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Jenny McCarthy On Playing Trans: 'I Feel Like That Inside'

“ Bill Schuette is using the (same-sex marriage) case to continue an ideological crusade and trying to disguise his actions with the excuse he's defending the Constitution, but it's exactly the opposite. ”

- Mark Totten, pg. 16




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COVER

14 A driving force
Photo courtesy of Nissan



“It was 25 years ago when ‘Roseanne’ brought gay characters onto the show, and it was a **big deal.**”

– Laurie Metcalf, pg. 24



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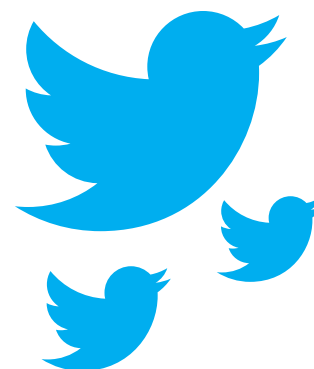
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Totten On The Issues On Marriage Equality

“This case presents a fairly clear example of a situation where the state marriage ban violates the federal Constitution, and consistent with my oath of office, I would be required to uphold the federal Constitution.”

On Bill Schuette's claims he was following the law by appealing:

“*At this point, Bill Schuette is using the (marriage) case to continue an ideological crusade and trying to disguise his actions with the excuse he's defending the Constitution, but it's exactly the opposite.*”

On the Enbridge Energy pipeline running under the Straits of Mackinac

“I will use existing powers under state laws already on the books to hold full, open public hearings to examine every inch of that pipeline and ensure that our Great Lakes are not susceptible to an oil spill. Bill Schuette has refused to do that.”

On Right-to-Work

“I think this was – at a policy level – a bad decision. I think it undermines organized labor, and I think it was a move that created a lot of bad will.”

On Medical Marijuana

“I've never smoked pot in my life. This isn't my thing, but I'm committed – outside whatever my personal preferences are – to upholding the law. I'm going to be a problem solver in this area to give the voters what they asked for, which is a safe and effective medical marijuana system for seriously ill patients.”

Elliott-Larsen Amendments

“Michigan needs to immediately amend the Elliott-Larsen Act... Employers, landlords should not be able to deny housing and employment opportunities.”

Totten Seeks Attorney General Seat, Speaks Out On Schuette Record

BY TODD HEYWOOD

For Democrat Mark Totten, 40, his bid to replace Republican Bill Schuette, 60, as Michigan's Attorney General is a mission.

“I think Michigan families need an Attorney General who is going to keep them safe and not let politics get in the way,” Totten told *Between The Lines* in a phone interview Oct. 8. He says Schuette, who is seeking re-election to be the people's lawyer, has failed on the core missions of the office - fighting consumer fraud, protecting the environment, assuring transparency in government and respecting the federal Constitution and equal protection for all.

The former Kalamazoo Public Schools board member, and father of one, is a relative neophyte in politics compared to Schuette, who is an old hat. Schuette is a former Congressman, an appeals court judge and now the attorney general. But Schuette, Totten says, is using that office to pursue an extreme agenda.

“At this point, Bill Schuette is using the (same-sex marriage) case to continue an ideological crusade and trying to disguise his actions with the excuse he's defending the Constitution, but it's exactly the opposite,” he says in relation to the Republican's appeals of a federal court ruling overturning Michigan's ban on marriage for same-sex couples.

Totten says continuing to fight is undermining the constitutional promise Schuette gave in his oath of office. And he says the writing is on the wall with marriage.

“This case presents a fairly clear example of a situation where the state marriage ban violates the federal Constitution, and consistent with my oath of office, I would be required to uphold the federal Constitution,” he says. “At this point in the day, there's really no question. You know, when the Supreme Court decided its key marriage case involving DOMA two years ago, they made it very clear the principles that guided their decision. Those principles apply equally to state marriage bans, as well.”

“If you had any question about that, just look at the fact that there have been – with one exception – forty state and federal courts that have decisively rejected Bill Schuette's arguments,” Totten continued. “That's unprecedented. That string of cases is unprecedented in modern Constitutional law.”

And Totten fully supports amending the state civil rights law, known as the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

“Michigan needs to immediately amend the Elliott-Larsen Act,” he said. “Employers and landlords should not be able to deny housing



Candidate for Attorney General, Mark Totten is strongly endorsed by BTL. He is seen here in late August addressing the LGBTQ Caucus of the Democratic Party of Michigan. BTL file photo: AJ Trager

and employment opportunities.”

He does not support a broad religious exclusion, as some have been arguing for in the state legislature. He says there have always been traditional exemptions for churches and houses of worships, but when it comes to housing or employment, there just isn't room for exemptions.

Totten's criticisms of Schuette don't stop there. Totten told the *Detroit Free Press* that Schuette has been following “one extreme crusade after another.” As Attorney General, Schuette has supported the Hobby Lobby case to exempt certain businesses from providing access to birth control and other sexual health options through insurance programs, when such provisions would violate the sincerely held religious beliefs of the owners. He's also regularly fought implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Schuette has also muddied the waters when it comes to implementation of Michigan's medical marijuana laws, Totten says. Schuette has argued, unsuccessfully, that federal laws trump state laws in relation to medical pot. He said that was an odd choice of an argument for an attorney general who claims to support state sovereignty. Schuette, incidentally, ran the campaign opposing the ballot measure in which 63 percent of state voters approved

Bill Schuette, Totten says, is using the AG office to pursue an extreme agenda.

medical marijuana.

“He's making arguments like that because he doesn't want to follow the law,” Totten said.

For his part, Totten says he supports making a safe, effective system for people to access medical marijuana.

“I've never smoked pot in my life,” he says with a chuckle. “This isn't my thing, but I'm committed – outside whatever my personal preferences are – to upholding the law. I'm going to be a problem solver in this area to give the voters what they asked for, which is a safe and effective medical marijuana system for seriously ill patients.”

The former federal judge law clerk and volunteer federal prosecutor also took aim at Schuette on his dealings with Canadian energy giant Enbridge. That company was responsible for the 2010 pipeline rupture that dumped over a million gallons of tar sands oil into the Kalamazoo river and a tributary. It was the most expensive inland oil spill in U.S. history, with a cleanup price tag well over \$1 billion.

The company knew before the rupture in 2010 that the location was ripe for failure based on internal sweeps with specialized tools. It failed to act, something it was admonished for by the National Transportation Safety Board.

Now it is in the eyes of environmentalists as a 60-year-old pipeline running under the Straits of Mackinac has been questioned. Schuette and Enbridge have refused to provide documents to Michigan Public Radio showing the pipeline is not at risk of failure. Schuette cited Homeland Security provisions, while Enbridge told MPR that the information was complicated and difficult to read.

“Enbridge has resisted, at every turn, providing the public with information that they need,” Totten said. “There are lots of reasons for us to be suspicious of Enbridge.”

For his part, Totten says he will use the powers of his office to address the pipeline if he is elected as Michigan's next attorney general.

“I will use existing powers under state laws already on the books to hold full, open public hearings to examine every inch of that pipeline and ensure that our Great Lakes are not susceptible to an oil spill,” he said. “Bill Schuette has refused to do that.”



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BRIEFS

Gary Peters Releases Statement On SCOTUS Decision

U.S. Rep. Gary Peters (MI-14) released the following statement after the U.S. Supreme Court announced it would not review the rulings of lower courts in same-sex marriage cases in five states, effectively authorizing same-sex marriages in Virginia, Utah, Oklahoma, Indiana and Wisconsin:



"Today is an important step forward in the fight for marriage equality and equal rights. I am heartened to see that the U.S. Supreme Court will be ensuring marriage equality in many states across the country, which will afford all couples in these states, regardless

of sexual orientation, the right to marry. No American should face discrimination based on who they love, and I will continue working to ensure marriage equality is fully recognized and celebrated in Michigan. It is my sincere hope that the 6th Circuit Court will heed this decision and uphold marriage equality in Michigan."

BTL's interview with Gary Peters was out in our Oct. 9 issue which you can download online at www.pridesource.com

DETROIT

ACLU Dinner To Honor Local Heroes

The ACLU of Michigan will host its Annual Dinner on Nov. 7, playing host to special guest, Ta-Nehisi Coates. Coates is an Atlantic senior editor and writer, known for his original and perceptive take on pop culture, politics and history. Coates hails from Baltimore, which he details in his memoir, "The Beautiful Struggle." Previously a Martin Luther King Visiting Associate Professor at MIT, Coates will teach at CUNY's School of Journalism this fall.

His recent essay, "The Case for Reparations," is one of the most lauded pieces from The Atlantic. Coates presents a scathing examination of the legacy of slavery, Jim Crow segregation and federally backed discriminatory housing policy; the writer also calls for "collective introspection" on the issue of reparations.

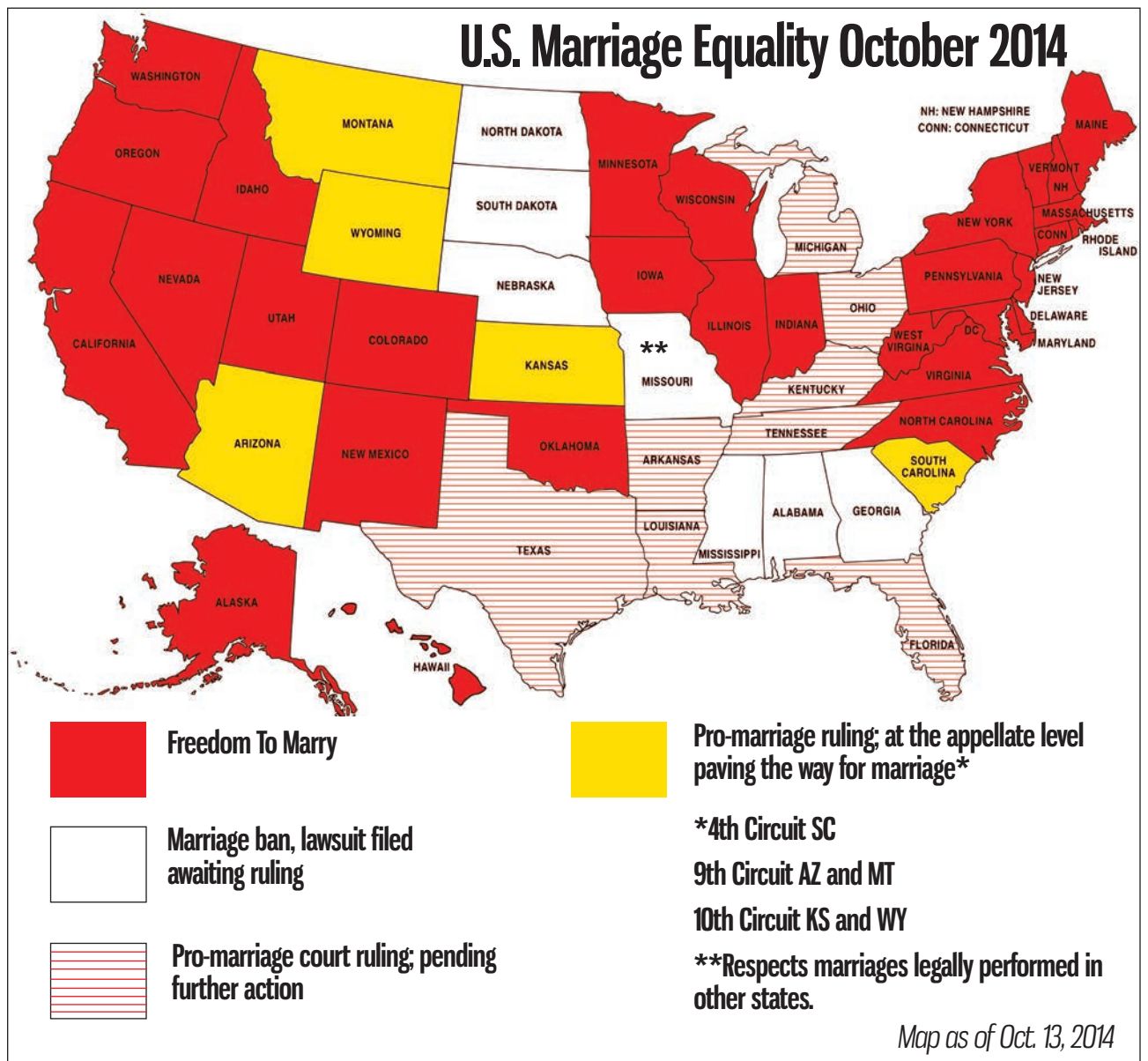
During the dinner, the ACLU of Michigan will also honor advocates of civil rights who have worked tirelessly to protect and ensure civil liberties and rights in the state. This year, Matthew J. Lund, attorney of Pepper Hamilton LLP, will be honored for his extensive civil liberty work, including serving as the lead attorney for the ACLU voting rights case that restored the thousands of wrongfully-purged names from the voting rolls before the 2008 election. Lund also worked on the "Mike's Hard Lemonade Case," which challenged an unconstitutional state law that was used to remove children from their parents.

The Youth Leadership Team of the Michigan School-Justice Partnership will also be honored. According to the ACLU, this group "captured the attention of policy makers this past April by organizing an 80-mile march from Detroit to Lansing to bring awareness to law and policies that result in pushing children out of schools and into the criminal justice system."

The 2014 Annual Dinner for the ACLU of Michigan will hold its reception at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 7. The main program will follow at 7:30 p.m. All events will be held at the Henry Ford Museum, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. Tickets range from \$50-1,000. For more information, call 313-578-6818 or visit www.aclumich.org.

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October Surprise At Supreme Court

BY LISA KEEN

If state bans against same-sex marriages were a table, the striking down of the Defense of Marriage Act last year was like the loss of a leg. The announcement last week that the U.S. Supreme Court would not hear appeals to keep such bans on the books was like the loss of a second leg. The table has fallen. All that is left is for the Supreme Court to remove the final two legs – by declaring that such bans are unconstitutional and by ensuring that its declaration does not provide a way for any individual state to continue its ban.

The stunning rapidity with which much of this has already happened has left even the most seasoned LGBT activists in awe. Yes, it took 10 years to go from the first trial in Hawaii (1993) to the landmark ruling in Massachusetts (2003). And yes, it took roughly another 10 years to witness

the decimation of the most harmful part of DOMA with the 2013 U.S. Supreme Court Windsor ruling. But the number of states – either by legislative action or court order – enforcing the principle of equal protection in marriage law has climbed dramatically and steeply in the past 12 months – from 14 in October 2013 to possibly 35 shortly.

And the victory is not in numbers only. The states that have entered the equality column with regards to the right to marry include some of the nation's most conservative: Utah, West Virginia and North Carolina, across four circuits: the 4th, 7th, 9th and 10th.

There have been some breath-holding moments though. Two days after the U.S. Supreme Court refused on Oct. 6 to hear seven petitions concerning five state bans on same-sex marriage, there was a bit of puzzlement, even a pause. On Oct. 7, the

9th Circuit declared bans in Nevada and Idaho to be unconstitutional, but Justice Anthony Kennedy granted a stay against that circuit's decision – a stay very much like the ones the Supreme Court had just lifted in three other circuits.

The 9th Circuit decision had been issued by a three-judge panel, so Idaho had a right to ask the full 9th Circuit to hear an appeal, and it plans to press that appeal.

The puzzlement was that Kennedy's order included Nevada, and Nevada state officials had *not* asked for a stay. They had not defended their ban in court and they were ready to enforce the 9th Circuit panel decision. Why would Kennedy include Nevada?

It was apparently a mistake and, within hours, Kennedy removed Nevada from

See **October Surprise**, page 13



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Creep of the Week

Gov. Rick Snyder

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

It's been a tough four years for Michigananders under Gov. Rick Snyder. Especially the gay and lesbian ones.



During his debate with Democratic rival Mark Schauer on Oct. 12, Nolan Finley of The Detroit News asked Snyder, "Governor, if the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals upholds Judge (Bernard A.) Friedman's

(March 21) overturning of Michigan's gay marriage ban, will you ask the attorney general to pursue the appeal further or will you let the matter rest?"

For some reason Snyder wants us to buy that, until the 6th Circuit rules ... he can't bother his nerd brain with the subject of marriage equality... Voting for Snyder is, quite literally, voting against gays and lesbians and their families. Not bothering to vote at all is too.

"They're separate constitutional offices, Nolan, so we each have a choice and I would, I'm gonna wait for the opinion to come down," Snyder replied.

In other words, he's saying he isn't the boss of Michigan's Attorney General Bill Schuette. But Snyder's own name is on the lawsuit, so it isn't like he's disconnected from it, separate offices or not. Also, Schuette's a right-wing conservative, a characterization Snyder's tried to avoid, so you'd think he might be comfortable breaking with Schuette on this issue. But no.

Snyder continued, "That's a hypothetical, but I will respect what happens in our court system and I think that's where the issue is going to be decided."

It's disingenuous for Snyder to dismiss Finley's question as "a hypothetical," because it really isn't. There's a distinct possibility that the 6th Circuit will uphold Friedman's ruling. One presumes that Snyder has a plan for what he'll do in that instance, as well as a plan for what he'll do if the 6th Circuit goes his way. Are we to believe that Snyder just hasn't bothered to think about it?

Note, too, Snyder said he "will respect what happens in our court system," not that he will respect the decision of the 6th Circuit, which means he very well might "pursue the appeal further," as Finley put

it, in the question that Snyder avoided answering.

Finley then asked Snyder, "Where do you stand on the issue?"

"Well, again, I'm waiting for the outcome of the courts," Snyder said. And then Snyder shrugged, like, "What more could there possibly be to say?"

For some reason Snyder wants us to buy that, until the 6th Circuit rules, why, he can't bother his nerd brain with the subject of marriage equality.

Mark Schauer, on the other hand, gets it. "I think the voters deserve to know where the governor will stand on tough issues," he said. "Now, (Snyder's) statement leads you to believe he has no position. This governor, through his own legislature, banned domestic partner benefits for gay and lesbian state employees. His tough choices are tough on all the wrong people.

They're hurting people and hurting our families."

Note that Snyder didn't say anything about families in his answer. Because his administration doesn't value gays and lesbians as people and he certainly doesn't think our relationships matter. Otherwise, why not say so? It isn't a radical position to say that all of Michigan's families matter. But it's too radical for Rick Snyder.

Snyder claims he's a numbers guy, and the economy is his main concern. Yet the state pissed away tens of thousands of dollars on "expert" testimony against gay families in court.

Again, Schauer gets it. "I support marriage equality," he said. "It is not only the right thing to do, but it is an economic issue here in our state. To discriminate against people, talented people we need to help rebuild the city of Detroit and our communities, is wrong. I've talked to parents who have adult children who are professionals who live in other states, (who) won't come here because we have backwards policies."

Voting for Snyder is, quite literally, voting against gays and lesbians and their families. Not bothering to vote at all is, too. Get out there on Nov. 4 and show Snyder that gays and lesbians and the people who care about them aren't unicorns. We're real. And we vote.

Bishops Say Gays Have Gifts To Offer Church

BY NICOLE WINFIELD

VATICAN CITY (AP) - Catholic bishops showed unprecedented openness Monday to accepting the real lives of many Catholics today, saying gays had gifts to offer the church and should be accepted and that there were "positive" aspects to a couple living together without being married.

A two-week meeting of bishops on family issues arrived at its halfway point with a document summarizing the closed-door debate so far. No decisions were announced, but the tone of the report was one of almost-revolutionary acceptance, rather than condemnation, with the aim of guiding Catholics toward the ideal of a lasting marriage.

Bishops clearly took into account the views of Pope Francis, whose "Who am I to judge?" comment about gays signaled a new tone of welcome for the church. Their report also reflected the views of ordinary Catholics who, in responses to Vatican questionnaires in the run-up to the synod, rejected church teaching on birth control and homosexuality as outdated and irrelevant.

The bishops said gays had "gifts and qualities" to offer and asked rhetorically if the church was ready to provide them a welcoming place, "accepting and valuing their sexual orientation without compromising Catholic doctrine on the family and matrimony."

For a 2,000-year-old institution that teaches that gay sex is "intrinsically disordered," even posing the question is significant.

"This is a stunning change in the way the Catholic church speaks of gay people," said the Rev. James Martin, a Jesuit author. "The synod is clearly listening to the complex, real-life experiences of Catholics

The bishops said gays had "gifts and qualities" to offer and asked rhetorically if the church was ready to provide them a welcoming place, "accepting and valuing their sexual orientation without compromising Catholic doctrine on the family and matrimony."



Bishops attend a morning session of a two-week synod on family issues at the Vatican, Monday, Oct. 13. AP photo

around the world and seeking to address them with mercy, as Jesus did."

The bishops repeated that gay marriage was off the table. But it acknowledged that gay partnerships had merit.

"Without denying the moral problems connected to homosexual unions, it has to be noted that there are cases in which mutual aid to the point of sacrifice constitutes a precious support in the life of the partners," they said.

Conservative groups rejected the report as a "betrayal" and even heresy.

"What will Catholics parents now have to tell their children about contraception, cohabiting with partners or living homosexual lifestyles?" asked Maria Madise, coordinator of the Voice of the Family, which counts pro-life and conservative groups as members.

"Will those parents now have to tell their children that the Vatican teaches that there are positive and constructive

aspects to these mortal sins? This approach destroys grace in souls."

For heterosexuals, the bishops said the church must grasp the "positive reality of civil weddings" and even cohabitation, with the aim of helping the couple commit eventually to a church wedding.

The bishops also called for a re-reading of the 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae* that outlined the church's opposition to artificial birth control. The bishops said couples should be unconditionally open to having children, but that the message of *Humanae Vitae* "underlines the need to respect the dignity of the person in the moral evaluation of the methods of birth control."

There has been much talk inside the synod about applying the theological concept of the "law of gradualness" in difficult family situations, including contraception. The concept

See Bishops, next page

Oklahoma Gay Couples Can Now File For Benefits

TULSA, Okla. (AP) - State employees married to people of the same sex can now apply for benefits in Oklahoma, a spokesman for the state's Office of Management and Enterprise Services said.

Spokesman John Estus told the Tulsa World that married gay couples and those who plan on marrying can submit a benefits change request for the 2014 plan year.

"It's the same process as our normal benefits change process," Estus said. "If you have some qualifying event in the middle of a year that would necessitate a change, you fill out a form."

He said the only change was to a form that now says "married couple" instead of "husband and wife."

Same-sex marriage became legal in Oklahoma after the U.S. Supreme Court declined to take up appeals from five states seeking to preserve their bans. The high court's decision effectively made such marriages legal in 30 states.

An increasing number of same-sex couples have been filing for marriage licenses, according to Jason Jones, head of the license division for the Tulsa County Court Clerk. The office stopped maintaining a record of how many same-sex marriage licenses were filed after Tuesday, but Jones noted the office issued 240 marriage licenses in total last week.

The 65 total licenses given out Friday were "far and away the most we've ever had in one day," Jones said.

► Bishops

Continued from p. 8

encourages the faithful to take one step at a time in the search for holiness.

Applying the concept to matters of birth control would be an acknowledgement that most Catholics already use artificial contraception in violation of church teaching. But it would encourage pastors to meet them where they are and then help them come to understand the full reasoning behind the ban and then adopt it themselves.

Bishops also called for "courageous" new ways to minister to families, especially those "damaged" by divorce. The document didn't take sides in the most divisive issue at the synod, whether Catholics who divorce and remarry without an annulment can receive Communion.

Church teaching holds that without an annulment, these Catholics are living in sin and thus ineligible to receive the sacraments.

The document said these Catholics deserve respect and should not be discriminated against, and then laid out the positions of both sides: those who want to maintain the status quo barring them from the sacraments, and those who favor a case-by-case approach, in which the couple undertake a path of penance.

Pope Francis has called for a more merciful approach to these couples, but conservatives have insisted there is no getting around Jesus' words that marriage is indissoluble.

There have been suggestions that the conservatives were being sidelined, if not silenced, behind the synod walls given Francis' known position on the matter.

Significantly, Francis decided at the end of last week to add six perceived progressives to the synod leadership to help prepare the final document after some conservatives were elected to leadership positions.

Filipino Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle said there had been "ample space" for people to speak their minds.

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Remembering Detroit's Anti-Hero



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

OLIVER "BILLY" SIPPLE. Born: Detroit, Nov. 20, 1941. Died: San Francisco, Feb. 2, 1989. A reluctant hero, he strolled into history at a precise psychological moment, but an inconvenient time. His year with destiny: 1975.

Billy's favorite San Francisco gay bar was the New Belle Saloon. Following his death (30 friends attended his funeral), the establishment displayed a framed White House letter: "Mrs. Ford and I express our deepest sympathy in this time of your friend's passing. President Gerald Ford."

It was not the thank-you note Billy had originally received. That treasured item – succinct, but surely just as sincere – cited him for saving the 62-year-old president's life, Sept. 22, 1975. On that eventful day, the Vietnam ex-Marine, living on a disability pension, exited a VA Hospital and joined an expectant crowd of 3,000 gathered at the elegant Saint Francis Hotel.

By chance, Billy stood next to a fade-in, fade-out, gray drab of a woman in a blue raincoat. Her name, Sara Jane Moore. She watched transfixed as President Ford, leaving the hotel, waved

Billy was a televised national hero. Unknown to the authorities, he was also a closeted gay man.

to bystanders and headed toward the black-metallic presidential limousine carelessly guarded by Secret Service agents.

Without a finger's snap of hesitation, Sara Jane lunged forward, flashed a steel-silver 38-caliber pistol, squeezed its eager trigger, as Billy, with instantaneous response, grabbed her wrist. The bullet veered five feet wide of its living-breathing target.

Salvation for one. Instant notoriety for two. Sipple urged the San Francisco police not to release his name or his Marine identity. The police were baffled. But it was too late for a vanishing act. Billy was a televised national hero. Unknown to the authorities, he was also a closeted gay man.

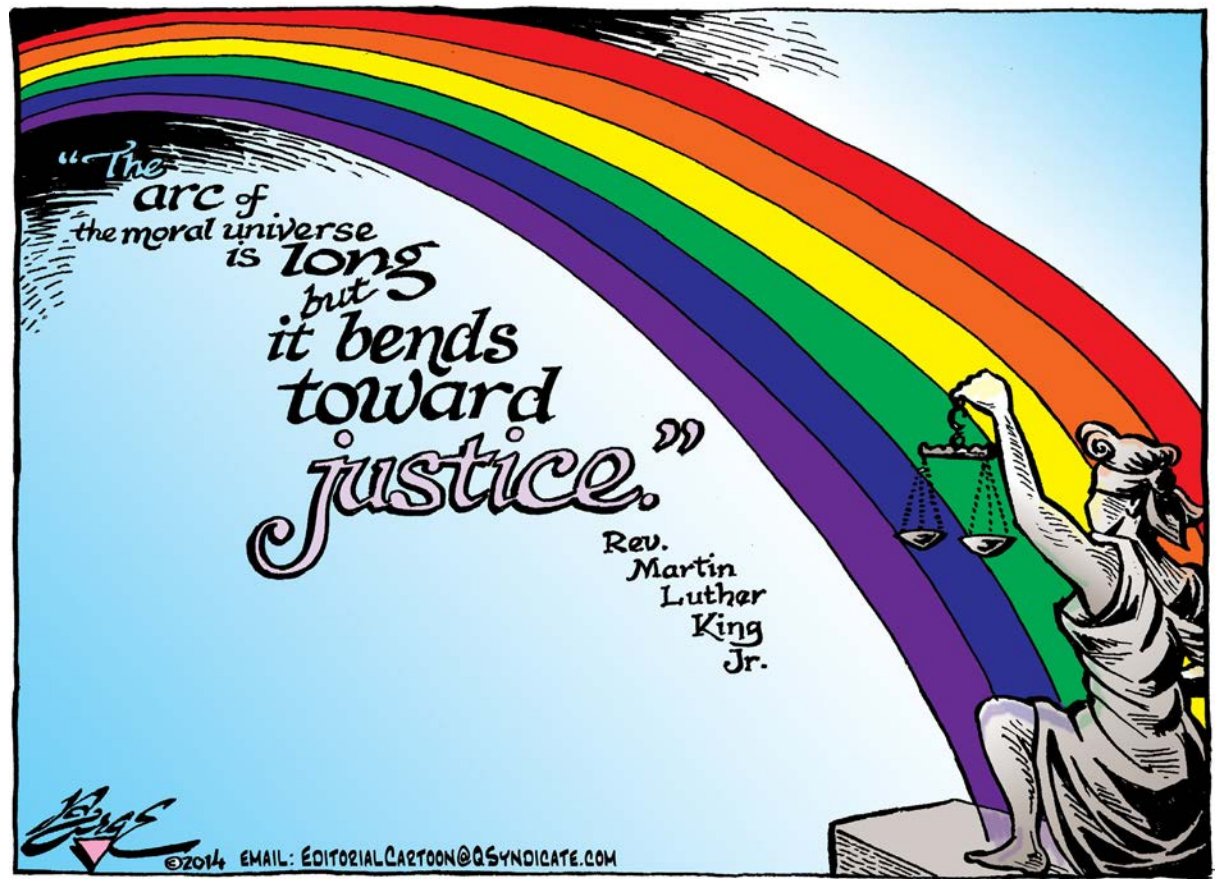
Ten years earlier, Billy had been Harvey Milk's boyfriend. He now feared publicity, and perhaps understandably so. This was three years before "Come out, come out, wherever you are" Milk was elected San Francisco supervisor and assassinated along with Mayor George Moscone in 1978.

It was Milk who told San Francisco Chronicle gossip mavin, Herb Caen, "Billy's gay. Maybe this will help break the stereotype." Six local papers zeroed in. Gay liberation groups petitioned for a hero's official recognition. Instead, Billy became alienated from his Baptist mother, his family, service vets and organizations. He and mom reconciled later.

"My sexual orientation has nothing to do with saving Ford's life," he told reporters before bringing a lawsuit for \$15 million against seven San Francisco newspapers for privacy invasion. The case was thrown out. Ruling: Sipple's act of heroism made him a public figure. "Fair game."

The strain was too much. Billy's mental and physical health imploded over the years. He drank excessively, became depressed,

See Parting Glances, next page



Viewpoint



Our Time for Action: Countdown To Nov. 4 Vote

OPINION BY MICHELLE E. BROWN

The one, and probably only, gubernatorial debate is over. The campaign ads are increasing as the days to the November 2014 midterm elections dwindle down.

Pundits say the number of votes that will determine the leadership (and I use the term loosely) of the Senate and House will be determined by a number of voters fewer in number than the population of Florida. The key to victory – who best turns out the vote.

Unfortunately, if history holds true for midterm elections, the GOP has the advantage, but history doesn't have to repeat itself. They are playing on the fears of a few (immigration, gay marriage, Ebola, ISIS) and anti-Obama sentiments, not issues. Using access to dollars allowed by corporate citizenship thanks to "Citizens United," they're running

slick media campaigns, avoiding answering questions from "we the people" in town hall meetings and debates. And by all accounts, they have a strong chance at pulling this off.

How can this be? Voter apathy, a lack of caring among voters in the electoral process, or is it voter fatigue? Fatigue from the continued fighting in Washington and political gridlock. Turn on the "tube," and yes, things at times look very bleak, but let's separate fact from fiction.

There has been progress nationally and locally. On the jobs front, the national unemployment rate is about 5.9 percent, with 55 months of consecutive private sector job growth and 10.3 million private sector jobs created, including jobs created or saved right here in Michigan because of the Recovery Act. The Federal deficit in 2014 is 2.8 percent of GDP

(the average under Ronald Reagan: 4.2 percent)

Approximately 10.3 million adults have gained insurance under the first year of Obamacare. In Michigan. This means senior citizens who benefitted from the closing of Medicare "donut holes" and young adults under 26 years of age who can stay on their parents' coverage. For women, the annual cost for birth control under AFA-compliant policies dropped to zero. For women, access to birth control is not just a health care issue but an economic issue as well.

And for the LGBTQ community, the advances have been life changing. From extension by the federal government of key benefits to same-sex couples to the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" to the declaration that the Defense of Marriage Act

See Our Time, next page

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► Our Time

Continued from p. 10

was unconstitutional and would no longer be defended in court and beyond – these have been historic times.

It hasn't been perfect. There have been stumbles, missteps and times when the administration

If we vote we win. It's that simple. Sitting at home just talking about it and not going to the polls Nov. 4 is not an option but it is an action – an action against our own welfare and the future.

has been slow to action, but it's gotten better. One can only imagine with a Senate, and especially a Congress, focused more on the welfare of the American people than partisan politics and holding on to the status quo for the power elite, how much more we could have accomplished.

Our LGBTQ victories in the courts have been due, in part, to Presidential appointments. Partisan politics have restricted President Obama's ability to make appointments, including those in the courts and even potentially to the Supreme Court.

We need action on immigration, climate change, civil rights, voting rights and continued progress for all families, especially LGBTQ ones. We need to move forward in this new day, not return to the days of fear, bias and inequality.

We can't be fooled by the ads, the hype and the lies from those who have said "NO" again and

again. Who have repeatedly denied equality to the poor, immigrants, communities of color and LGBTQ Americans. Elected officials who understand this will change their views and do what's best for all Americans if we send them to state capitals and Washington in November's election.

If we vote, we win. It's that simple. Not going to the polls Nov. 4 is not an option, but it is an action – an action against our own welfare and the future.

What matters to you? What really matters – equality, freedom, community, family? And if it really matters, take a stand on Nov. 4 at the polls and make a difference.

I was asked recently why I vote. I haven't missed an election since I was old enough to vote and was registered to vote before I had a driver's license. I was asked to share these thoughts on Urban Nation Radio, and after a little thought, I wrote the poem on this page.

Michelle E. Brown is a public speaker, activist and author. Her latest book of poetry "Three Layers and A Brassiere" is available at bookstore.authorhouse.com or www.mychangeiam.com. You can also follow her at www.twitter.com/mychangeiam.

I Vote Because

BY MICHELLE E. BROWN

Because they had no voice
When brought over in those chains.
Sold, beaten, traded
Eyes cast down shuffling by
As they silently swallowed pride.

Because they rode the back of the bus
Having services denied.
Colored toilets, colored fountains
Suffering indignities just to get by.

Because they marched for freedom
While being beaten and knocked down
Water cannons, dog bites, night sticks
To deny their civil rights.

Because their voices were silenced
Before they could make their mark
Four little girls in Birmingham
Trayvon Martin,
Islan Nettles,
Renisha McBride,
Marco McMillian,
Michael Brown
For black, brown and queer babies yet to come

I vote to make a difference
I vote to make a change
I vote for this imperfect union
I vote in all their names.

Because of them it matters
For me to be a part of the game
Not sitting on the sidelines
To cast aspersions and merely complain

I might not see the difference
Or live to see the change
But because of them I do it
I vote so their lives were not in vain.

Find your reason and vote this November. To borrow from the United Negro College Fund, a vote is a terrible thing to waste.

► Anti-Hero

Continued from p. 10

toxic, suicidal. He lived on \$400 a month in a cheap Tenderloin District room. On the day he died, he told a buddy he had been turned away from the VA hospital. He had pneumonia.

In 2001, Detroit News columnist Deb Price interviewed former 38th President Ford. He answered reader's allegations that he had deliberately, carefully distanced himself from Sipple. "As far as I was concerned, I had done the right thing and the matter was ended. I didn't

It was Harvey Milk who told San Francisco Chronicle gossip mavin Herb Caen, "Billy's gay. Maybe this will help break the stereotype."

learn until sometime later he was gay. I don't know where anyone got the crazy idea I was prejudiced and wanted to exclude gays."

Ford died 26 years after the assassination attempt. In the 2006 media coverage of his funeral, there is

no mentioning of once-heroic, fellow Michigander Oliver "Billy" Sipple. And who indeed remembers Billy these days anyway? Lest we forget. Don't ask. Do tell.

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Matthew Hamby, left, and Christopher Shelden are one of five gay couples who sued the state of Alaska to overturn its ban on same-sex marriage. AP photo Mark Thiessen

Alaska Will Issue Marriage Licenses To Gay Couples

BY MARK THIESSEN

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) – Alaska will begin accepting marriage applications from same-sex couples Monday after a federal judge struck down the state’s ban on gay marriage – one of the first such prohibitions approved by voters in the U.S.

The state will begin accepting applications Monday morning, Phillip Mitchell, with the state Department of Vital Statistics, told The Associated Press in an email. Alaska has a three-day waiting period between applications and marriage ceremonies.

Earlier in the week, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear appeals from several states seeking to retain their bans on same-sex marriage. The Oct. 6 move effectively legalized gay marriage in about 30 states. But much of last week was marked by confusion as lower courts and states worked through when weddings could begin.

Then, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco overturned marriage bans in Nevada and Idaho on Tuesday. On Thursday, West Virginia officials began issuing gay marriage licenses, and Kansas’ most populous county issued a marriage license Friday to a gay couple, believed to be the first such license in the state.

Sunday’s ruling in Alaska came in a lawsuit brought by five gay couples who asked the state in May to overturn a constitutional amendment approved by voters in 1998, the same year Hawaii passed its ban, though the state later legalized the unions. The Alaska amendment defined marriage as being between one man and one woman.

The lawsuit sought to bar enforcement of the ban or any state laws that refuse to recognize gay marriages legally performed in other states and countries or that prevent unmarried gay couples from marrying.

The judge heard arguments Friday and released his 25-page decision Sunday. Burgess said the laws violated gay couples’ due process and equal protection rights.

“Refusing the rights and responsibilities afforded by legal marriage sends the public a government-sponsored message that same-sex couples and their familial relationships do not warrant the status, benefits and dignity given to couples of the opposite sex,” Burgess wrote.

Gov. Sean Parnell said in a statement Sunday that he would appeal in order to defend the Alaska Constitution.

Same-Sex Marriage Legal In 30 States

It’s been more than a week since same-sex marriage developments moved more states into the equality column. It began with the Supreme Court’s denial of appeals from five states on Oct. 6, allowing for expansion of marriage rights in Virginia, Indiana, Wisconsin, Utah and Oklahoma.

Shortly afterward, the 9th Circuit struck down bans in Idaho and Nevada.

The Supreme Court action also led to rulings in additional states under the jurisdiction of the affected Circuit Courts, leading to marriage equality in Colorado, West Virginia and North Carolina.

How many states are now allowing same-sex couples to marry? As of Tuesday, same-sex marriage is legal in 30 states and the District of Columbia.

ALASKA

Same-sex couples began applying for marriage licenses in Anchorage on Monday, 15 years after Alaska helped touch off a national debate with a ban on same-sex unions.

U.S. District Judge Timothy Burgess ruled Sunday that the ban violated the due process and equal protection guarantees of the U.S. Constitution. His ruling came over the objection of gay marriage opponents who say states should decide the issue, not courts. Late Monday, the state asked the judge to stay his decision allowing same-sex marriages to go forward.

There is a three-day waiting period in Alaska, so unless a stay is issued, same-sex ceremonies won’t take place until Thursday, however the Alaska Dispatch reports that at least two same-sex couples married in Barrow on Monday after state Magistrate Mary Treiber waived the three-day waiting period. See story on this page.

FLORIDA

State Attorney General Pam Bondi, who has repeatedly called it her duty to defend the state’s ban on gay marriage, now wants the state’s highest court to decide whether it is legal. Her office filed a request late Monday with the 3rd District Court of Appeals in Miami that asks the court to immediately send two consolidated cases to the Florida Supreme Court for a decision.

In both cases, judges declared the state’s gay marriage ban unconstitutional. It’s not clear how soon the court could rule if it takes up the cases. There also is a separate federal case that could be

decided before then.

IDAHO

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decided Monday that Idaho’s stay banning same-sex marriage will dissolve starting Wednesday morning. The court’s decision came just after Idaho’s attorney general dropped its opposition. It was unclear whether licenses would be issued Wednesday, but at least two couples who were plaintiffs in the case against the state hope to be issued them.

At least one same-sex couple has already married in Idaho, however. Tabitha Simmons and Katherine Sprague married last Friday after Latah County’s clerk, Susan Petersen, said she got the green light from the county prosecutor’s office.

Meanwhile, Republican Gov. C. L. “Butch” Otter implied he will continue defending the ban and said in a court filing that approval of gay marriage would dissuade voters from participating in elections because it would allow the federal government to overturn state laws.

KANSAS

The American Civil Liberties Union has asked a federal court to order Kansas to allow same-sex couples to wed while the group’s lawsuit against the state constitution’s ban is under review. The group argued in its filing in U.S. District Court in Kansas City that it is likely to prevail. It also said that denying the right to marry even for a short period would do irreparable harm to the two lesbian couples represented by the ACLU in the case. The group wants to immediately block the state from enforcing its gay marriage ban. Attorney General Derek Schmidt’s spokeswoman did not immediately return messages seeking comment.

NEVADA

Gay marriage opponents filed a request Monday asking the full 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to hear their case against same-sex unions in Nevada. In documents calling the issue “a question of historic importance,” the Coalition for the Protection of Marriage claimed bias by a three-judge panel of the court that last week struck down a 2002 Nevada constitutional amendment prohibiting gay marriage.

The coalition said a review before the full court is necessary because judges who were “favorably disposed

to arguments for expanding the rights of gay men and lesbians” were assigned to the case. Tara Borelli, the Lambda Legal attorney who won the Nevada appeal on behalf of eight same-sex couples, called the allegation of improper judicial selection “unfounded, desperate and sad.” A spokesman for the appeals court declined to comment.

NORTH CAROLINA

Same-sex couples across North Carolina lined up for marriage licenses Monday morning — the first full day when they could do so following a judge’s order on Friday striking down the state’s constitutional ban on same-sex marriage. As of Monday morning, all 100 counties in North Carolina were issuing licenses to same-sex couples.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Attorneys have until next week to file motions in a lawsuit playing a key role in South Carolina’s debate over same-sex marriage. A federal judge on Tuesday gave attorneys until Oct. 23 to file, with another three weeks for responses. Gay marriage appeared imminent last week until the state Supreme Court ruled that South Carolina must wait for the U.S. District Court to rule in a case challenging the state constitution’s gay marriage ban.

WISCONSIN

Gov. Scott Walker announced Monday that more than 500 same-sex marriages performed in June will be recognized by the state. There had been questions over whether those marriages would be legally recognized, since they happened when the gay marriage ban was blocked only temporarily. Walker issued a statement that said the state would be treating the licenses issued in June as valid.

Coming Up This Week

Marriage equality advocates are closely monitoring at least three other states that could see developments in legal challenges to their same-sex marriage bans: **Arizona, Montana and Wyoming.**

Court watchers are also expecting a ruling that will impact **Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky** from the 6th Circuit. A ruling is likely any day. The hearing was held in Cincinnati on Aug. 5.

► October Surprise

Continued from p. 6

the stay. By Friday, the entire court lifted the stay on the 9th Circuit panel decision. Not one justice registered a dissent.

The Supreme Court had already surprised many court observers on the first day of its 2014 session when it declined to hear appeals from the five states regarding the constitutionality of state laws that ban marriage licenses or even recognition of marriages for same-sex couples. The surprise was *not* that the court declined to hear the appeals; a number of seasoned court watchers suggested that scenario because all the lower courts – three federal circuits and five federal district court judges – had agreed such bans are unconstitutional. The Supreme Court does not tend to get involved in disputes where all the courts below agree.

Speedy Ruling

The surprise was that the Supreme Court announced its decision so soon. It sat on previous LGBT-related cases (DOMA and Proposition 8) for weeks before announcing whether it would hear those appeals. The court receives about 10,000 requests each year to review lower court decisions and accepts only about 75 to 80 of them. In order to accept a case, at least *four* of the nine justices must agree to do so.

So, in the case of the marriage ban appeals, there were *not four* justices who wanted to grant the reviews. That meant *six justices* said, “No, we don’t want to hear any of these marriage cases.”

Those six justices knew that, by denying the appeals, the Supreme Court was allowing at least five, and perhaps as many as 11 states, to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples immediately.

“I would say the Supreme Court gave an unmistakable signal to lower courts and the remaining states that it is unconstitutional to deny gay people the freedom to marry and equal protection and respect under the law,” said Evan Wolfson, head of the national Freedom to Marry group.

That quickly became the assessment of court observers and state officials across the country. Some expressed that assessment in a way that, while technically incorrect, captured the spirit of the Supreme Court’s impact. The West Virginia governor and attorney general both issued statements indicating they believed the Supreme Court had made it “clear that laws banning same-sex marriage have been declared unconstitutional.”

Clinging To Bans

At least two states are still clinging to the edge of the marriage ban table: Last Thursday, the Supreme Court of South Carolina issued an order preventing state judges from issuing

marriage licenses to any same-sex couples until a decision is made by a federal court in South Carolina. It’s a long shot effort: The 4th Circuit, which includes South Carolina, has ruled such bans are unconstitutional. But the 4th Circuit decision came from a three-judge panel, and South Carolina is apparently pinning its hopes on getting its opinion from the full 4th Circuit bench, a decision that counters that of the three-judge panel. The Kansas Supreme Court also issued a decision last Friday, ordering a county clerk to stop issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

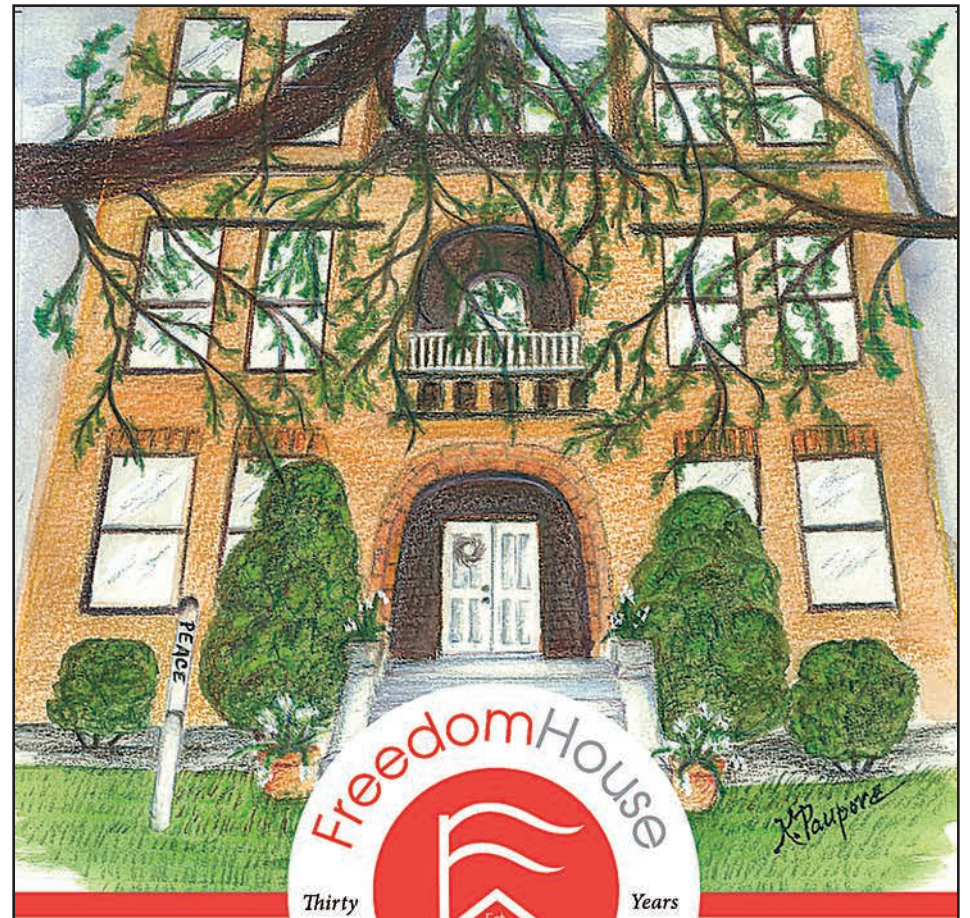
And some supporters of bans on same-sex marriage point out that the Supreme Court is simply waiting for a circuit to come up with a ruling that is in conflict with the four appeals courts that have previously ruled. They note what Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said in a recent public appearance, that a decision contrary to these other appeals courts would create a greater “urgency” for the Supreme Court to take a marriage case.

But if there was any *real* likelihood that the Supreme Court might eventually uphold the constitutionality of such bans, it seems quite unlikely that six justices would have rushed to announce on the first day of the court’s 2014 session that it would allow lower court rulings in as many as 11 states to go into effect, enabling same-sex couples to marry almost immediately in those states. Why create the potential need for years of corrective legal action when the court could simply wait for the right case to come along and then make its decision?

What the Supreme Court’s announcement means, as Wisconsin Republican Gov. Scott Walker acknowledged in a statement on the campaign trail, is that the issue of the constitutionality of denying same-sex couples the right to marry is “resolved.” Such bans are unconstitutional and the Supreme Court will most likely say so *if* one of the remaining circuits issues a decision to the contrary.

The 6th Circuit, representing Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky, could issue its decision any day now. The 5th Circuit announced Sept. 25 that a three-judge panel would hear appeals from both Texas and Louisiana, but briefs in the Louisiana case are not expected to be completed until Nov. 7.

Meanwhile, more states within the circuits that have already declared the bans unconstitutional may soon join the pro-equality list. A federal judge issued a ruling Oct. 12 that Alaska’s ban is unconstitutional. A federal judge has given Arizona until this Oct. 16 to file briefs explaining why it should not comply with the 9th Circuit panel ruling.



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Photo courtesy of Nissan

Auto Expert Travis Parman On Evolution Of LGBT Outreach

BY CHRISTOPHER TREACY

Travis Parman predicted the future.

As the current director of Corporate Communications at Nissan, Parman oversees all sorts of relationships within the automotive industry. But it wasn't that long ago that he wrote a 333-page thesis for his master's degree that specifically examined the relationship between corporations, their media marketing strategies and the LGBT community at large. The deep level of understanding it demonstrates makes Parman a wet-dream ally for nearly any niche

marketing scheme – and so far, his thesis speaks the truth.

“What my thesis predicted was a mainstreaming of LGBT marketing, media and PR outreach efforts,” he says in a Southern drawl befitting his native Tennessee homeland (Parman splits his time between Nashville and Bloomfield Township). “And that's exactly what's happened, but there are two distinct parts to the history. The mid-2000s were a heyday for LGBT marketing and PR. Interest was surging; it was new, novel and sexy. And that was right before the recession. During a recession, marketing to diversities is the

first thing that gets cut from the budget. All of the industries saw a retraction, so it's different now than it was.”

Prior to his role at Nissan, Parman put his expertise to work at General Motors. It was during that time that he began working on his thesis, in part because of what he was learning from helping GM more effectively target specific audiences.

“At General Motors, we had a Diversity Communications Program,” Parman explains. “So it wasn't really designed to address the LGBT community specifically, but rather, it attempted to reach all

of the diversity groups: Hispanic, Asian, women, etc. The reality, however, is that you've got to separate it out: if you're trying to demonstrate understanding, lumping diversity groups together accomplishes the direct opposite. And when we started, that's what I was finding across the board.”

Although never officially titled as such, Parman became an expert at LGBT-specific PR outreach within the automotive industry, moving from GM to Nissan while he completed his thesis. Along the way, he learned to put his own sexual orientation to work in a strategizing capacity – after all,

who better to determine what gay people want from a corporation than someone who identifies as gay?

In his research, Parman, now 42, saw lots of companies attempting to court the gay dollar without achieving the proper credentials first ... a strategy that wasn't working all that well since, as a community, we do our homework. Gays and lesbians are generally careful to make sure that the entities they support are first supporting them – simply making a play for our money won't get

See Travis Parman, page 16

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► Travis Parman

Continued from p. 14

you very far.

"The community checks for things like domestic partnership benefits and how a company goes about supporting its LGBT employees, so you have to have your house in order first," Parman says. "Once you've established that, you have to further demonstrate that you actually understand the community you're targeting. I think of the mid-2000s as 'LGBT Outreach 1.0.' In the best case studies, they got the language and the imagery down, and the message would get delivered with a nod and a wink ... things that straight audiences didn't even notice," he adds, recalling a conversation with someone from Cadillac's marketing department in which he tried to explain a Canadian Subaru ad that boasted the slogan, "We've Got Versatile Tops."

Demonstrating a high level of understanding to LGBT consumers is tricky, and Parman says that one way to get it done is by bringing a company's gay employees together with community leaders and politicians whenever possible, creating forums for dialogue specific to their issues. This goes far to show both influence and initiative.

Of course, another way to effectively engage the gays is to get involved with Pride.

Parman recalled the low-level presence he witnessed from Infinity – Nissan's luxury brand – during his early days with the company at Nashville Pride. Keep in mind that Nissan's American home base is in Tennessee, so Nashville's annual Pride celebration should be an important event for the company.

"Infinity had a couple of vehicles parked outside the gate with no staffing to talk about the cars," he says. "They just didn't know any better. I thought, 'Kudos to them for trying, but let's show you how to leverage what you already have.' This year, we pretty much owned Nashville Pride with over three dozen volunteers – we gave out Nissan towels at the misting stations."

Actually, Nissan has done a big 180 with regard to its LGBT relationship. This is thanks in large part to the implementation of "GSAN" – a Gay-Straight-Alliance diversity training program that, in the course of two years, took the company's HRC Corporate Equality Index from a shoddy 30 all the way up to 100. Rather than just having cars and volunteers at Nashville Pride this year, Nissan was a sponsor. And Parman says they held their own at Motor City Pride as well.

"We partnered with Affirmations and set up a speed-dating event using our cars," he says. "We supplied the questions

as well, which demonstrated our level of comfort, knowledge and cultural fluency."

Parman says the tides have turned significantly since his days at GM, in many ways – but maybe not all – for the better. Mainstreaming sounds deceptively simple, but it's actually forcing companies to speak to consumers with broader strokes while still finding ways of letting diversity groups somehow know they're included in the message. Whereas so much of the targeting occurred "in-channel" – i.e., within niche

publications and other media – now, consumers are addressed en masse.

"And we're also a more nuanced LGBT audience," he says. "We have an older generation that came of age without acceptance and have never been comfortable being marketed to. We have a middle-aged group that knew people affected by AIDS, which became a cohesive force that has bonded them together – they appreciate being recognized. And we have a younger group that came up with 'Will & Grace' already in syndication – they reject the notion that they should be spoken to in any specialized way.

"The advent of social media has changed everything, and one part of the mainstreaming phenomenon is that information now gets broadly shared – you can't keep it 'in-channel' anymore," Parman says. "And, of course, the general population is more sensitive to – and educated about – LGBT issues."

“The community checks for things like domestic partnership benefits and how a company goes about supporting its LGBT employees, so you have to have your house in order first.”

– Travis Parman, director of Corporate Communications at Nissan

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Chrysler's Grand Gesture In Support Of LGBT Employees

BY AJ TRAGER

AUBURN HILLS – In a decade where not all employees receive domestic partner benefits let alone healthcare for themselves, Chrysler has been taking the lead in appreciating the diversity of its LGBT employees and their loved ones.

For National Coming Out Day

held Oct. 11, six cars, vibrantly colored from each end of the rainbow, were spread out in the heart of Chrysler's Tech Plaza. The display symbolized the inclusion and continued acceptance of the LGBT members at the company, in addition to the Gay And Lesbian Alliance's (GALA) Faces of GALA exhibition, showing off the faces and stories of some Chrysler

LGBT employees.

In 2000, along with GM and Ford, Chrysler began offering same-sex partner benefits to its employees. Eight years later, the company began covering medically necessary care for its trans employees. And this month, Chrysler continues to show its support of the LGBT community by displaying the LGBT flag, not

only outside its company entrance, but also inside Tech Plaza with the rainbow car display, for the few days prior to National Coming Out Day.

"Right away, I knew that there was something different about this place and the culture. It still has that small company feel, but it is still very inclusive and accepting. I didn't even know Chrysler had an

LGBT group when I started here, but something kept attracting me to that, so I eventually found out and applied to be a part of the group," said Tyler Slasinski, designer and lease engineer for steering of the Fiat 500 and a future Jeep program.

Slasinski has been with Chrysler for two-and-a-half years and sees Chrysler as a leader in LGBT

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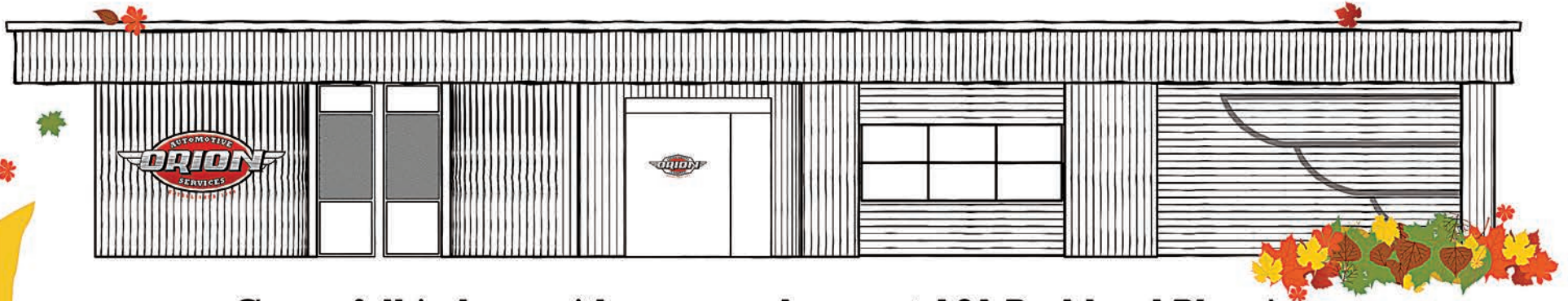
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► GALA

Continued from p. 18

workplace inclusion. He is proud to work for a company that “supports who you are and what you are all about.”

Slasinski is joined by roughly 70 other active Chrysler employees and retirees who are members of the Employee Resource Group, GALA, whose mission is to “promote an inclusive culture within Chrysler through education and awareness, and to provide support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons through business and networking activities.”

His coworker, Arana Long, has been with the company for 26 years. She is an active ally for the LGBT community and says that she has seen Chrysler and GALA go through a lot of change over the years.

“When the group first started, the focus was quite different. I’d say it was more foundational, with things like health benefits and domestic partner equality – all of it that many companies didn’t have years ago, and Chrysler did have. So getting those put in place. Now it’s really shifted into

what the culture is. It had to go beyond just policies,” Long said.

Doing the math, that meant that Long was a part of Chrysler before Melissa Etheridge came out as a lesbian, before

chair of GALA, is one of those faces. He has been with Chrysler for four years and became a GALA officer one year after starting with the company.

“One of the primary goals is to lead us from being an ERG (Employee Resource Group) to more like a BRG (Business Resource Group) where we connect the activities of the resource group to the ultimate goals of the corporation. So we began to provide not only value to Chrysler, but we began to tap into that value that is there,” Hawkins said.

Providing the company with visible LGBT members allows the faces and voices of GALA to be proud of where they work, because they can be visibly out, Hawkins said.

For eight years, Chrysler has received a 100 percent rating on the Human Rights Campaign’s Corporate Equality Index.

It is one of the most longstanding scores for auto manufacturers and currently the only auto signee to the Michigan Workforce Coalition.

“What that does is provide servitude for LGBT families who, when they move here, want to know if they will have benefits. They want to know that their company isn’t going to fire them

“...promote an inclusive culture within Chrysler through education and awareness, and to provide support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons through business and networking activities.”

– GALA’s mission statement

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” was enacted, before the beginning of DOMA and then the eventual strike down of DOMA. Long has seen the evolution of LGBT legal rights develop into the strong movement it is today.

The Faces of GALA exhibit showcases LGBT Chrysler members and their stories. Greg Hawkins, process development engineer and

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► GALA

Continued from p. 20

for being LGBT. They want to know all these things with certainty, and it does that not only for Chrysler but also for Michigan in general,” Hawkins pressed.

Throughout the year, GALA strives to stay active in LGBT affairs such as Motor City Pride, where they host a big float in the Pride Parade, along with monthly meetings with other auto ERGs from GM and Ford. In those meetings, the ERGs talk policy and help each other become experts in certain areas while working to understand the current struggles of the LGBT community.

“We are making sure that employees understand that Chrysler not only supports them internally but also externally – that is a reality. So it’s important that we have that message as well,” Hawkins said.

The group holds board meetings once a month and membership meetings at least twice a year. The Faces of GALA exhibit was one of their largest undertakings. Members spoke about the idea for years and have, in the past, used LGBT celebrities to showcase inclusion in the company. This year, they decided to put themselves out there and show that these are employees who are within the company, who are also out and successful as LGBT members of the community. Each poster has a coming out story, whether it is from an ally or from Hawkins, describing his love of snowboarding and his love for his husband.

The entire LGBT community does not yet have the luxury of being out at work. Michigan has yet to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes of the state’s non-discrimination law – but at Chrysler, it’s OK to be out. Coming

out is a process that is done often, if not daily, in the home and at work.

“They are exactly different and exactly the same. You’re still worried about how you are going to be perceived, and you’re still a little bit scared about being yourself. But at Chrysler, you don’t have to actually worry, because the company really cares about you being you. You want to make world class products for people just like us. Being able to put a picture of your spouse on your desk is a small gesture, but is something that the company encourages and it affects our bottom line,” said Ryan Joyce, senior designer for Jeep brand interiors.

Joyce has been an employee for seven years and a GALA board member for three and a half.

“It’s grand gestures like this gigantic rainbow vehicle display in the heart of Tech Plaza that reminds me that this is a company that cares about the LGBT workforce and the diversity of the entire company as well. They want you to feel included and encouraged. So it’s good to know that you are judged by the quality of your work and there aren’t any limits – just what you put forward,” Joyce said.

“I’m trying to decide if my desk is too gay. Now I have to ask my friends when they stop by if my desk is too gay,” Hawkins laughed.

Being free to be out and authentically oneself at work relieves a lot of stressors that many face elsewhere. Many have to hide who they are or change pronouns for loved ones when they are telling their weekend stories to coworkers. But if big companies such as Chrysler, which employs 15,000 people (in Auburn Hills), continue to show support and make strides for LGBT employees, the possible innovations and creations made from LGBT people comfortable at work, and safe from discrimination, could be endless.



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From The Connors To The McCarthys

Laurie Metcalf Talks Roles On Gay-Inclusive Sitcoms

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

There's no question that "Roseanne," a show centered on the Connors, was one of the most influential TV shows of all time. Just look: Gay marriage is now as trendy as Jackie Harris' hipster-desired mom couture.

Two decades later, meet "The McCarthys," CBS's primetime comedy, premiering Oct. 30, about a zany sports-crazed family. One of the sons, Ronny, is gay, and the clan's matriarch is – because of course – Laurie Metcalf, who played Jackie on "Roseanne" (and, in case you forgot, was outed during the show's finale in 1997).

Metcalf recently called to chat about how "The McCarthys" has made her feel like she's "missing out" on a real-life gay son, the lesbian kiss on "Roseanne" that caused a stir, and her own lip-lock with a stage icon – her first time kissing a woman (she thinks).

Between HBO's "Getting On" and now "The McCarthys," you're spoiling us, Laurie. It's so good to have you back on TV.

Thanks so much. Yeah, it's been a long time. I'm spoiled myself right now; I've got two wonderful projects. But yeah, I've been doing mostly just theater for the past six years.

Which do you prefer: TV or theater?

I have to say, I prefer stage, probably because it's where I came up. I feel like I understand it best, and I like the immediate gratification of a live audience. You know, it's been so long since I've been on a multi-camera show that it just felt like home walking back onto that set, so that was fantastic. I didn't think one of those would come back around!

What drew you to "The McCarthys"?

First of all, I love that multi-camera format. It's a very collaborative way of working, because you're in there with the writers, and everybody is trying to contribute to making the show the best it can be on Friday nights for the audience. It's a group effort, and I really like working that way. Then I talked to Brian Gallivan, the showrunner, who I adore. He came up from Second City, so I felt we had a little something in common. And he's fantastic. So calm, so supportive and so wonderful to work with. (The scripts) went through so many changes that I know were very difficult for all the writers involved. He's just a really fantastic leader and he sets the tone for the whole project, and he's super funny.

Especially as "Sassy Gay Friend."

When we first talked, I said I was a huge fan of that character and he's like, "Are you kidding me?" Then we agreed that Sassy Gay Friend should do an intervention at some point on Jackie from "Roseanne." Wouldn't that be great?

Absolutely. You gotta make that happen. Speaking of Jackie, do you find it amusing that her mom style is now a fashion trend among hipsters?

(Laughs) That sounds about right! I mean, it's about time. We just had our 25th-year anniversary (in October 2013), for God's sake.

How much of "The McCarthys" is based on Brian's real-life family?

The whole thing is his family. He and his mother watched procedural-crime dramas together, and in "The McCarthys" we're fascinated by "The Good Wife," so that's where that bonds exists. The way (Brian) writes this family – their family humor is so unique to me. (Laughs) I don't know people like this! I mean, I'm sure they exist – obviously they do – but the non sequiturs they talk in, and the way they tease each other and the way they misunderstand each other, is so funny to me. And they're loud and they're way too needy, but then weirdly totally supportive of each other, which seems to come out of the blue but doesn't. I really like the family dynamic that he's recreated from his own family.

What do you think "The McCarthys" says about the bond between a mother and her gay son? After shooting a few episodes, do you notice a particular connection?

Yes! I guess there is one. I mean, I don't have that in my own family, but it's so relatable, you know? And it's fun and it's light. It just seems like a really fun relationship. I feel like I'm missing out!

Were you ever one of those mothers who wished she had a gay



Photo: Monty Brinton/CBS

son?

I didn't really ever think about it, but now I do! It's funny: In our show, the one daughter is sort of the misfit and gets the least attention from the mom, definitely because they don't have the same bond.

Because the LGBT movement has come so far since "Roseanne" aired in the '90s, how would you compare "Roseanne" to "The McCarthys" when it comes to the portrayal of LGBT people? Do you notice a shift in how LGBTs are represented on TV?

It was 25 years ago when "Roseanne" brought gay characters onto the show, and it was a big deal. I mean, she didn't think anything of it, but it was ... it was different. I don't know what the network thought of it; she had so much pull at the time that she could basically do whatever she wanted. Then she pushed that boundary a little bit with an episode (1994's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell") where she went to a gay bar with Mariel Hemingway and they kissed. I remember that was a huge deal at the time, and they went round and round about pulling the scene. Roseanne was gonna walk off. It was a huge deal.

Now cut to "The McCarthys," and the fact that Ronny is gay is a non-issue. The issue is that Ronny is trying to find a partner because he needs to get out of the house; he needs to break away from his family. They're all horrified and fearful that he will leave if he's with somebody, and they don't wanna lose him. So that's what I mean when I say it's a non-issue; it's just about him dating, and the family is hugely supportive.

How much of the show revolves around Ronny being gay?

I don't think it's ever gonna be the A-storyline, though it might be the B-storyline.

"Roseanne" was so ahead of its time in how it portrayed LGBT characters so matter-of-factly. How do you reflect on the influence the show had on the perception of gay people in mainstream culture?

I actually have no idea what it did for Middle America. I really don't. When I think of Martin Mull and Fred Willard as this couple (one of TV's first gay couples) who got married on the show – I mean, I didn't realize how big it was. I really didn't. I was on the inside of it, in a bubble, not knowing. Roseanne knew. That's why she pushed to do stuff like that. I was very much out of the loop

of that. I just saw the humor of it, and I saw these guys who have worked together forever (Mull and Willard both starred on "Fernwood 2 Night" in the '70s) and how fantastic it was that she cast them as this married couple.

But, in retrospect, you must realize the significance of having a gay married couple on TV in the '90s, right? For you, what does it feel like to have been a part of a show making big strides for the LGBT community?

I was so lucky to be a part of that show for so many reasons. People who talk to me about it, and just because they're talking to me about it, relate to the sister (Jackie). The writing was so high-quality, and still, all these years later, it maintains that level. Every episode, Roseanne (Barr) was just willing to sacrifice laughs to make the show about something. She hit on so many things while also portraying characters, and she just wasn't concerned about any backlash for anything. To have been a recurring character on a show that did that is one of



Laurie Metcalf (far left) on "Roseanne."

the highlights of my whole career. I just was so lucky.

Premiering in November on HBO is the second season of "Getting On" (the first season is available on DVD/Blu-ray Nov. 11), and recently Betty Buckley talked about the two of you kissing for one of the episodes. She said it was her first girl kiss. Is this your first girl kiss too?

I think so, yeah. I mean, I may have done it in a play or something. I don't know. I can't remember. But no, I think so. I don't mean to build it up or something, but the kiss is a metaphor for that show. It's not a big deal on the show; it's just something that happens very spontaneously, and then it's over and you're like, "What was that?" But it's odd, and yet it's kind of funny because you don't expect it, and it's kind of weirdly heartbreaking because Betty's character needs to connect to somebody and it just comes out of her. So, it just runs this gamut of emotions, but then it's over in two seconds and you think, "Wow, I don't know how to feel about that."

I have to reflect on some of the crazy characters you've played: Mrs. Loomis in "Scream 2," and the nutcase who shot up that grocery store on "Desperate Housewives." Is it true that actors live vicariously through their characters?

(Laughs) Yes! I get to play a number of freaks, and I don't know if I'm getting cast as a freak or if I bring my own freakiness to the character. I really don't know anymore.

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The Many Musings Of Jenny McCarthy

Radio Host On Detroit Show, Feminism & Feeling Trans 'Inside'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Jenny McCarthy knows what it's like to be singled out. In our recent interview, and before she emcees the "Dirty, Sexy, Funny" show at 8 p.m. on Oct. 17 at Sound Board at MotorCity Casino Hotel, the former MTV game show host revealed why she almost wasn't one after she posed for Playboy.

The 41-year-old shared her unique perspective on other wide-ranging topics: identifying as non-feminist, relating to trans people, how she deals with haters and the potential advantages of having a gay son ("We can shop! Do my hair!").

It's been a long time since you've been to Detroit, Jenny.

It has been a long time, and I hope you come to the show. I hope everyone comes! It's so great. Everyone has been walking out of the show saying, "It's one of the best nights of comedy ever."

Just how raunchy does it get up there during the show?

I don't wanna say "raunchy." It gets really real. It gets dirty. The fact that it's an all-girl comedic troupe – I just didn't want guys to think it's gonna be fluffy, no. It's just as entertaining for guys as it is for girls.

INFO

Dirty, Sexy, Funny with Jenny McCarthy

8 p.m. Oct. 17
Sound Board at MotorCity Casino Hotel
2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit
www.soundboarddetroit.com

The humor is what girls are really thinking about – dirty sex – and the guys can really laugh and relate to it.

So a better word would be "raw"?

Yeah, exactly. It's raw.

Like "Bridesmaids" raw?

Yeah, and "Sex and the City."

You recently said in an interview that "chicks are funny too," but isn't it such a sad reflection of society that we actually have to defend women as if they're not funny? Do you think it's still a struggle for women in this industry, and do they still have to prove themselves?

I do. I think a lot of it has to do with women, basically, in society thinking they have to be a perfect way or a certain way, or act kind of ladylike and keep certain thoughts

to themselves. But there are a few women out there, like the Chelsea Handlers and myself – I've written some very raw books – with a really funny point of view. So, I think the more that women come out and speak the truth, it's gonna get easier and easier, but there's no doubt that we're still fighting for that comedic platform.

When in your career did you feel like you had to prove yourself?

I remember when I first posed for Playboy and they said, "What do you wanna do?" and I said, "Get into comedy." They laughed and said, "Now *that's* funny." Then I got on (MTV's) "Singled Out" and kind of proved that girls could be goofy and funny, so it was a constant battle. I think it always will be, but sometimes, like they say, the journey is the funnest part, and it really has been.

So doing "Singled Out" was your way of proving yourself to people who weren't taking you seriously?

Yeah, it's weird. Right after Playboy I literally said to myself, "How can I show people my personality?" Because if I got into acting, I'm only playing roles. I really wanted to show – I guess you'd call it a

See Jenny, page 29

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ITALIAN BISTRO

Puzzle solution on pg. 34

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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Oct. 16

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

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

Friday, Oct. 17

Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America 10:15 a.m. Special book talk by Prof. Miriam Frank. 36th Annual North American Labor History Conference, Detroit. Nalhc.wayne.edu

The Final SWCSGL Meet-Up 6 p.m. Women of Color Same Gender Loving 40 & Up, 511 W. Canfield St., Detroit. Meetup.com/Women-of-Color-Same-Gender-Loving-40-UP

Detroit's Largest Zumba Fitness Party 7 p.m. All ages and abilities are welcome. No dance or fitness experience necessary. Over 50 vendors and community partners to shop with! Tickets: \$10. Detroit Zumba All Stars, 2727 Russell St., Detroit. 313-587-6203. detroitzumballstars@gmail.com Dzas.weebly.com

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

Saturday, Oct. 18

Michigan Witches' Bazaar 9 a.m. Fourth Witches Bazaar. Free and open to the public. Michigan Pagans, 8201 E. Old 13 Mile Road, Warren. Meetup.com/Michiganpagans

Come Hungry, Leave Happy Strolling and tasting food tour. Meet at Rocky's or Mootown Ice Cream. Tickets: \$29. Feet on the Street Tours, 2489 Russell St., Detroit. 313-393-2055. Enjoythed.com

A. Jaffe Bridal/Diamond Jewelry Event 11 a.m. We will have a much larger selection of engagement, commitment, anniversary and stackable rings, wedding bands for brides or grooms, as well as earrings and necklaces. ABRACADABRA, 205 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-994-4848. Abragem.com

Arnie Bernstein and Swastika Nation: Fritz Kuhn and the Rise and Fall of the German-American Bund 3 p.m. Everybody Reads, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-346-9900. everybodyreads@sbcglobal.net

Haunted Homo-coming 7 p.m. Youth 13-20 only. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Michigan/Midwest Witches Ball 7 p.m. 21+. Michigan Pagans, 8201 E. Old 13 Mile Road, Warren. Meetup.com/Michiganpagans

Sunday, Oct. 19

General Membership Meeting Meet the Third Sunday of Jan., April, July and Oct. Dignity Detroit, 8425 W. McNichols, Detroit. 313-278-4786. Dignitydetroit.org

Woodside All Community Festival Featuring author Edward McClelland. Woodside Church, 1509 E. Court St., Flint. 810-767-4911. Woodsidechurch.net

Coffee & Cocktails 11 a.m. Gay Professionals Social Group, 175 W. Troy St., Ferndale. Meetup.com/Gay-Professionals-Social-Group-MI

Bisexual Peer Group 4 p.m. Our group meets monthly on the third Friday & discussion relates to bisexual identity. Building is handicap accessible using ramp to rear entrance. Bisexual Peer

Thursday, Oct. 23

Jerry 'Jai' Moore 7 p.m. Hatcher Graduate Library, 913 S. University Ave., Ann Arbor. Lib.umich.edu/events/detroit-lgbt-heritage

Sing for the Cure: A Proclamation of Hope 8 p.m. Tickets: \$25-30. The DIA and Rackham Choir, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-833-4005. Dia.org

MUSIC & MORE

Concerts

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Paul Williams Live" Chris Caswell, conductor. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 17 - Oct. 18. 313-576-5111. Dso.org

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Dianne Reeves". Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 17. 313-576-5111. Dso.org



Editor's Pick

The Michigan/Midwest Witches Ball is coming to Warren this weekend. The "dress to impress" event will feature an open bar, hors d'oeuvres and raffle tickets.

In addition to festivities, the Michigan Pagan Scholarship Fund will be on hand. Amy Saari and DJ John Bommarito will provide music throughout the evening. A "King & Queen" of the evening will be voted later in the night, as well.

The ball begins at 7 p.m. this Saturday, Oct. 18 at the Royalty House Banquet Center, 8201 E. 13 Mile Road, Warren. The event is 21 and over. Tickets are \$40. For more information, visit www.midwestwitchesball.com.

Group, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-678-2478. Biprideannarbor@gmail.com Facebook.com/groups/110918256984/

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?rf=118209121607517>

Tuesday, Oct. 21

Gay Marriage Panel Presentation CLE 8 a.m. Gay Marriage - What's on the Horizon in Michigan and Nationally and How Do We Counsel Our Clients? Washtenaw Bar Association, 1830 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor. Washbar.org

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

A2 TNG (Next Generation of Kinkster) 8 p.m. A kink and fetish oriented group for younger kinksters. The group focuses on support, the sharing of information in the form of demonstrations or discussion groups and socializing. Meets on the third Tuesday of every month. Open to all. A2 TNG, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-678-2478. CuteSubToy@yahoo.com JimToyCenter.org

Four Pianos "Walt Matzkes Four Pianos A Tour de Force on Four Grand Pianos" Tickets: \$15-38. The Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 8 p.m. Oct. 18. 248-661-1900. Fourpianos.com

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Chamber Series 2: Cornicopia" French Horn Music by Brahms, Strauss & More! Molly Grove Chapel, First Presbyterian Church, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing. 3 p.m. Oct. 19. LansingSymphony.org

Riverwalk Theatre "An Evening of Jazz" Tickets: \$20. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. 8 p.m. Oct. 18. 517-482-5700. Riverwalktheatre.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Flying Lotus" With Thundercat. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. Oct. 23. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "The Glitch Mob" With The M Machine, Chrome Sparks. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. Oct. 22. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

The Ark "The Ragbirds" Tickets: \$20. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 18. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Shari Kane & Dave Steele/ Brooks Williams" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Oct. 16. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Crofoot "Tune-Yards with J. Tillman". The Crofoot, 1 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. Oct. 21. 248-858-9333.

TheCrofoot.com

The Magic Bag "Aaron Carter" Tickets: \$25. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Oct. 22. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

Festivals

Kerrytown Concert House "Edgefest 18" BAS(S)ically Sound! Tickets: \$50-285. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. Oct. 23 - Oct. 18. 734-763-4186. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

Alice in Wonderland, Jr. \$13. The Franke Center Children's Theater at The Franke Center, 214 E. Mansion St., Marshall. Oct. 16 - 19. 269-781-0001. frankecenterforthearts.org

Arsenic and Old Lace \$14-16. Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Through Oct. 18. 248-473-1856. farmingtonplayers.org

Blithe Spirit \$8-15. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Oct. 23 - Nov. 2. 517-482-5700. Riverwalktheatre.com

Carrie: The Musical \$15-35. The Crosswell Opera House, 129 E. Maumee St., Adrian. Oct. 17 - 26. 517-264-SHOW. Crosswell.org

I Was a Rat \$7+. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Parish Theatre, 426 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Oct. 17 - 25. 269-343-1313. kazoozoo.org

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

Tribes \$16-18. Stagecrafters at Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Through Oct. 19. 248-541-6430. stagecrafters.org

College/University Theater

All's Well That Ends Well \$10-20. Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Through Oct. 19. 313-577-2960. bonstelle.com

Cabaret \$10-28. The U-M Department of Theatre & Drama at Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, 911 N. University, Ann Arbor. Through Oct. 19. 734-971-2228. umich.edu

Dr. Faustus \$9-15. Eastern Michigan University Theatre at Sponberg Theatre inside Quirk Dramatic Arts Building, East Circle Dr. & Ann St., Ypsilanti. Through Oct. 19. 734-487-1220. Emich.edu/emutheatre

See Happenings, page 32

www.PrideSource.com

► Jenny

Continued from p. 27

unique sense of humor. I was in my manager's office when I saw a piece of paper come out of the fax machine and it said, "Audition for MTV; looking for a female game show co-host." I said, "That's it. I wanna go out on it." (My manager) said, "You don't wanna be a game show host, no." (I said,) "You don't understand what I can make of this. I can show my personality." They called to get me an audition for "Singled Out" and they rejected me – they said there was no way they'd ever hire a Playmate on a network. I wound up crashing the audition, and after 14 or so callbacks, I got the job.

Besides the show being dirty, sexy and funny, are you trying to make a feminist statement with it?

You know, I've never been one of those people. I just haven't. I feel like female and males should be adored and respected equally, but I'm not going to try and go and make some kind of statement. Even posing for Playboy, (people were like), "You think that was a feminist move?" "I don't know; I just needed to pay off college!"

When you say you're not "one of those people," are you saying you don't see yourself as a feminist?

Correct. Yeah, I don't.

Recently on your SiriusXM radio show, "Dirty, Sexy, Funny," you talked about everyone being kind of gay. You said you've been thinking about this topic for a long time. How did you come to this conclusion? How did this topic come up?

I love talking about things that people might not want to talk about but know they secretly do. I know it's something that girls, and my girlfriends, have talked about when dating, going like, "You're not quite sure which team he might be on." I really do feel like, with sexuality being more open and people coming out, there might be a little bi in everybody; it's just a matter of who acts on it.

You've been open about making out with women previously. So, where do you fall on the spectrum?

That's a really good question, and I feel like everybody falls exactly in the middle. You just kind of go toward the one you want the most at the moment. Love is love. Period.

Have you ever dated a gay man?

(Pauses) Probably. You know if an ex-boyfriend says, "That's my type (while) looking at a guy on a commercial." It's like, "Oh. Ohh! Okaay."

Looking out at the girls, who are you currently crushing on? Do you have any girl crushes?

Not anymore. I used to, but as you get older and you've done all that kind of fun stuff, I can appreciate women now, but I don't really have any super girl crushes. I had a crush on Donnie Wahlberg, and then I married him.

I didn't know Donnie Wahlberg was a girl, but whatever works.

(Laughs) Back in the day when everybody had

a crush on Angelina Jolie, I was probably part of that group.

There weren't a lot of transgender characters on TV a decade or two ago, but you actually played one in the early 2000s. You co-starred as David Spade's best friend Brandi, formerly Burt, on "Just Shoot Me."

It's my favorite role ever!

Oh? Why's that?

Yeah, because I feel like that inside. I always felt like one of the guys wearing, like, a Playboy bunny outfit. I was David Spade's buddy to begin with, so I was a natural fit, and I always felt like his brother. To play kind of the dude was almost too scary natural.

So much has changed for the transgender community since then. I mean, Laverne Cox made the cover of TIME magazine earlier this year. Do you recall the response you received from the trans community when you played Brandi?

I don't. I just remember having everybody respond positively to it, and that to me was a sign of, "Wow, we're not in 1970 anymore." So I do feel like there was a shift, and obviously we've become much more of an accepting community. We still have a way to go, but look at the cover of TIME magazine.

And look at how gay marriage is sweeping the states.

Yeah, I have two gay men who have helped me raise my son for the past five years and they're getting married next year. They've pretty much been live-ins for the last five years of my life as a single mom when I was on the road raising Evan. Evan loves them dearly, and I love seeing through the eyes of an innocent child: He loves them for them and has no issue. It's wonderful.

What if Evan were to come out to you one day? How would you respond? What would you say to him?

Oh my god, I would be so excited. We can shop! Do my hair! (Laughs)

Because you've been quiet on the autism front, where do your passions lie at the moment?

Without a doubt this "Dirty, Sexy, Funny" tour has been a passion of mine. I came up with the idea three years ago and, really, I went across the country looking for these girls. We put it on its feet and we've been on tour all summer working it and building it, and now Sirius has given me a full-time job with the brand of "Dirty, Sexy, Funny." Just to have a vision and then to be able to manifest it is such a beautiful goal and dream right now. Besides that, still helping the autism community, especially with the bullying that's going on. So those are really two important pieces of my life.

Do you read your own press?

No, god! I learned a long time ago not to do that.

How do you deal with backlash when you take a stance on a topic that might rub some people the wrong way?

I just stand my ground. Stick with your truth. It's what you know and it's what you lived, and that's that. You just keep pushing forward.

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Edgy 'Alice' Stands Convention On Its Head

BY JOHN QUINN

Some theatrical experiences defy description. But a few adjectives come to mind that are applicable to "Alice," the performance organization Nerve's immersive journey through Wonderland. "Unconventional?" Without a doubt. "Unique" – that too. Unsettling? More than a little.

Sometimes it's best to let the artists speak for themselves. "Alice" is Nerve's latest experiment in "consensual theater" in which, according to the company's web site, "It's all about the senses." Nerve is all about "immersive, audience participatory shows in non-traditional spaces." This non-traditional space is the school associated with Drayton Avenue Presbyterian Church in Ferndale. Usually, audiences sit and watch performers. For "Alice," performers meet you in the lobby and sweep you up into the show.

"Alice" is an original work, based on characters and motifs created by Lewis Carroll in his timeless novels "Alice in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass, and "What Alice Found There." Regardless of their appeal to the very young, the "Alice" books aren't kid stuff. Carroll was a geometer, a discipline based on rigid logic. His pair of novels are revels in the illogical, full of elegant word play. What better theme could one adopt for alternative theater than the madness created when a mathematician blows off steam?

"Alice" is highly conceptual, intensely stylized. The costumes and makeup only suggest character; voice and gesture are paramount. Our guide down the rabbit hole is the White Rabbit, who encourages us to explore the installation on our own. Sticking close to the bunny, though, keeps you in the center of the action. Her cohorts include a Mad Hatter and a March Hare, a Cheshire Cat, a Pale King and a malevolent Red Queen. And Alice? She's a raffia-haired puppet that the Rabbit pushes around in a cart.

Classrooms on both sides of a darkened hallway are transformed into "settings" for the play; they are themselves works of art. The attention to detail is striking.

The Hatter may be called "mad," but the fundamental theme of "Alice" is summed



A very unusual "Alice" comes alive in Ferndale through Oct. 31. Photo: Copyright Rick Lieder - Dreampool.com

REVIEW

Alice

Nerve

at Drayton Avenue Presbyterian Church

2441 Pinecrest Dr., Ferndale

9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 17, 24, 31

9 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18, 25

Children 14 and over accompanied by parent/guardian only.

1 hour, 20 minutes; no intermission

\$30; \$75 Halloween. All tickets are

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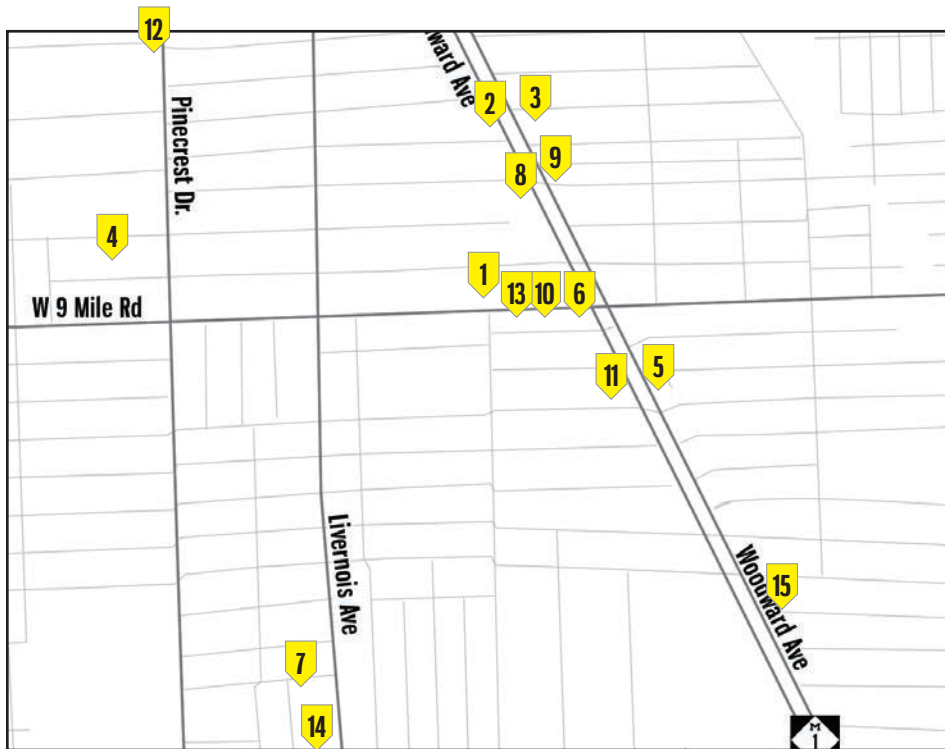
In the spirit of ensemble theater, Nerve provides no program for "Alice," but a tour of their website reveals that the core company are Laura Bailey, Steve Xander Carson, Marisa Dluge, Chris Jakob, John Denyer and Kathe Kojka. They are familiar faces on Metro stages, but audiences at other venues haven't experienced them quite so up close and personal. This is "immersive" theater; even though participation is "consensual," the production is very much "in your face." But no audience members were harmed in the making of "Alice."

This is an experience for the adventuresome only – the adventuresome and the physically fit. I mean, plays have left me breathless in the past, but not quite in this manner. The painfully shy, like yours truly, can try to hide in the shadows, but it's likely that Red Queen will ferret you out. And that's a fate you really don't want.

up by the evocative observance of the Cheshire Cat, "We're all mad here." And indeed, what started out as a romp in a garden of talking flowers descends into a darker, more twisted journey.

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Editor's Pick



Witness Luigi Pirandello's Noble Prize-winning play "Six Characters in Search of an of Author," come to life at the University Musical Society this month.

Luigi Pirandello won the prize in Literature in 1934 for his "bold and brilliant renovation of drama and the stage." His play, which dates from 1921, is an absurdist meta-theatrical

play about the relationship between authors and their characters. A dysfunctional family of six bursts into a rehearsal of another Pirandello play with a curious claim: they are characters who have been abandoned by their author and are seeking someone to complete their story. The theater manager is intrigued and agrees to help, but becomes vexed by the interplay of the real actors with the unrealized characters, whose literary limbo causes fiction and reality to overlap. The production is directed by Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota and performed by Théâtre de la Ville.

Pirandello's "Six Characters in Search of an of Author" begins at 8 p.m. on Oct. 24 and 25 at the Power Center in Ann Arbor. Tickets start at \$26. For more information, visit <http://gaybe.am/6>.

Happenings

Continued from p. 28

Professional

1984 \$5-20. What A Do Theatre, 4071 W. Dickman Road, Springfield. Through Oct. 25. 269-282-1953. whatado.org

Aelita: Queen of Mars \$15-20. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Oct. 24. 269-756-3879. Acorntheater.com

Alice \$30-75. Nerve at Drayton Avenue Presbyterian Church, 2441 Pinecrest Dr., Ferndale. Through Oct. 31. 248-506-4335. gonerve.com

Are You There God? It's Me, Carrie \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Nov. 3. 248-545-5545. theringwald.com

Around the World in 80 Days \$26-41. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Through Oct. 26. 248-377-3300. mbtheatre.com

At the Bistro Garden \$18-23. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Through Oct. 19. 248-850-9919. twomusetheatre.org

Cheating Cheaters \$8-15. Thunder Bay Theatre, 400 N. Second Ave., Alpena. Through Oct. 19. 989-354-2267. thunderbaytheatre.com

Do You See It Coming? \$12-20. Matrix Theatre Company at Liberal Arts Theatre, Marygrove College, 8425 McNichols, Detroit. 7 p.m. Oct. 25. 313-967-0599. matrixtheatre.org

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

Enter Laughing \$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. Oct. 22 - Nov. 16. 248-788-2900. jetttheatre.org

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

Mamma Mia! \$39-79. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Oct. 17 - 19. 313-872-1000. broadwayindetroit.com

Menopause The Musical \$49. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Oct. 14 - 16. 313-872-1000.

broadwayindetroit.com

Motown the Musical \$39-95. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Oct. 21 - Nov. 16. 313-872-1000. broadwayindetroit.com

Once \$34+. Wharton Center's Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. Oct. 14 - 19. 800-WHARTON. whartoncenter.com

Poltergeist: A Musical Parody \$8-14. Stark Turn Players at Dog Story Theatre, 7 Jefferson SE, Grand Rapids. Oct. 23 - 26. 616-425-9234. dogstorytheatre.com

Romeo and Juliet \$10-31. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Oct. 24 - March 24. 313-577-2972. finearts.wayne.edu

Sandy Hackett's Rat Pack Show \$43-59. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 7:30 p.m. Oct. 17. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

Six Characters In Search of an Author \$26. University Musical Society at Power Center for the Performing Arts, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. Oct. 24 - 25. 734-764-2538. ums.org

Story Time Free!. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Oct. 25. 734-663-0681. pntheatre.org

The 39 Steps \$20. The Snug Theatre, 160 S. Water St., Marine City. Through Oct. 26. 810-278-1749. thesnugtheatre.com

The Birth of Chad \$10. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Through Oct. 25. planetant.com

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

The Signal \$25. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. Oct. 17. 269-756-3879. acorntheatre.com

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

Tomfoolery \$10-20. The Penny Seats Theatre Company at Conor O'Neill's Irish Pub and Restaurant, 318 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. Through Oct. 23. 734-926-5346. pennyseats.org

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

White People \$15. Puzzle Piece Theatre at The Abrecht Performance Space, 1301

W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Oct. 24 - Nov. 9. 313-454-1542. puzzlestage.org

ART 'N' AROUND

Art Detroit Now "3rd Thursdays in Detroit" 45+ local galleries and retail locations stay open until 9 p.m. to offer the best in contemporary art. Multiple, Detroit. Aug. 15 - Oct. 16. Artdetroitnow.com

Cranbrook Art Museum "Warhol On Vinyl: The Record Covers, 1949-1987+" Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. June 21 - Feb. 28. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) "Abstraction and Landscape: Contemporary Woodcut" 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sep. 12 - Oct. 18. 313-832-8540. 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

Flint Institute of Arts "First Frost Arts & Fine Crafts Fair" Tickets: \$4-5. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Oct. 18 - Oct. 19. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.org

Janice Charach Gallery "Pictures of Resistance: The Wartime Photographs of Jewish Partisan Faye Schulman" 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield Township. Oct. 19 - Dec. 14. 248-661-1000. Jccdet.org

Michigan State University Museum "Michigan and the Civil War" Exhibit highlights Michigan connections in the Civil War. Michigan State University Museum, 409 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing. Aug. 4 - Dec. 31. 517-355-7474. museum.msu.edu

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

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

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Touching Strangers" Richard Renaldi's photography exhibit. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. Aug. 29 - Nov. 1. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

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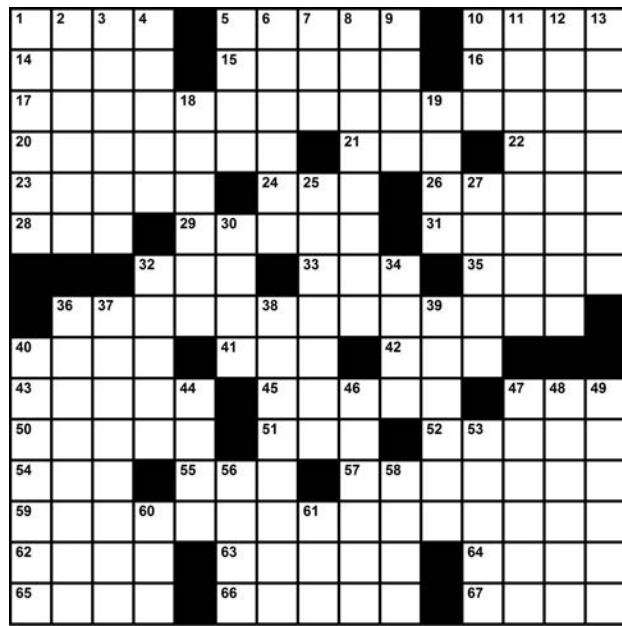
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Across

- 1 Where to wallow
- 5 Branches of a family tree
- 10 The Phantom of the Opera's name
- 14 Etcher's fluid

- 15 Islamic deity
- 16 Moliere's mommy
- 17 1962 hit that Bob Crewe co-wrote for The Four Seasons
- 20 Ten-inchers, for example
- 21 Beginning of a hickey?
- 22 Tin Man's request

- 23 Former NFL player Tualo
- 24 BB propellant
- 26 Sad piece
- 28 Jan. 1 until now
- 29 Batman's alter ego Bruce
- 31 Parts of floats
- 32 "That was good, honey!"
- 33 Use your tongue
- 35 Licks, for example
- 36 1974 hit that Bob Crewe co-wrote for Patti Labelle
- 40 Philbin cohort
- 41 Childcare writer LeShan
- 42 Place for Hamburger Mary's meat
- 43 "___ roll!" (winner's cry)
- 45 Went down on eagerly
- 47 Vegas opening
- 50 Cuban coins
- 51 Hanging spot
- 52 That is, to Cicero
- 54 Throw in the towel, with "out"
- 55 QB's misfire
- 57 Freaked out
- 59 1967 hit that Bob Crewe co-wrote for The Tremeloes
- 62 Kind of idol
- 63 Hot blood
- 64 Nuts
- 65 Gas brand in Canada
- 66 In concert
- 67 Aardvark entrees

Down

- 1 Moms of comedy
- 2 Most like a polar bear
- 3 Fixed, but not repaired

Solution on pg. 28



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