right

See Reminders, next page

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Halloween Charity Event at Coleman Farms on Sunday, October 5th from 12-4 in the afternoon the event benefits POET Animal Rescue and The Ann Arbor Animal Hospital's Fixed Income Family Fund.

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then,” James said, noting it was the first public demonstration in which he participated.

And, since the demonstration was in a different city, fears over being outed were lessened. At the time, James was only out to a small circle of family and friends.

Demonstration participants were asked to consent to having their photo taken, and he declined.

“It was more of a commitment for the local people, because they could be recognized, whereas those of us from Washington wouldn’t. But we were asked by photographers working with the demonstration if we wanted to be photographed, and I said no because I liked my job.”



John James

## ‘Known Homosexuals’

At the time, the federal government largely operated under a policy of terminating “known homosexuals.”

“They would fire anyone who was known to be gay. I didn’t want to lose my job,” James said.

The federal policy also prevented James, who worked at NIH until 1967, from pursuing other federal positions — which he said ended up being fortunate.

“I never considered applying for a security clearance because they would’ve found out, and that would have complicated things. But, I didn’t want to do military work anyway,” he laughed, “so not having a security clearance was one way to make sure I stayed away from that.”

In advance of the demonstration, organizers ensured that participants would both dress and act professionally.

“We all wore suits and ties. That was Kameny, that was his philosophy,” James said.

About 40 people participated in the inaugural picket and marched for about an hour-and-a-half behind a police barricade, holding such signs as “Homosexuals should be judged as individuals” and “Homosexual civil rights.”

James said there was “some degree of fear” about the public reaction to the demonstration, but they were met with no real pushback.

“People took it in stride. I didn’t notice any expressions of either hostility or support,” he said. “It turned out peaceful; we weren’t attacked by people in the streets or anything. Things could have happened, but they didn’t.”

While James stayed out of photos, it turned out he may have been captured — in part — in a photo of Gittings that ran on the front page of the Philadelphia Inquirer.

“I suspect my leg is showing in the picture. But I’m not sure,” James said.

James only participated in that first event, but picketers returned each year for the next four years; the final Annual Reminder demonstration took place just days after the Stonewall Inn riots of 1969.

While the 1965 demonstration is now credited as being one of the first public LGBT-rights demonstrations, the weight of the event wasn’t as apparent at that time, especially since his activism focus was a bit different than that of the organizers.

“It was kind of just matter of fact, I did this thing. I knew there was a symbolic importance at the time, but it wasn’t necessarily the kind of movement I would have done myself if I hadn’t been asked, but yet again I wasn’t an organization person anyway. So I went along with how Frank and Warren wanted to do it,” James said. “My philosophy was a little different; Kameny’s was to pick one issue and do just that issue, where my idea was to mix all the issues — antiwar, gay rights, civil rights, whatever you had the opportunity to do.”

## Founding AIDS Treatment News

James had the opportunity to put that philosophy into practice years later.

After leaving federal employment, James said he went out to the West Coast to have the customary “Haight-Ashbury experience” and, as the HIV/AIDS epidemic flourished in the 1980s, went on to found AIDS Treatment News.

In the beginning of the epidemic, the publication explored alternative medicine and experimental treatments and went on to publish more than 400 editions.

“When treatments were becoming available, no one wanted to cover it. So we were talking to patients, doctors, scientists. That was my main project,” he said, noting that he found his true passion in that type of behind-the-scenes activism, rather than the public nature of actions like the Annual Reminders. “I was never much into demonstrations so I think that, by far, my most important activism was AIDS Treatment News. That was my contribution. I like to work on long-term projects that don’t have a particular day where they culminate. I realize with demonstrations that they work to build up relationships, which is really important. And get publicity. Demonstrations help to get issues talked about that should be talked about, but that way just wasn’t my thing.”

After years of operating on the West Coast, living in San Francisco became unaffordable, so James packed up ATN and headed back east, deciding to settle in Philadelphia where he had a number of colleagues and friends. ATN now operates as an independent project housed at Philadelphia FIGHT.

James returned to a city that, like most of society, views LGBT people in a wholly different light than in 1965. Illustrative of that is the city’s plans for a large-scale celebration next year to mark the 50th anniversary of the start of the Annual Reminders pickets.

“We never would have thought of any official recognition like that. That would have been inconceivable,” James said. “We were just happy to be more tolerated. We weren’t looking for anything out of the government besides just letting us live how we wanted to live and leaving us alone.”

Contact Jen at [jen@epan.com](mailto:jen@epan.com).

# Creep of the Week

## Peter LaBarbera

OPINION BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

Gay people. They’re just like Nazis, amirite?

What with their Pride parades and their drag queens and their wanting to get married and their Broadway musicals and their rainbow stickers plastered across their Subaru bumpers.



Peter LaBarbera

I mean if that doesn’t say, “Heil Hitler,”

For LaBarbera to cry that he’s being ‘Holocausted’ just because the rights of the LGBT minority are advancing despite his opposition is a really desperate attempt to play the victim here.

I don’t know what does! At least that’s what Peter LaBarbera of Americans For “Truth” About Homosexuality thinks.

LaBarbera was a guest on the Janet Mefferd Show (a right-wing radio show, obviously) on Sept. 26 to discuss the Human Rights Campaign’s new report titled “Export of Hate,” a veritable who’s who of anti-gay extremists who have taken their hate abroad.

LaBarbera was featured in the report for “work” he’s done in Jamaica where he “urged Jamaican Christian conservatives not to repeal the country’s anti-sodomy law and told them that homosexuality is a choice and is associated with pedophilia.”

When asked by Mefferd if he’s received any pushback since the release of the HRC report, LaBarbera said, “It’s constant with us.” (Cue sad trombone.)

Huh. Go figure. I can’t understand why a group dedicated to portraying gay and lesbian people as subhuman perverts would receive any objection at all!

Maybe if LaBarbera claims that those subhuman perverts are also Nazis, people will stop complaining. Because who could possibly defend Nazis?

“We have to trust in God to protect us” from homos, LaBarbera tells Mefferd. “But I do think they’re doing to us what the Nazis did to the Jews. You know, they’re intentionally demonizing.”

Huh. LaBarbera and I must have read very different books about the Nazis

and the Holocaust. Because I am having a lot of trouble with this comparison. Sure, you could argue that HRC and other critics (why, hello there!) are “demonizing” LaBarbera and his anti-gay friends. I think he’s wrong, and I think he’s a creep. But I’m not putting him on a train car to Bergen-Belsen except, perhaps, in a sick oppression fantasy in his head.

“This is all about demonizing because they know that it works,” he adds. “This demonization is just — it’s what’s been done to minorities in the past and, like I said, it’s what the Jews did to um, what the Nazis did to the Jews.”

Not only is his analogy offensive to both gays and to all of the other people who were oppressed and executed by the millions, but

it is illogical. LaBarbera is a white male who identifies as heterosexual and Christian. He is hardly a minority. He’s basically won the identity lottery in America. So for LaBarbera to cry that he’s being “Holocausted” just because the rights of the LGBT minority are advancing despite his opposition is a really desperate attempt to play the victim here.

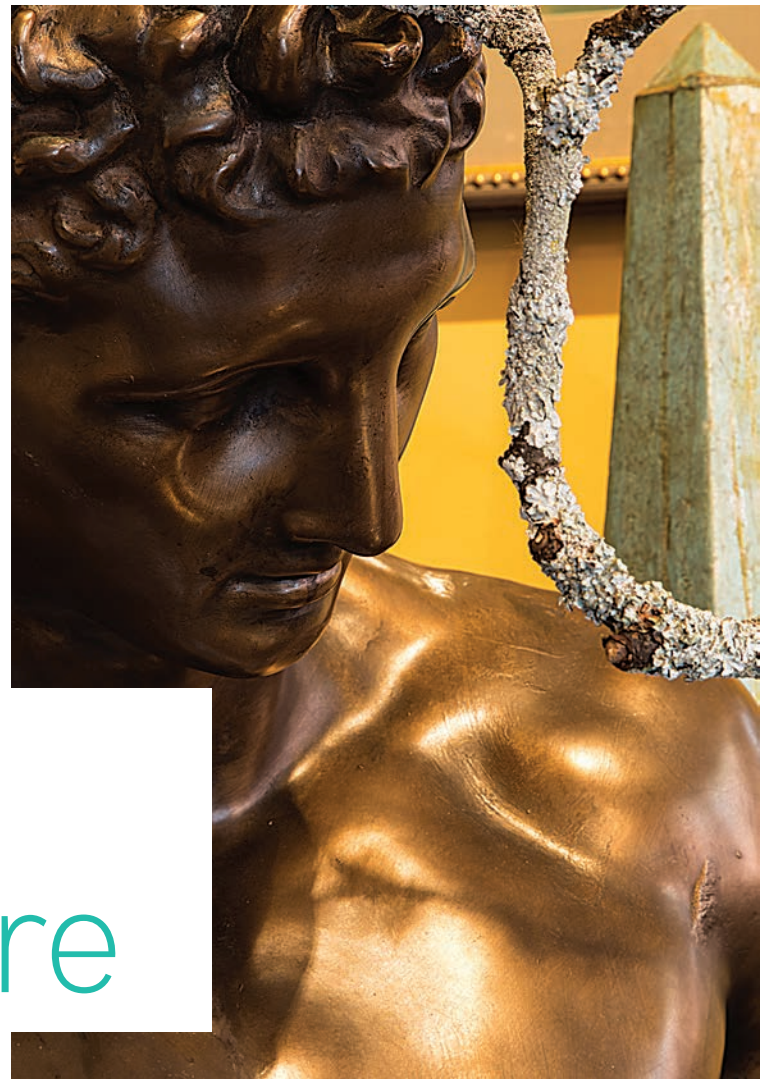
LaBarbera claims he is upholding “historic Judeo-Christian sexual morality.” He tells Mefferd, “The Bible calls homosexual behavior an abomination, so I suppose that means that God is the biggest hateful homophobic bigot of all. According to their ideology.”

Let me play Devil’s advocate here. Just kidding, I don’t believe in the Devil, and I don’t believe in God. So, instead, let me just answer this in response to LaBarbera’s assertion above: “Yup.”

If you use a sky god of your own invention, tailored to hate all of the same things you hate, and hide behind said god in order to justify saying things like, “[Gays are] doing to us what the Nazis did to the Jews,” then, yes. God is “the biggest hateful homophobic bigot of them all.” Because God is really just the you that you couldn’t possibly justify being if you didn’t have God to use as an excuse.

If I did believe in God, I bet that such shenanigans would make Him puke.





# Bradly's Home Decor & More

Bradly Rakowski, owner of Bradly's Home and Garden in Lansing. Photos courtesy of Bradly Rakowski

## BY JEROME STUART NICHOLS

Sometimes, it's just the threat of change that makes great ideas come to life. For Bradly Rakowski, owner of Bradly's Home and Garden in Lansing, the constant threat of a layoff made him take the leap into becoming his own boss.

"I always loved the little ma-and-pa shops we'd go into when my

husband Chris and I would travel," Rakowski says. "I had come home one day – after a bunch of layoffs – and I asked him if he would mind if I got started on one of the ideas I had."

Armed with a loan from his 401k and a passion for décor, Rakowski made his dream come to life.

In 2011, he started with a few furniture lines he picked up from a merchandising trip to Chicago and

rented space in an existing business. By March 2013, after about 16 months, he was able to get a shop of his own. In August of this year, he held the grand opening for Bradly's relocation and expansion.

In a market overpopulated by national chain home, garden and gift stores, Bradly's has stood out by offering top-notch and one-of-a-kind pieces. Perhaps that's due to the fact

that Rakowski still hand-picks the store's inventory.

"I'm looking for things unique to the market," Rakowski says. "It's all very high quality and has styling different from Art Van, Pottery Barn or Crate and Barrel."

He says he's only looking for items of a quality he'd be happy to buy or bring into his own home. That translates to a store full of

unique pieces from local and national boutiques and limited-run collections. Those include Noir furniture, Tessoro jewelry and handmade Lead Head Glass terrariums.

One will also find a distinct lack of particle board items cluttering the shop, as Bradly's specializes

See Bradly's, page 20



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# Home Sweet Dorm

## 10 Ways To Turn Your Box House Into A Real One

BY SARAH HUNT

No matter what “home” means to you, you can transform your dorm space from institutional to inviting with a modicum of effort and a whole lot of flair. Or even a moderate amount of flair. The amount of flair is up to you. You’re an adult now. The decisions about flair levels are on you.

### Dad’s old vinyl

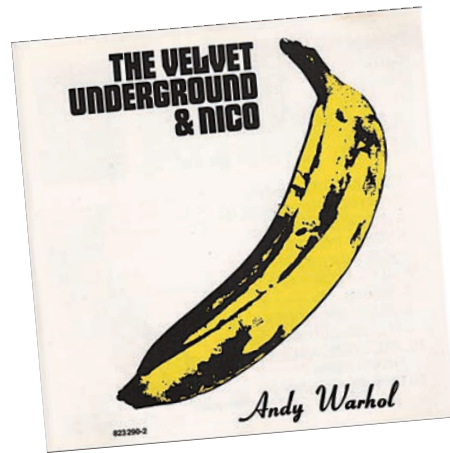
Nothing says “home” like the vinyl collection your dad is tired of storing. Invest in an all-in-one turntable to turn your dorm room into a swank listening lounge. Check out Records on Walls online, where you can buy a wall case to proudly display that iconic Velvet Underground album featuring the Andy Warhol banana.

Buy a lamp. You’ll look better and your dorm mate’s shiny, all-too-frequently nude ass will too.

### Keep it clean, ya hippie

Yes, no one is going to nag you about that steaming pile of last month’s laundry or berate

See Dorm Room, page 24



### Map art of hometown

Feeling homesick? Consider some unique map art customized to your hometown coordinates. Etsy is a fantastic source for art pieces that will make you feel nostalgic for all the places you ignored back home. You’ll find wall art, customized pillows, blankets, ornaments and more, all emblazoned with the coordinates of the place you’ve left to become a “real adult.” Rest easy. No one back home knows what that means either.

### Refeather that nest

Call it a stereotype, call it inevitable, but you’re likely to spend quite a few hours bundled up against the persistent Michigan winter... in bed. Make it homier, and perhaps even more inviting (wink, wink, nudge, nudge), by investing in some decent pillows and a nice down comforter.

### Lighting matters

No one wants to examine even the best specimens of dorm mates under the harsh radiance of overhead fluorescent lighting. Ambient lighting is your friend.



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## Nothing Half-Glassed When It Comes To Lansing Artist

Lansing native Craig Mitchell Smith began making glass artwork in 2006. Because of serendipitous timing and a few TV cameras that made for a surprising launch, what started as a hobby became a full-fledged career.

"I was in touch with HGTV and they were interested in doing a little six-minute segment on my kitchen," Smith says. "When they found out about some of the glass I was doing, they flew a crew out from California to film that. It never occurred to me that this was going to be my career. Then, all of a sudden, I was contacted by galleries and I began making glass for sale."

Over the next couple of years, his profile and brand began to grow. In 2010, he was sourced to make the ornament for the State of Michigan to be displayed on the national Christmas tree. In 2012, Disney hired him to create a field of glass poppies for the Epcot International Flower and Garden Festival in promotion of 2013's "The Great and Powerful Oz," which was filmed in Pontiac.

While Smith has also made more message-centric art, his nature-based pieces are his bread and butter.

"My favorite work is my philosophical, allegorical work, but no one buys it," Smith says. "When I'm dead, that's what they'll want! The personal and more artistic work sustains your soul, but it does not pay the mortgage."

Smith has also pioneered a unique glass-making technique.

"No one makes glass in the way I make glass," he says. "I cut glass in the shape of brush strokes and then, in the bottom of the kiln, I draw with shards of glass. I feel we're on the cutting-edge of making a new art form."

It's his passion for the art of glass that has kept him from using his skills to make more practical pieces like stemware, decanters or other kitchen tools.

"I have refused commissions that were of a practical nature, that's not art," Smith says. "Art is supposed to make you feel something. You're not supposed to put lemons in it."

## ► Bradley's

Continued from p. 16

in hardwood furniture.

With every move or expansion, the store has been able to increase the number and variety of items available. At this point, Bradley's offers thousands of items in the furniture area alone. They also offer giftware, jewelry, indoor plants, pillows, cards, seeds and scents along with almost everything else needed to decorate almost any space, starting at just \$1.

"It's a really cool store," Rakowski says. "People come in here and they feel good. Whether you're buying something for a kid, a card or furniture, it all has a cohesion and an innate unique flavor."

While Bradley's offers a bunch of options for the eager designer, the options can be overwhelming. For those people, or those who just want to borrow Bradley's eye, they offer in-home design consultations. They will also help with wedding décor and home staging.

Among the more recent line acquisitions, Bradley's was able to secure a deal to handle the

retail side of world-renowned glass artist Craig Mitchell Smith's business. As Rakowski relocated Bradley's to a space just a few feet away from Smith's 4,000-square-foot production facility in Lansing's Old Town neighborhood, Smith said it understandably seemed like a "good fit."

"It opens me up to another clientele," Rakowski says. "Craig gets to have his art displayed in a living environment rather than just on pedestals in a gallery. So, you can see how a sculpture or a lamp works in a room of furniture."

Smith is mostly known for his wild and imaginative custom commissions, though that can be costly. For the first time since closing his own retail front, Smith's sculptures will be available to more consumers with items priced from \$30-\$5,000.

"I am happy to make the work available to a much broader audience," Smith says. "I invite people to experience and see what they think and feel about it."

For more information on Bradley's Home and Garden/Craig Mitchell Glass, located at 117 E. Grand River Ave. in Lansing, visit [www.bradlyshomeandgarden.com](http://www.bradlyshomeandgarden.com).

## Fall Design Tips

Bradly Rakowski, owners of Bradley's Home and Garden in Lansing, on getting your home festive for fall:

**Colors:** "I always really like using fall colors in my home; a lot of people think that's just brown, gold and orange. If you look at a tree, you get the deep burgundy and the plum colors. I like to play around with that pallet, mixing it in with different pillows for the season. That's a great way to bring a bit of autumn color into your home."

**Bring nature inside:** "I always like doing fresh gourds. Just put them in a bowl. Bowls help keep the look organized and keep your furniture safe if the gourds start to go bad. Bring in sticks or branches and prop them up in a corner or in a vase."







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# The Mainstreaming Of Gayborhoods

## New Book Takes On Queer Neighborhoods' Post-Gay Future

In his new book, "There Goes the Gayborhood?," Amin Ghaziani explores whether queer-dominated neighborhoods are destined to disappear as LGBTs become more accepted into mainstream culture.

Drawing on a wealth of evidence – including census data, opinion polls, hundreds of newspaper reports from across the United States, and more than one hundred original interviews with residents in Chicago, one of the most paradigmatic cities in America – "There Goes the Gayborhood?" argues that political gains and societal acceptance are allowing gays and lesbians to imagine expansive possibilities for a life beyond the gayborhood. The dawn of a new post-gay era is altering the character and composition of existing enclaves across the country, but the spirit of integration can coexist alongside the celebration of differences in subtle and sometimes surprising ways.

Exploring the intimate relationship between sexuality and the city, this cutting-edge book reveals how gayborhoods, like the cities that surround them, are organic and continually evolving places.

Ghaziani is associate professor of sociology at the University of British Columbia and an affiliate with the Institute for Advanced Studies and the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice. He earned his Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern. Before arriving in Vancouver, he was a postdoctoral fellow at the Princeton Society of Fellows.

Ghaziani is dedicated to bringing the study of sexuality into the mainstream of sociology. Specifically, he studies topics that range from measurement to mobilization and the metropolis. Despite this diversity, however, there are common questions that motivate his work: How can we characterize the social organization of sexuality? And how do these relational arrangements change over time, across political contexts, and in different urban and non-urban settings?

Ghaziani has used these broad questions to carve three distinct research programs in culture (focusing on how to measure meanings using qualitative approaches), social movements (thinking about the relationship between infighting and insurrection) and urban sociology (exploring the spatial expressions of sexuality).



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## ► Dorm Room

Continued from p. 19

you into trashing the remains of that 3 a.m. Taco Bell run once it's reached a state of liquefied goo. But if it's homey you're going for, channel Martha, not Hoarders.

## Scented bliss

There's something about the smell of cinderblock and stale, post-pubescent body odor. Something almost... well, it's not magical. Cram 700 undergrads into a single, mid-rise building with inadequate airflow and the resulting air quality can become most unkind in the olfactory way. Mask that barnyard scent with diffuser reeds for lasting relief.

## Guest amenities

All the honeys love swag. Grandma knew what was what with that candy dish filled with hard butterscotch

discs. Oh, they just kept coming back for more, and your guests will, too, if you keep a supply of mini candy bars on hand (don't cheap out – go for the Assorted Hershey's or stay home). Consider investing in a small set of nice glasses or a set of espresso mugs, the perfect accompaniment for all that philosophical waxing you're going to be doing now that you've become an academic. It's what your Friday nights are for now – hosting intimate gatherings, drinking chicory and discussing Poe while wearing an ironic beret. Pro tip: Keep a small stock of extra, ironic berets on hand for forgetful guests.

## Memento-ize your wall

Don't forget where you came from, but don't wallow in your homesickness for too long. It's hard to walk this line, but a visual representation can help to keep you motivated while adding a homey touch. Tack up a bulletin board and turn it into a scrapbook-on-a-wall. Add mementos from high school and leave plenty of room for ticket stubs and pictures from all the great things you're doing at school. Give it the social media spin and make it

all seem oh-so-inspiring, or get real and tack up that snarky note from the TA about your handwriting on your econ midterm.

## Put a rug on it

It's bad enough that so many classes start at what definitely seems like the middle of the night. It's even worse when the first experience of the day is the shock of cold, hard concrete under your naked, unhappy feet. Happily, your ancient ancestors perfected the art of rug-making many eons ago and your choices are infinite here. The little piggy who ran all the way home and all his slightly larger friends will thank you.

## Don't forget your lovey

Maybe it's a tattered, homemade quilt or a frayed, well-loved teddy bear: You can hide it under that nice bedding we talked

about earlier if you want, but if there's something you've loved since you were still small enough to live in ignorant bliss about the cruel realities of the real world, bring it with you. Because this isn't going to get any easier. Because your lovey has been there all along, longer than almost every relationship in your life. Because you've seen "Toy Story 3."



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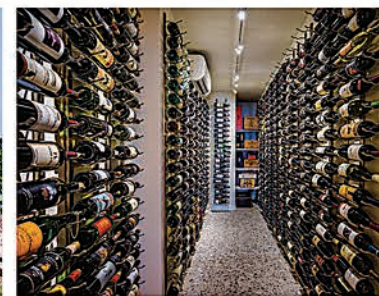
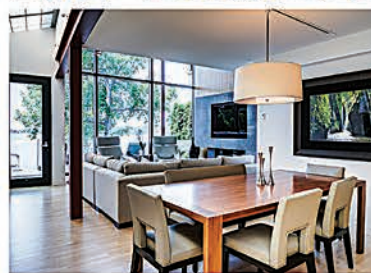
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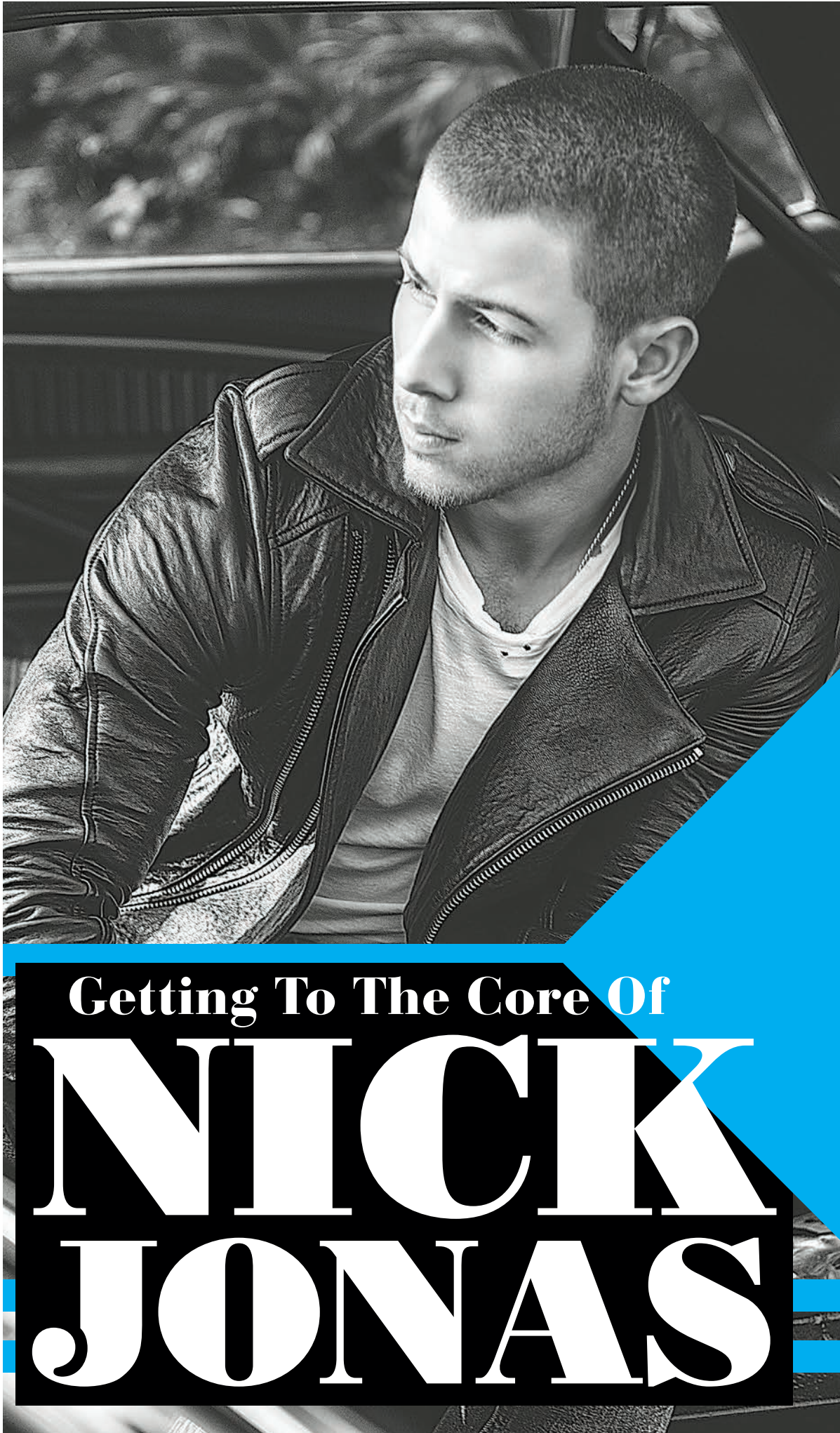
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## Nick Jonas Talks 'Fully Clothed' Tour, 'Ignorant' Haters & Learning Open-Mindedness From His Pastor Father

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

**W**hen you think of Nick Jonas – and let's face it, you've been thinking a lot about him lately – a few things come to mind: the straight-edged Jonas Brothers. Former flames Miley Cyrus and Selena Gomez. His abs.

Per his handlers, two of those topics were off-limits during my chat with Nick, but so what. Ever since he posted a salacious Instagram pic of his fit, V-cut torso in 2013, it's been ab this, ab that. The 22-year-old BFF to the gay community is also releasing a self-titled, post-Jonas Brothers album (out Nov. 11), which he chatted about during our interview. You know, in addition to his abs.

**You said recently that part of the reason you're so adamant about reaching out to the gay community is because you don't feel like the Jonas Brothers did enough of it before. So, is this gay media blitz your way of making up for lost time?**

(Laughs) Maybe! I think my brothers and I did what we could, but at that time, in our career and during that moment in our lives, it was pretty crazy. We had so much going on that we were, I think, just trying to stay on top of everything. I've had a little time prior to the promotion (of this album) to establish exactly what I want to say, who I wanna talk to and the steps I wanna take.

**Did the lack of gay-media attention have anything to do with your handlers? Were people telling you not to do gay press to maintain your conservative Disney image?**

To be honest, I don't think it was that. I think if we had wanted to make an effort there it wouldn't have been an issue. It was important and it is important to me, and it's also important to me as I transition into acting.

I'm on a show called "Kingdom" where my character goes on a pretty interesting journey. I can't give anything away – no spoilers – but it's been fun as an actor to be willing to go to that place. I love playing this role that I play, and I'm excited for the audience to go on this journey with me.

**Considering you've revealed there's a nude scene, we are also excited**

Getting To The Core Of

# NICK JONAS



to go on this journey with you. What's it like shooting a nude scene?

It's pretty bizarre. The way you have to go into it... it's not real. As actors, it's our job to tell these stories, and with a show like "Kingdom," you go the extra mile and push the boundaries and keep it very real. So, in that moment, it's just about telling the story the best way you can while trying to be honest. As far as any of the physicality goes – or nudity or sex scenes – it's just about knowing that it isn't real.

**Wait, your sex scene is not real?**

(Laughs) It's not.

**Why is it so important for you to reach out to the gays for your solo debut?**

When I was setting up this record and meeting with the team about it, I told them that I really wanted to make an effort to embrace that part of my audience. I've known for a long time that it is a great part of the audience, and I just never felt like we made all the effort we could to embrace them.

It's been really fun and really incredible.

**When did you know the gay community was embracing you?**

I think it was a combination of things. I did theater prior to recording music, and so at a very young age I made a lot of really close gay friends. When I started recording music, and my brothers and I started recording

and touring, we saw pretty quickly – this was back in 2005/2006 – that this was a big part of our audience. As the years went on, and as I went back into theater, I made the (gay community) a priority. It's about embracing all sides.

**You're currently on tour, and considering how much attention you've given the gays lately, how gay are the audiences that come out to see you?**

It's been pretty awesome to look out and see a difference in the crowd; it's not drastic by any means. It was kind of there prior, but there's definitely more of them embracing this next chapter in my life and my music. All that, I can feel. Looking out, there is probably a handful more gay fans out there, which is incredible.

**So, like, if you had to rate the gayness of a Nick Jonas show, where would it fall on the Kinsey Scale, 1 being straight and 6 being totally gay?**

(Laughs) I don't know if I can answer that

INFO

## Nick Jonas

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just yet. I think I need to let it continue to evolve. It's in the early stages here. Let's see where we get in the next couple of months and then we'll make that call.

**You have a point. Considering you just performed in San Francisco, the number would be skewed.**

(Laughs) Exactly!

**Because your abs are now famous as well, do you feel obligated to show them at every show?**

(Laughs) Umm, no. I haven't showed them at any of my shows. That was more so when I was in New York celebrating the release of

the new music and I went to a couple of gay clubs and... (Laughs) They kind of made me do it, so I had to! But as far as my shows go, I keep it fully clothed.

**I saw the video online, Nick. I didn't see anyone taking your shirt off for you.**

It was a few drinks in at that point. All bets were off.

**When you show up at a gay club like the ones in New York, do guys hit on you? Do they flirt? And how**

**do you approach a situation like that?**

Yeah, it's interesting. Whether it comes from people who are aware of me and my personal life, or the person who was on the microphone saying it, there's a general awareness that I am straight but totally embracing of the gay community. I love my gay fans, so it was just a lot of love, and there wasn't a whole lot of hitting on me and flirting. A little bit, which was actually kind of fun. (Laughs) It was a pretty new environment for me, so I was just trying to take it all in and have a good time.

**What do you make of naysayers who say you're just using your body to bait the gay community?**

Everyone's entitled to their own opinion. I think it's unfortunate that some people have to find a negative in every situation. Clearly my heart is in the right place, and more than anything, if they just looked at my life and my gay friends and the authentic nature of where

See Nick Jonas, page 31



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# Happenings

## OUTINGS

### Thursday, Oct. 2

**Raising the Steaks: Dining Out at Logan's Roadhouse** 4 p.m. Support Affirmations by dining out at any of seven locations in metro-Detroit every First Thursday. Affirmations, **Various**. Goaffirmations.org

**On Uncomputable Numbers: Toward a Queer History of Computing** 6 p.m. What makes a computer queer? Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., **Bloomfield Hills**. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

**Family & Friends** 7 p.m. Topics vary from month to month. The Jewish Gay Network of Michigan (JGN), 6600 W. Maple Road, **West Bloomfield**. 248-432-5661. Jgnmi.org

**Red Robot** 7 p.m. Ageplay group. Every first Thursday. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. Jimtoycenter.org

### Friday, Oct. 3

**First Friday @ Cork Wine Pub** 6:15 p.m. Gay Professionals Social Group, 23810 Woodward Ave., **Pleasant Ridge**. meetup.com/Gay-Professionals-Social-Group-MI

**Friday Night Vibe @ The AFF Cafe, Store & More** 7 p.m. The Friday Night Vibe is your original open mic night in downtown Ferndale, whether your singing, acting, dancing or showcasing your talent. DJ ACE will be here playing the hottest club hits. Free. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. TylerBeltz@aol.com Goaffirmations.org

**Womyn's Film Night** 7 p.m. Film: Kate Clinton-Self-professed feminist comic Kate Clinton takes on a heap of controversial issues in this classic performance, touching on lesbianism, sex and politics, as well as offering up her hilarious observations on everyday life. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org/

**Crystal Bowersox** 8 p.m. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., **Three Oaks**. 269-756-3879. Acorntheater.com

**Pride Friday** 9 p.m. The one and only gay night. 18+. Guys with college ID get in free before 11 p.m. Cover: \$5+. Necto, 516 E. Liberty St., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-5835. Thenecto.com

### Saturday, Oct. 4

**THREADS that BIND US** 9 a.m. Over 100 quilts on display, Special Exhibits,

Silent Auction, Make and Take, Door Prizes, Food, Vendors and more... Free Parking-Handicap Access \$5. 00 Great Lakes African American Quilters' Network, 15218 Farmington Road, **Livonia**. 313-863-9108. sacph@aol.com Glaaqn.com

**Mackinac Island Wedding Show 2014** 12 p.m. Tickets: \$10-15. Mission Point Resort, **Mackinac Island**. 800-833-7711. Missionpoint.com

**Author Sean Dubois Day, book-signing event** 1 p.m. Off the Beaten Path Bookstore, 33314 Grand River Ave., **Farmington**. 248-987-6065. dianebaldwin45@yahoo.com 0tbpbookstore.com

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

### Sunday, Oct. 5

**Cook Off** Details to be confirmed. Dykes on Bikes, **Plymouth**. Dykesonbikesdetroit.com

**The Great Camp Out** Come both days or one. The weekend includes a place to pitch your tent, connect with horses, be a part of empowering presentations, have a calm evening around the bonfire and sleep with the horses whinny within ear-shot. This event is for YOU. All are invited. Hidden Promise, 7601 Allen Road, **Fenton**. 248-898-5094. hiddenpromisecampus@gmail.com Confidencethroughconnection.com/the-great-camp-out/

**Tyler Oakley** Tyler's Slumber Party. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., **Royal Oak**. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

**Pistons Fit 5k** 9 a.m. Registration: \$30-40. Detroit Pistons, 7774 Sashabaw Road, **Clarkston**. 248-377-0100. Palacenet.com

**Michigan Atheists Meeting** 2 p.m. Please join us at our Sunday Gathering in our private room for friendship, food, announcements and reports. Michigan Atheists, 39550 Ann Arbor Road, **Plymouth Township**. 734-459-0880. Michiganatheists.org

**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

**The Candidate Forum** 7 p.m. Birmingham Temple and Jewish Gay Network, 28611 W. 12 Mile Road, **Farmington Hills**. 248-477-1410. Jgnmi.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/inuendo.nightclub/?f=118209121607517

### Monday, Oct. 6

**Gay Chicago Trip** 8 a.m. Will include transportation, sight-seeing and more. Tickets: \$489. GOAL, **TBD**. meetup.com/GOAL-Get-Out-And-Live-LGBT

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

### Tuesday, Oct. 7

**Beyond the Binary** 5:30 p.m. Speaker: Robyn Ochs, known for her work as a speaker, writer, teacher and activist for Bisexual people. University Of Michigan-Dearborn, 4901 Evergreen Road, **Dearborn**. 313-436-9142. Umd.umich.edu

**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

**Update from the 20th World AIDS Conference in Australia & HIV Prevention Workshops** 6 p.m. This program is for anyone in our community interested in reducing HIV, for themselves or others, health care providers interested in prescribing Truvada as part of HIV prevention and counselors or others providing HIV preventive services. Dr. Paul Benson, 27351 Dequindre, **Madison Heights**. drpaulbenson@doctorbewell.com

**Teens Using Drugs: What to Know and What To Do** 7:30 p.m. A FREE, ongoing, two-part series designed to help participants learn to understand, identify and address adolescent alcohol/other drug problems. Dawn Farm, 5305 Elliot Dr., **Ypsilanti**. 734-485-8725. info@dawnfarm.org Dawnfarm.org

See Happenings, page 32

## Editor's Pick

Affirmations will bring a spooky fundraiser to Ferndale next week. For its second year, the center will host "Vineyard: The Haunted Mansion, a night of wine & bites to dine for."

The 21-and-over event will offer a unique fundraising experience for supporters and wine lovers. Guests can enjoy hors d'oeuvres, beautiful music and a selection of wines.

The Vineyard event will take place from 7-11 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 11 at Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. Tickets are \$35 before the event, \$45 at the door. For more information, visit [www.goaffirmations.org](http://www.goaffirmations.org).



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# 6 Don't-Miss Flicks For Fall



## Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me

Even as her waning health led to her final bow this past July, thespian fireball Elaine Stritch remained an open book as vibrant and vital as ever. Consider it a gift that documentarian Chiemi Karasawa had the chance to capture the “Company” actress in all her sassy splendor before the curtain closed. This is a role of a lifetime – and not only because it’s literally Stritch’s life. Stritch was never better than when she was just being herself. In what’s now, ultimately, a bittersweet send-off to a national treasure, Karasawa’s Oscar-bound masterpiece strikes a biographical-but-universal balance: It’s a telling, warts-and-all tribute to the tenaciousness of an aging icon, Broadway fixture and blunt force of nature, but it’s more than that: “Shoot Me” is an enlightening account of the human condition seen through the eyes of one badass broad. Preserving the stage veteran’s legacy with unforgettable zest, and serving it with empathetic heart and humor, you can’t help but raise your glass and say, “I’ll drink to that.” Elaine will have you in Stritches during the supplements, which includes priceless footage of her telling a filmmaker to keep the camera on her for no other reason than she can.

## Y Tu Mamá También

Before sending a woozy Sandra Bullock to space in last year’s tour de force “Gravity,” and consequently winning the Oscar for Best Director, Alfonso Cuarón’s filmmaking was, well, a little

more grounded. A road-trip flick through Mexico involving two restless buddies, a bored cougar and lots of butts, 2001’s “Y Tu Mamá También” was, like “Gravity,” about the transient journey of life. A young Diego Luna (who’d go on to appear in Dustin Lance Black’s “Milk”) stars, and an emotionally nuanced performance from Spanish actress Ana López Mercado is fiercely revelatory. With a film that’s liberating, queer, sexy and driven by the “live each moment...” aphorism, Cuarón demonstrated his knack for storytelling even before he had a blockbuster budget. Resurrecting “Y Tu Mamá También” for this glorious three-disc Blu-ray/DVD set, Criterion Collection’s most noteworthy extras include new making-of interviews with the crew (Luna and Cuarón among them) and also a wonderfully assembled 71-page book of scene stills and in-depth essays. There’s even an “In Memoriam” for Betsabé, the station wagon that changed these characters’ – and our lives – forever.



## The Birdcage

The modern ’mo might watch limp-wristed comedy classic “The Birdcage,” director Mike Nichols’ American version of ’70s French-Italian farce “La Cage aux

Folles,” and gasp at its more-apparent-than-ever clichés: a flaming houseboy, Nathan “Starina” Lane and more male femininity than an episode of “RuPaul’s Drag Race.” But this was 1996; positive portrayals of gay couples were hard to come by (seeing two men madly in love with each other, as depicted in “The Birdcage,” was as monumental as gay marriage is now). That it starred two gay-for-pay Hollywood luminaries – Lane in drag and the hilarious-as-always late Robin Williams – in a box-office hit was a landmark moment for queer cinema. And besides, some humor is just timeless: Watching Williams school Lane on how a “real man” butters his toast is funny in any era. Disappointedly without any extras, the fab-looking Blu-ray debut of “The Birdcage” is still a worthy addition to any queer cinephile’s collection.

## The Grand Budapest Hotel

There’s absurd, and then there’s “The Grand Budapest Hotel.” It makes cute of



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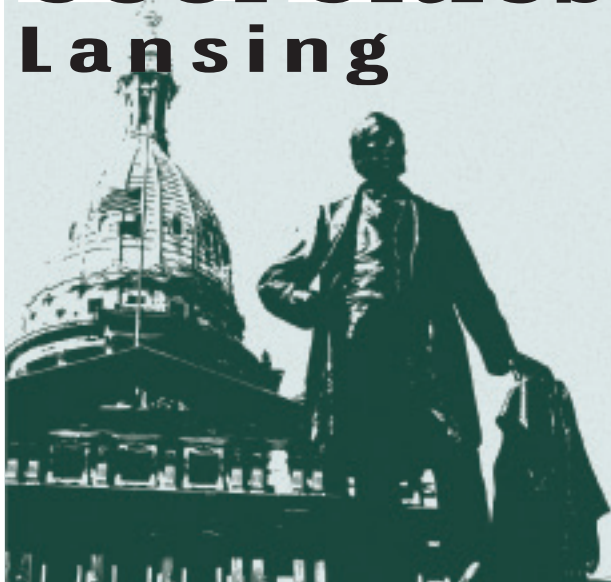
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# Lansing Community College Hosts LGBT, Hispanic Events

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

Lansing Community College fills out its calendar with LGBT-centric events this month for students and non-students. October serves as LGBT History Month, signifying National Coming Out Day on the 11th, remembering the death of Matthew Shepard on Oct. 12, 1998 and now commemorating the Hate Crimes Prevention Act being signed by President Obama on Oct. 28, 2009.

One of LCC's major events comes as part of Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month, also a part of October. National Hispanic Heritage Month runs from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. According to the U.S. government's website on the celebration, "The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period starting on Sept. 15 and ending on Oct. 15. It was

enacted into law on Aug. 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100-402.

"The day of Sept. 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and Sept. 18, respectively."

The special film showing of Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Juan Carlos Tabío's 1993 film, "Strawberry and Chocolate," will thus embody both LGBT and Hispanic history. The event will begin at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 10; location will be updated on the LCC website.

The Oscar-nominated film takes place in Havana, Cuba in 1979. LCC's synopsis for the film reads: "David (Vladimir Cruz) is a university student who meets Diego (Jorge Perugorria), a gay artist unhappy with the Castro regime's censored

conceptualization of culture. David's homophobic classmate, Miguel (Francisco Gattorno), plans to use David to spy on Diego, a person whom they see as aberrant and dangerous to the Communist cause. Diego, for his part, initiates the friendship with sexual intentions."

Following the screening will be a post-film conversation facilitated by Monica Del Castillo (LCC Counselor) and Ana Woehr (LCC Academic Advisor).

In addition to the film and discussion, LCC will host its Gay-Straight Alliance meeting from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 6, Oct. 13, Oct. 20, and Oct. 27. The school's GSA meets in Gannon Building Room 328 on campus.

Lansing Community College is located at 610 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. For more information on Lansing Community College LGBT events, call 517-483-1285 or visit [www.lcc.edu/studentlife/whats\\_new](http://www.lcc.edu/studentlife/whats_new).



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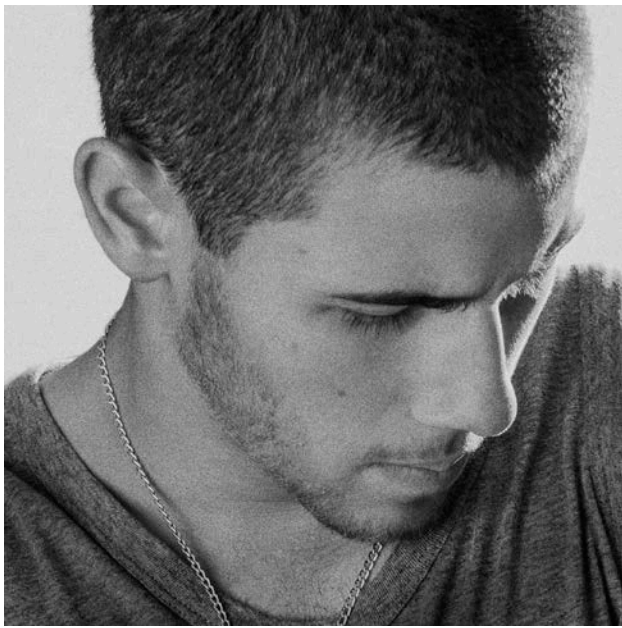
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► **Nick Jonas**

Continued from p. 27

my heart is, they'd just see that they're kind of ignorant.

The nature of where we are today is, we're in a time where we need to make strides and step forward as a society and embrace all people from all different walks of life. When you're trying to make a bold statement like that, some people aren't gonna fall in line with that. And that's OK. You gotta stay on your own path.

**You've recently opened up about your religious journey and how you've taken off your "purity ring." Did the gay people in your life have anything to do with reexamining your religion? Have you always been this accepting of homosexuality?**

That's a good question. I always have been. I think that's a testament to growing up in the theater and from an early age being surrounded by (gay people), and my parents – although my dad was a pastor – were very open-minded and said the same thing that I say, "We have to love people from all walks of life, and that's the key." It was nice to come from that.

Definitely my opinion and my feelings on faith and religion, specifically, have evolved over time just having seen some of the judgments that other people show toward the lesbian and gay community. It really burdens my heart, and it saddens me in a huge way because I feel like it's not our place to judge at all. Some of the most loving, caring relationships that I've ever seen are between my gay friends, and some of my straight friends' relationships are the worst examples of what love is.


**With your parents being as open-minded as they are, were there gay people in your life even before you pursued theater?**

There were. My parents were always good about having an open mind toward everyone. Like I said, although church and religion were a cornerstone for us in a lot of ways, they (my parents) were open, and especially after we left the church and had to develop our own faith is when my views and opinions started to take shape.

**Would you still consider yourself Christian?**

I say now that I have a relationship with God and that it's my own relationship with God. It's one of those things that I try to keep most personal because I think that's the healthiest way I've learned to deal with it. I keep it as that, and I know that I love God and he loves me.

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## Editor's Pick



The Brewster sisters love to murder old men and bury their bodies in the basement. That zany premise sets the stage for the Farmington Players' season opener, the farcical black comedy "Arctic and Old Lace" by Joseph Kesselring, which runs through Oct. 18 at the Farmington Players Barn.

As the old women perfect their deadly hobby, their nephew pays a visit, discovering a body stashed in a window seat – and the game is on for a show rich in irony, where you can't help but root for the killers.

This is Kristi Schwartz's directorial debut. "Being a good girl who always follows the rules, I wanted to direct a black comedy where I could explore that dark side."

The Farmington Players Barn is located at 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Reserved seats (\$14-16) are available at the box office by calling 248-553-2955.

### ► Happenings

Continued from p. 28

#### Thursday, Oct. 9

**Wellness Clinic** New center offers spaying, neutering and more. Tail Waggers 1990, 28402 Five Mile Road, Livonia. Tailwaggers1990.org

**Relationship Skills Class** 6 p.m. A series for LGBTQ people and their friends and loved ones. Topics include: exploring personal and cultural relationships, values, arguments and making agreements, accountability and building community connections. Tickets: \$5-35. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Toastmaster's International

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

### MUSIC & MORE

#### Concerts

**Michigan Philharmonic** "Beethoven, Bridges and Blue Jeans" Tickets: \$10-30. The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 4. 734-394-5300. Michiganphil.org

**Royal Oak Music Theatre** "Chris D'Elia". Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. Oct. 3. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

**Saugatuck Center for the Arts** "Al Stewart" Tickets: \$35. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. 8 p.m. Oct. 4. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

**The Acorn Theater** "The Guitars of Spain". The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Oct. 4. 269-756-3879. Acorntheater.com

**The Ark** "Crystal Bowersox" Tickets: \$25-75. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 5. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

**The Ark** "Marketa Irglova" Tickets: \$22. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 8. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

**The Magic Bag** "Lez Zeppelin" Tickets: \$20. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Jan. 31-Oct. 3. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

**The Magic Bag** "Puddles Pity Party" Tickets: \$25. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Oct. 5. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

### Dance

**Detroit Opera House** "Children's Nutcracker Auditions". Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Oct. 3. 313-237-SING. Motopera.org

**Metropolitan Center for the Arts, Inc.** "MetCen Youth Dance Company Auditions" Ages 7-18. Beginners welcome. The performance troupes are based on age and skill level.metropolitancenterforthearts.org. 41719 Joy Road, Canton. 6 p.m. Oct. 8. 248-345-1575.metcen.org

### THEATER

#### Civic/Community Theater

**A Little Princess** \$15. Project DayDream at Congregational Church of Birmingham, 1000 Cranbrook Road, Bloomfield Hills. Oct. 3 - 4. projectdaydream.org

**Dial M for Murder** \$16-18. St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild of Cranbrook, 400 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills. Oct. 10 - 25. 888-718-4253. showclix.com/events/3871333

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

**Shifting Gears** \$20. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 6. 734-761-1800. A2ct.org

**The Fox on the Fairway** \$12-15. The Twin City Players, 600 W. Glenford Road, St. Joseph. Oct. 3 - 26. 269-429-0400.

See Happenings, page 35

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# Strange Bedfellows Change History (And Each Other)

BY DONALD V. CALAMIA

Discussions of race and racism in modern-day America are fraught with danger, as emotion and passion often trump civility and reason, and political correctness and the fear of being called the dreaded “r-word” stifle an honest and open discourse. Even reviewing a play about racism is like stumbling onto a minefield, as my interpretation of the production might set off an explosive debate with other attendees whose personal experiences and biases might differ from mine.

But such is life.

Yet I suspect one area of agreement I’ll have with others at the University of Detroit Mercy Theatre Company’s opening night performance of “The Best of Enemies” is this: It was one heck of a thought-provoking night of theater.

Based on the true story of the “unlikely friendship” that emerged between a black activist and an exalted cyclops of the Klu Klux Klan, “The Best of Enemies” recalls the pain and division the residents of Durham, N.C. faced when the federal government came to town to force their schools to desegregate 17 years after Brown v. Board of Education became law of the land. And what playwright Mark St. Germain paints quite vividly is the humanity behind the tough exteriors of activist Ann Atwater and Klansman C.P. Ellis.

If you were Bill Riddick, a young, educated and black federal mediator from the Department of Education facing a near-impossible task in a Southern town guaranteed to be hostile toward you, what would be your primary plan of attack? Riddick’s idea was ingenious: You pull together the two most vocal leaders of the opposing factions and convert them to working together on the same team. Easy, it wasn’t; Atwater and Ellis were longtime enemies.

But as St. Germain shows, a funny thing can happen when fiercely opposing sides realize they have more in common than they previously thought.

And that, quite frankly, is the beauty of St. Germain’s script. Neither Atwater nor Ellis are saints in his play; both have flaws and painful histories. But more important is his revelation



Madelyn Poirter, Dan Johnson and Greg Trzaskoma in “The Best of Enemies.” Photo: UDM Theatre Company

## REVIEW

### The Best of Enemies

UDM Theatre Company  
At Marygrove Theatre  
8425 McNichols Road, Detroit  
8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 3  
8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 4  
2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 5  
Contains adult and potentially offensive language  
\$5-20  
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<http://theatre.udmercy.edu>

that both sides feared change, but for different reasons. For Ellis and the low-educated whites of Durham, federal mediators and the northern activists flooding into the South were seen as aggressors who wanted to destroy their way of life; and while the black community wanted equal education, they didn’t necessarily want it sitting next to white kids.

History tells us desegregation prevailed, of course. Yet amid their volatile clash of personalities, St. Germain peels away decades worth of prejudice and hate and reveals very human truths about Atwater and Ellis – and by extension, us. And he skillfully reminds us that history is neither as black nor as white as it often seems (or is portrayed) to be.

But words alone do not a play make. Insightful direction is needed here, and it’s provided by Dr. Arthur J. Beer, who gives

life and power to St. Germain’s script. With characters who are far-more complicated than the audience initially realizes, Beer carefully uses the beats of the story to shred the stereotypes of the angry black woman and the racist redneck to give us people we can relate to – even identify with and care about.

Even the show’s technical wizardry serves the script well. With scenic and costume designer Melinda Pacha and lighting designer and technical director Alan Devlin, Beer places the action on a mostly bare stage – but that stage is rather deceitful. Upon entry into the theater, one sees only a brown, wood-paneled wall on stage. In the center of the wall is a large screen that comes to life a few minutes prior to the start of the show with a slideshow that helps set the tone of the show with photos of the era. (Never seen a Klan meeting before? Or a “coloreds only” waiting room or restaurant? You will here!) Then, throughout the show, the projections set each scene, which keeps the production running smoothly while tables and chairs are quickly exchanged.

But the highlights of the show are the three longtime pros and one relative newcomer who take the written word of their characters and find much to bring them to life.

The “youngster” in the group, Dan Johnson, fully captures what Atwater sees as Riddick’s arrogance. And a transition toward the end of show is well executed

See Best of Enemies, page 37

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## Puzzle solution on pg. 34

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## Editor's Pick



The South Oakland Art Association will host its third annual "Art at the Museum" show and sale tomorrow evening. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served in addition to local artists being on hand for meet and greets.

The show itself is free to all after the opening night party, with a \$10 minimum donation for the "First Night Party" tomorrow. The show will run through Saturday, Oct. 18. Show hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays. Donations go to Common Ground's Art Therapy Program for families and individuals in crisis.

The event will run from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 3 at the Royal Oak Historical Museum. The museum is at 1411 W. Webster Road and can be reached at 248-439-1501. For more information, visit [www.SoOaklandArt.com](http://www.SoOaklandArt.com).

### ► Happenings

Continued from p. 32

[twincityplayers.org](http://twincityplayers.org)

#### College/University Theater

**All's Well That Ends Well** \$10-20. Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 10 - 19. 313-577-2960. [bonstelle.com](http://bonstelle.com)

**Animals Out of Paper** \$5-10. Lansing Community College (LCC) Performing Arts at LCC Black Box Theatre, 168 Gannon Building, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. Oct. 3 - 11. 517-483-1488. [lcc.edu/showinfo](http://lcc.edu/showinfo)

**Check Your Privilege** \$5-20. The University Theatre at York Arena Theatre inside The Gilmore Theatre Complex, 2200 Auditorium Dr., Kalamazoo. Through Oct. 12. 269-387-7222. [Wmutheatre.com](http://Wmutheatre.com)

**Good Kids** \$10-28. The U-M Department of Theatre & Drama at Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin Ave., Ann Arbor. Oct. 2 - 12. 734-764-2538. [tickets.music.umich.edu](http://tickets.music.umich.edu)

#### Professional

**1984** \$5-20. What A Do Theatre, 4071 W. Dickman Road, Springfield. Oct. 10 - 25. 269-282-1953. [whatado.org](http://whatado.org)

**Alice** \$30-75. Nerve at Drayton Avenue Presbyterian Church, 2441 Pinecrest Dr., Ferndale. Oct. 10 - 25. 248-506-4335. [gonerve.com](http://gonerve.com)

**Annappurra** \$12-42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Dec. 20. 734-433-7673. [purplerosetheatre.org](http://purplerosetheatre.org)

**Annie** \$35-85. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Through Oct. 4. 313-872-1000. [broadwayindetroit.com](http://broadwayindetroit.com)

**Around the World in 80 Days** \$26-41. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Oct. 1 - 26. 248-377-3300. [mbtheatre.com](http://mbtheatre.com)

**At the Bistro Garden** \$18-23. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. 248-850-9919. [twomusetheatre.org](http://twomusetheatre.org)

**Bernhardt on Broadway** \$24.50-28.50. Dexter Center for the Performing Arts, 2200 N. Parker Road, Dexter. Oct. 11 - 12. 800-838-3066. [brownpapertickets.com/event/789185](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/789185)

**Boeing Boeing** \$10-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Oct. 4. 313-577-2972. [hilberry.com](http://hilberry.com)

**Buried Child** Donation only. The Abreact Theatre Collective, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Through Oct. 11. 313-

454-1542. [theabreact.com](http://theabreact.com)

**Cheating Cheaters** \$8-15. Thunder Bay Theatre, 400 N. Second Ave., Alpena. Oct. 2 - 19. 989-354-2267. [thunderbaytheatre.com](http://thunderbaytheatre.com)

**Dracula** \$35-41. The Dio - Dining and Entertainment, 135 E. Main St., Pinckney. Oct. 2 - Nov. 1. 517-672-6009. [diotheatre.com](http://diotheatre.com)

**Driving Miss Daisy** \$27-41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Oct. 26. 734-663-0681. [pntheatre.org](http://pntheatre.org)

**Evil Dead: The Musical** \$15-29.50. The Ringwald Theatre & Olympia Entertainment at City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 1 - 25. 313-471-6611. [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

**Frog and Toad** \$3-12. Wild Swan Theater at Towsley Auditorium in the Morris Lawrence Building on the campus of Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E. Huron River Dr., Ann Arbor. Oct. 9 - 11. 734-995-0530. [wildswantheatre.org](http://wildswantheatre.org)

**Jekyll & Hyde** \$35-58. Miller Auditorium, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. Oct. 3 - 4. 269-387-2300. [millerauditorium.com](http://millerauditorium.com)

**Joel Frankel** \$5. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. Oct. 11. 269-756-3879. [acorntheater.com](http://acorntheater.com)

**Kiss & Cry** \$26. University Musical Society at Power Center for the Performing Arts, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. Oct. 10 - 12. 734-764-2538. [ums.org](http://ums.org)

**Snow Queen** \$10-20. PuppetART at Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit. 4 p.m. Oct. 5. 313-887-8500. [musichall.org](http://musichall.org)

**Spamalot** \$15-32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Through Oct. 12. 734-268-6200. [theencoretheatre.org](http://theencoretheatre.org)

**Sylvia** \$15-20. Open Book Theatre Company at Penelope's Venue, 12219 Dix Toledo Road, Southgate. Through Oct. 4. 734-288-7753. [openbooktc.com](http://openbooktc.com)

**The 39 Steps** \$20. The Snug Theatre, 160 S. Water St., Marine City. Oct. 10 - 26. 810-278-1749. [thesnugtheatre.com](http://thesnugtheatre.com)

**The Best of Enemies** \$5-20. UDM Theatre Company at Marygrove Theatre, 8425 McNichols Road, Detroit. Through Oct. 5. 313-993-3270. [theatre.udmercy.edu](http://theatre.udmercy.edu)

**The Gravedigger, A Frankenstein Story** \$15-35. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Through Nov. 2. 517-655-SHOW. [williamstontheatre.org](http://williamstontheatre.org)

**The Trial of the Catonsville Nine** \$20 suggested donation. Jasmine Rivera at Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley, Detroit. Oct. 3 - 4. 313-967-0999. [matrixtheatre.org](http://matrixtheatre.org)

**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. [jettheatre.org](http://jettheatre.org)

**Tomfoolery** \$10-20. The Penny Seats Theatre Company at Conor O'Neill's Irish Pub and Restaurant, 318 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. Oct. 2 - 23. 734-926-5346. [pennyseats.org](http://pennyseats.org)

**Voca People** \$43-59. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 11. 586-286-2222. [macombcenter.com](http://macombcenter.com)

### ART 'N' AROUND

**Boardwalk** "Gary Eleinko: Jungle Fever" Oil on Wood. Part of ArtPrize. Vote 56521. Boardwalk, 940 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids. Sep. 24-Oct. 12.

**Detroit Artists Market (DAM)** "Abstraction and Landscape: Contemporary Woodcut" Curated by Endi Poskovic. Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sep. 12-Oct. 18. 313-832-8540. [detroitartistsmarket.org](http://detroitartistsmarket.org)

**Detroit Institute of Arts** "Guest of Honor: Monet's Waterlily Pond, Green Harmony" . Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 1-Jan. 4. 313-833-7900. [Dia.org](http://Dia.org)

**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](http://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. Sep. 7-Oct. 31. 810-234-1695. [flintarts.org](http://flintarts.org)

**MOCAD** "Detroit City: Detroit Affinities" Detroit: Affinities, Speaks and Stages. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sep. 12-Jan. 31. 313-832-6622. [mocadetroit.org](http://mocadetroit.org)

**Pewabic Pottery** "Maker/Master" . Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. Sep. 5-Oct. 19. 313-626-2000. [Pewabic.org](http://Pewabic.org)

**South Oakland Art Association (SOAA)** "Art at the Museum" Donation: \$10. Royal Oak Historical Museum, 1411 W. Webster Road, Royal Oak. 6 p.m. Oct. 3. [SoOaklandart.com](http://SoOaklandart.com)

**The Scarab Club** "Border Crossings: Coming of Age in the Czech Resistance" Detroit: Sandra Novacek will present an illustrated talk on her late husband Charles Novacek's life as told in his award winning memoir. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. 6 p.m. Oct. 8. 313-831-1250. [Scarabclub.org](http://Scarabclub.org)

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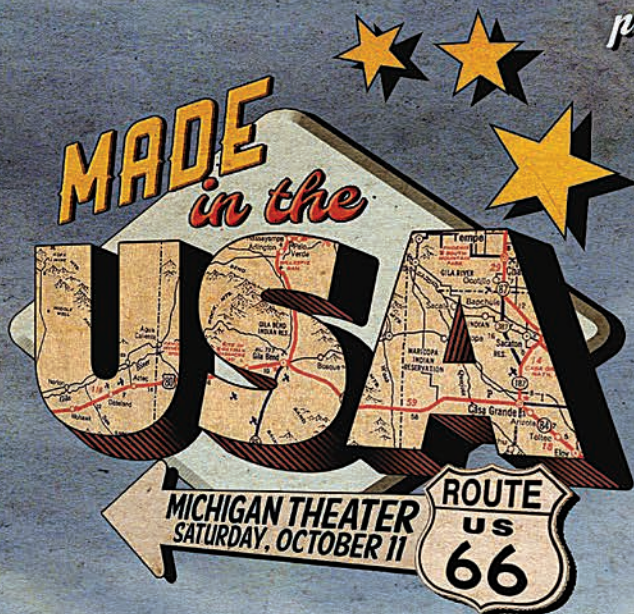
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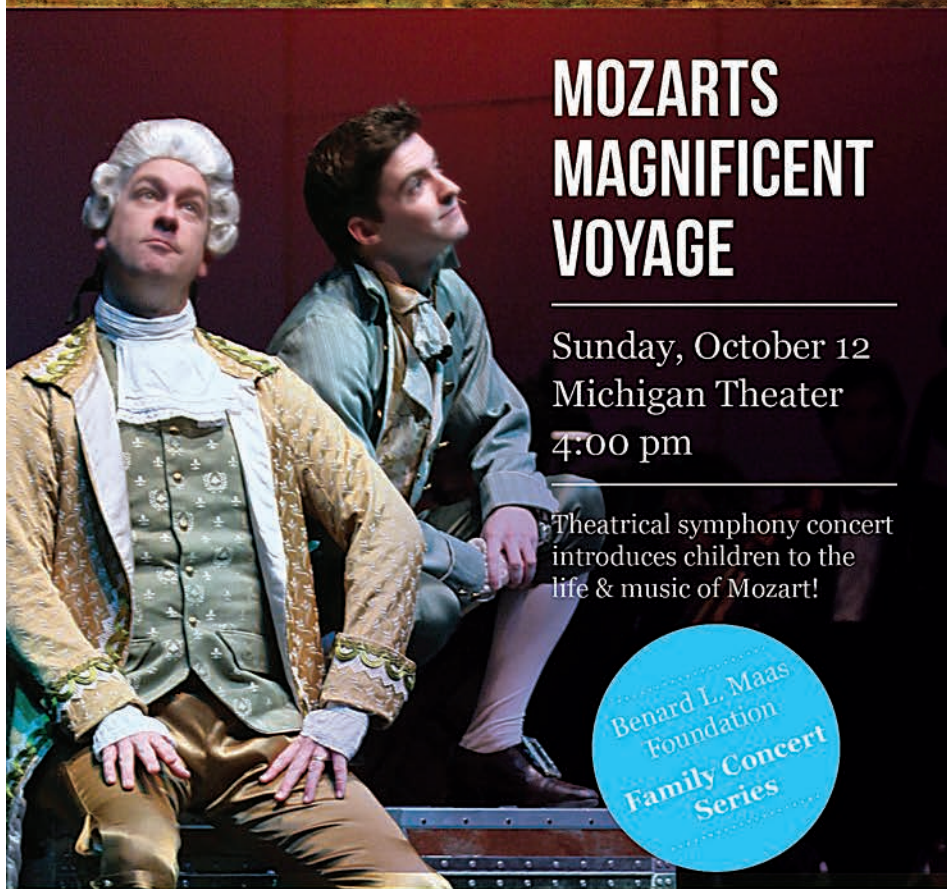


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## ► Screen Queen

Continued from p. 29

a Fascist regime with a silly “Three Stooges” sensibility. It turns out deadpan dialogue with unforeseen non sequiturs. It kills a cat and makes you feel like a bad person for reacting with belly laughs. It casts Tilda Swinton as a garish old lady who you’ll only recognize because a) the credits and b) I told you. Basically, there is nothing normal about “The Grand Budapest Hotel,” but it’s not surprising when you consider the source: Wes Anderson, who tells the ridiculous story of Gustave H, a legendary concierge, and his lobby boy. With a premise like that, gay jokes predictably ensue, but its queerness has less to do with homos and more to do with Anderson’s trademark kitsch. Full of supreme oddities, “Looney Tunes”-esque zip and in-your-face aesthetics, the director and his all-star cast come out on top with this fantastical politically-charged live-action cartoon. Extras, on the other hand, are nil.



## The Normal Heart

With advanced pharmaceuticals sustaining HIV-positive lives and PrEP minimizing the risk of contracting the virus, it’s easy for this generation to forget the onset of one of the deadliest epidemics in human history. But not anymore. And not for a long time. Provocative, unforgettable and expectedly heartbreaking, Ryan Murphy’s HBO adaptation of gay playwright Larry Kramer’s acclaimed theater production chronicles AIDS in 1980s NYC, when it emerged as a mysterious “gay cancer.” Winner of Outstanding Movie at this year’s Emmys, an award it certainly deserved, the film also showcases big names in riveting

## ► Best of Enemies

Continued from p. 33

and fully believable.

Recent Wilde Award-winner Linda Rabin Hammell tackles a role that would be easy to either overplay (shrew) or underplay (doormat) – that of Mary Ellis, C.P.’s wife. Mary’s character helps shed light on her husband, but she also serves to represent the townspeople, many of whom might be ready to embrace change. And – like always – Hammell nails it with a nuanced performance that finds all the correct emotional beats handed to her by the playwright.

Ultimately, the show’s success rests on the believability of the actors who play Atwater and Ellis. We must buy into the stereotypes before they can be destroyed – and both Madelyn Porter and Greg Trzaskoma work hard to make that happen. And they succeed!

Trzaskoma’s Ellis certainly looks like

roles. Matt Bomer is fearless, and Mark Ruffalo, as the stalwart Kramer-inspired gay activist Ned Weeks, is intensely moving. Even Jim Parsons’ supporting role packs a punch. The lone extra gives scant insight with Kramer’s selective commentary.



## All That Jazz

Stylistically flamboyant and dramatically morose, famed choreographer Bob Fosse’s trippy caper danced to its own beat.

Decades later, it’s more apparent than ever that, with his fearless ambition and blatant hysterics, Fosse revolutionized cinema like no other. (It’s hard to imagine many films in the late ’70s celebrating the scope of human sexuality quite like “All That Jazz”). Released in 1979, this bizarre musical biopic about a drug- and sex-addicted dancer literally suffering for his own art inspired a company of dexterous crazies, including Natalie Portman as an unhinged ballerina in “Black Swan.” In Fosse’s fever dream of a film, a young (and wildly sexy) Roy Scheider takes center stage in his compelling turn as Joe Gideon, Fosse’s alter ego, with his angel of death, Jessica Lange doing “American Horror Story” before “American Horror Story,” standing in the wings. And talk about “All That Jazz”: Criterion’s newly minted Blu-ray/DVD edition is something to get dancey over. This impressive salute to one of cinema’s great musicals packs special features – from Fox’s previous DVD releases – among them: scene-specific Scheider interviews and “Portrait of a Choreographer,” which features Liza Minnelli and Adam Shankman – and dazzling new additions. Archival interviews with Fosse talking in depth about his craft, characters and “the sissiness of dance” are stand outs.

the stereotypical redneck Klansman – a bit disheveled, a protruding belly, and a vocabulary rich with the now-infamous “n-word.” He’s loud and abrasive – and he’s used to being a powerful man respected by many and feared by others. But as his status, livelihood and home life change, Trzaskoma applies every “trick” of his craft to show us the ongoing toll it takes on Ellis through the use of gestures, stature and vocal techniques – some of which are ever-so-slight and tough to perceive. (Maybe it was just me sitting off to the side a bit, but I lost some of his early dialogue because of the thick accent. But that stopped not long into the play.)

Porter’s appearance is especially notable. One of the gems of the Detroit theater community – and someone whose work I’ve regretted missing in recent times – Porter is highly skilled at discovering the heart of even the toughest character, imbuing them with humor and passion that many others would ignore or fail to find.



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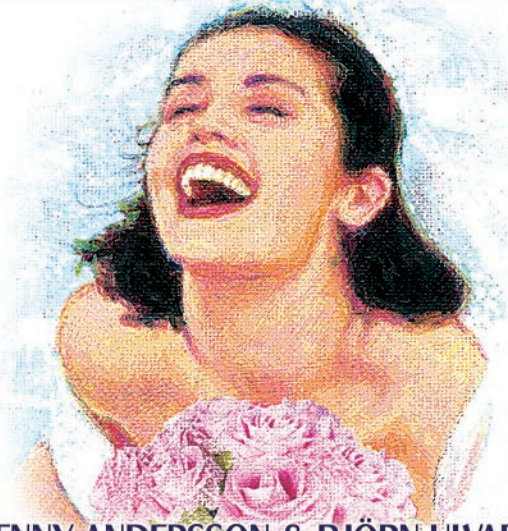
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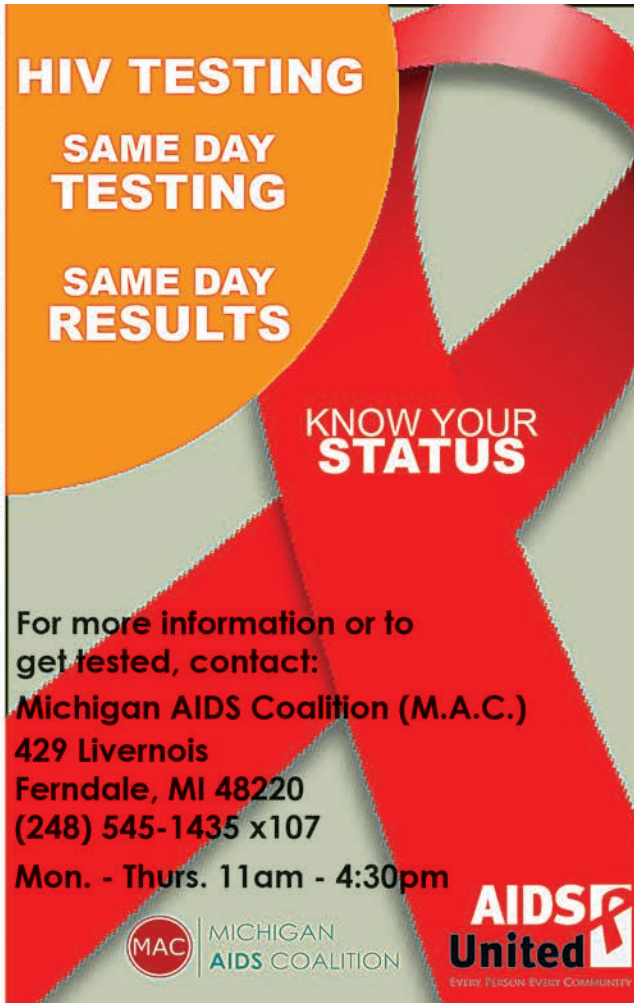
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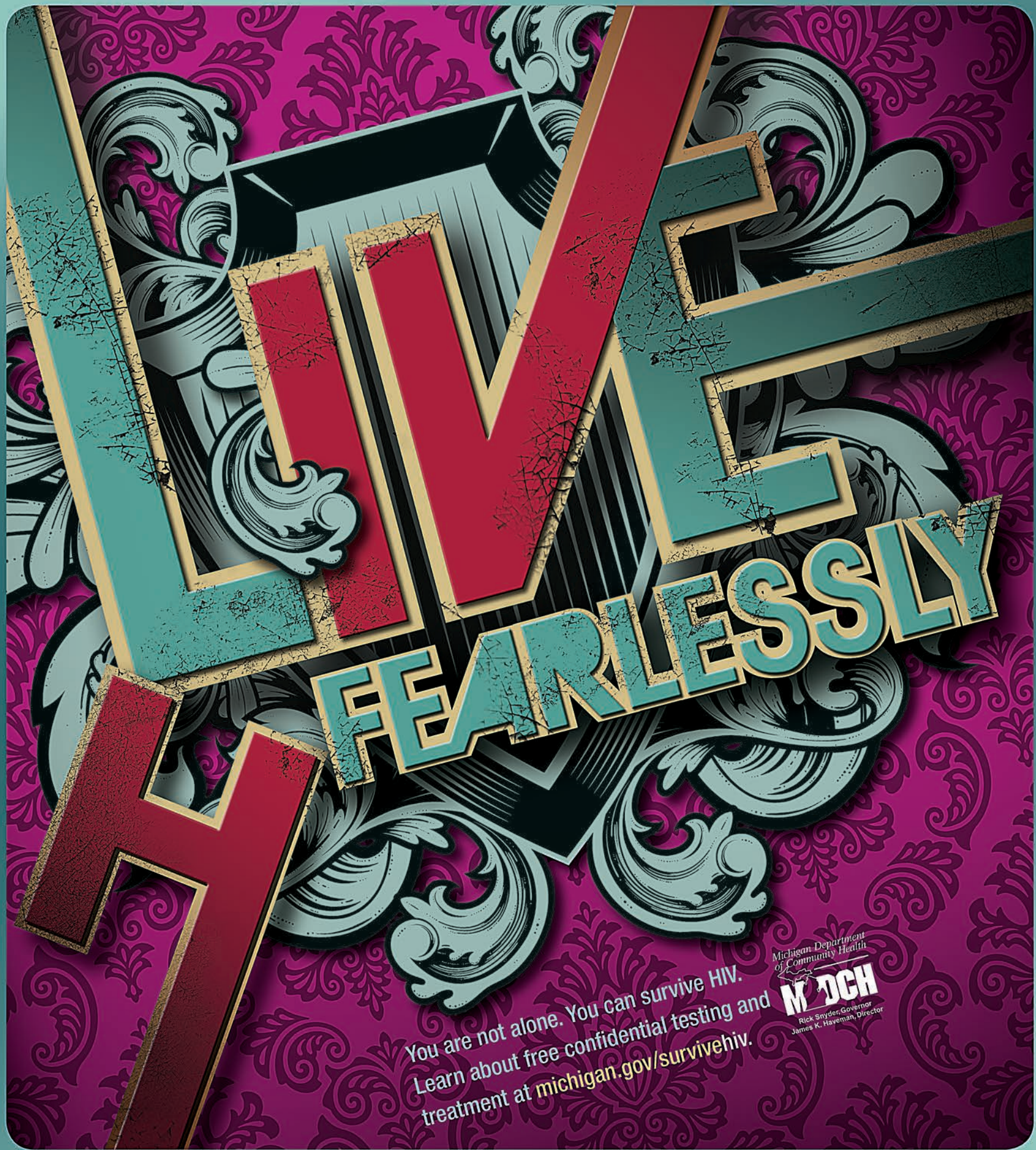
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