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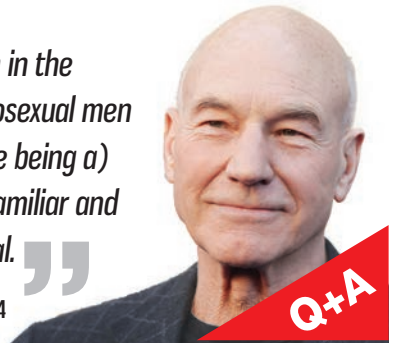


Southfield City Council Passes Non-Discrimination Ordinance

Nagging Questions Behind 6th Circuit Marriage Cases

“ I had been in the company of homosexual men and women (since being a) teenager. It was familiar and completely normal. ”

- Patrick Stewart, pg. 14



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COVER STORY

9 Nagging questions behind 6th Circuit marriage cases

Photo: Associated Press



NEWS

- 4 Southfield passes non-discrimination ordinance
- 6 Elliott-Larsen: how Michigan is falling behind
- 6 Gay marriage case may affect discrimination, religion bills
- 7 Political hors d'oeuvres
- 8 Couple behind Ala. gay marriage case grateful for ruling
- 12 Discrimination continues in states with marriage equality

OPINION

- 10 Parting Glances
- 10 Schuette's cowardly plea to discriminate
- 11 Creep of the Week

LIFE

- 14 The perfect match
- 17 Feeling the folk in Ann Arbor
- 18 UM student's car-bike hybrid at Detroit Auto Show
- 20 Happenings
- 21 Hear Me Out
- 25 Deep Inside Hollywood
- 26 Puzzle

“ We’ve gotten smarter in our organizing. I think we have the best coalition that we’ve ever had with activists from the LGBT community, with allies, with business folks, with folks from academia and folks from public policy.

– State Sen. Rebekah Warren, pg. 6



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Conference Will Discuss Safe Schools

ROCHESTER - With a goal to create more supportive and inclusive educational environments for LGBT individuals, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Initiative of Oakland University's School of Education and Human Services will host the fourth annual Michigan SOGI Education Conference.

The event, to be held on Feb. 6 at the Auburn Hills Marriott at 3600 Centerpoint Parkway in Pontiac, will feature expert presentations; roundtable discussions; instruction on the best practices for integrating SOGI initiatives of safe and welcoming space for all students, faculty and administrators regardless of identity into school and work; and ongoing networking opportunities.

"This may be our best lineup of presenters yet. We have drawn presenters from across the country," said Dr. Timothy Larrabee, associate professor and director of the SOGI Initiative Taskforce. "At the same time, we have not lost our local focus. The Southeast Michigan chapter of GLSEN is back to discuss starting and maintaining gay-straight alliances. We will hear from students in Novi. Experts from University of Michigan-Dearborn, Wayne State University and Michigan State University will be here. We will also discuss the intersections of SOGI issues with race, religion, health and education."

Keynote speaker, Kris Hermanns, will deliver her address, "The New Frontier: Ensuring Safe Schools for all LGBT Students." Hermanns, a self-described "country girl from Wisconsin," has over 20 years of nonprofit and managing experience, including many years spent as the deputy director at the National Center for Lesbian Rights. Hermanns is currently the executive director of Pride Foundation, a regional community foundation that inspires giving to expand opportunities and advance full equality for LGBT people across the Northwest

This year's emcee is Steve Spreitzer, president and CEO of the Michigan Roundtable. Spreitzer has held various leadership positions in the organization, having served as director of programs and managed the Roundtable's Interfaith efforts and Walk2gether Michigan. His work has gained recognition from the World Sabbath for Religious Reconciliation, the Council of Islamic Organizations of Michigan, the Catholic Youth Organization and the Hindu American Foundation.

Registration for the event, which includes a breakfast and lunch, is \$100 for the general public and \$25 for full-time students. On-site registration the day of the event is payable by credit card or electronic check (ACH) only. For additional information, visit the conference website at oakland.edu/SOGI. To contact the SOGI Initiative Office, call 248-370-4614 or email them at sogi@oakland.edu



Ferndale Pride Seeks Sponsors And Vendors

Ferndale Pride has just released a press release announcing their plans for this year's event.

Downtown Ferndale will host its annual Ferndale Pride for the LGBTQA community on Saturday, May 30 along W. Nine Mile Road. Many related events and activities will accompany the festival throughout the week. Such events include the Rainbow 5k Walk/Run, drag shows, multiple club and bar events, patio parties, dinners, art shows and many others. Ferndale Pride is expected to attract between 12,000 to 15,000 people during the week's festivities.

Sponsorship opportunities give organizations and businesses the chance to promote themselves as well as support the LGBTQA and Ferndale communities. Participants can be a part of the vibrancy and diversity that the city is known for. Sponsors to date include MotorCity Casino Hotel, Ferndale Chamber of Commerce, Ferndale DDA, Ferndale Community Foundation, Affirmations Community Center, Michigan AIDS Coalition and more.

For information on how to be a sponsor, go to www.ferndalepride.com/sponsoring/how-to-sponsor.html. To secure a vendor booth, go to www.ferndalepride.com/vendors/booth-rental.html.



Southfield City Council Meeting on Monday, Jan. 26 (BTL photo/AJ Trager)

Southfield Passes Non-Discrimination Ordinance

BY AJ TRAGER

SOUTHFIELD – Southfield City Council unanimously voted Jan. 26 to pass a city-wide non-discrimination ordinance that would add gender identity and sexual orientation protections to a list of protected classes.

Southfield joined 35 other Michigan cities and townships which provide non-discrimination protections to its citizens by passing an amendment to its human rights ordinance.

"Every time we expand 'We The People' we are better off for it," State Rep. Jeremy Moss said after the vote. "Unfortunately the atmosphere in Lansing won't take this up, but it says something when a city of about 75,000 residents that live in it, or upwards of 200,000 people who work in it, are now protected based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. That's a lot of clout to bring up to Lansing for me, as a state legislator, in trying to push forward an Elliott-Larsen amendment."

Moss introduced the ordinance when he was serving on the Southfield City Council in December 2013. The legislation was referred to the city's attorney for review and dismissed from the council table in early 2014. The ordinance was reintroduced this year by Acting Council President Sylvia Jordan.

Language now directly reads that the ordinance will "prohibit discrimination in Southfield in the areas of employment, housing and public accommodations based upon race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, marital status, physical or mental disability, family status,

sexual orientation or gender identity of another person," City Attorney Sue Ward read at the meeting.

Former councilwoman Barbara Talley, of the Martin Luther King Task Force, spoke during the resident response time. She was the first black woman to serve on the Southfield City Council and was in complete support of the ordinance, recounting a time when she, too, was discriminated against for who she was.

"I don't know if any of you on city council have ever been discriminated against. But I have. And so I'm coming from a different point of view," Talley said. "... However, on that City Council, I used to sit there before any of you sat there. And we worked very very hard for inclusion and diversity in the city. I want to remind each of you of the oath that you took. You really should not be sitting on City Council if you think that your denial (of the ordinance) is valid."

Tensions rose as Jordan was criticized by a resident for changing her mind to be in support of the ordinance. The speaker claimed Jordan was trying to write her own history. Just before the vote, the council president then stated that she had always been in support of LGBT rights.

"I worked at The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as an investigator for over eight years in the '80s. And we fought for civil rights and stood up to discrimination," Jordan responded. "I have members of my family in the gay community. I have members of my church in the gay community. And for me to not approve a human rights ordinance would not be the

right thing to do, because I totally agree with equal treatment for all. So I want to make that very clear."

Other members of the community who spoke include Jay Kaplan, the ACLU LGBT Project's staff attorney and longtime Southfield resident; Cindy Clardy; Julia Music, organizer of Ferndale Pride; Beth Green; Faith Robinson, Chair of the Jewish Gay Network of Michigan; Stephanie English; and Barbara Seldon.

"I couldn't have said it better than the people who said it this evening; the diversity of Southfield was reflected in the people who spoke and how they viewed the issue. I would simply say it's clearly just the right thing to do," Councilman Ken Siver said after motioning for a call to vote.

"Equality Michigan appreciates all of the amazing work that Jeremy Moss and Brenda Lawrence did to make Southfield the 36th city in Michigan to pass a local LGBT inclusive Human Rights ordinance and we hope that this continues to put pressure on the legislature in Lansing to take up this issue on a statewide level," Greg Varnum, director of external relations at Equality Michigan, said.

The council passed the ordinance unanimously with a 5-0 vote. Councilman Sid Lantz was not present for the meeting. Changes to city law are expected to take effect in March.

"This is going to make Southfield economically competitive, welcoming of those who want inclusive communities, diverse communities," Moss said. "And it's the right thing to do. And I am excited to be a Southfielder tonight."



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Gay Marriage Case May Affect Discrimination, Religion Bills

BY DAVID EGGERT

LANSING (AP) – Gov. Rick Snyder hopes to resuscitate legislation that would protect gay and transgender residents from discrimination, while LGBT advocates explore asking voters to pass the bill since it's unlikely to clear the GOP-led Legislature.

In his State of the State speech, the Republican governor called for continued discussion over amending Michigan's civil rights law to prohibit discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents in employment, housing and places open to the public.

"Let's show that we can deal with issues of discrimination in our state," Snyder said, drawing applause from Democrats and some Republicans.

But after last week's address, new GOP House Speaker Kevin Cotter of Mount Pleasant told reporters that he sees no need for more debate after the business-backed legislation stalled in November without a vote.

The U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision to take up constitutional challenges to a gay marriage ban in Michigan, however, may intensify pressure on lawmakers from both the LGBT community and social conservatives.

"You could have a situation where people are allowed to get married in a state but will lose their jobs if they were to come out publicly or let it be known that they got married to a same-sex partner," said Sommer Foster, director of political advocacy for Equality Michigan.

Until a year ago, she said, every state where same-sex marriage is legal also had anti-discrimination protections for gays. But as a wave of lower courts ruled quickly in favor of gay marriage rights, many now allow same-sex marriage yet don't have non-discrimination policies.

"The impending Supreme Court decision makes it even more urgent," Foster said.

Realistic about the yet-to-be-reintroduced bill's future, the organization is studying whether a 2016 ballot measure is an option and if enough money can be raised for a signature-gathering and advertising campaign.

A final decision will be made in six to 12 months. There has never been a statewide vote in any state on such a measure, Foster said.

A September poll conducted for The Detroit News and WDIV-TV by the Glengariff Group showed 74 percent of 600 likely state voters were in support of making it illegal to fire or deny housing to someone because he or she is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Eighteen percent were in opposition, with a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

Some supporters of a proposed state version of the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act also say their effort to shield a person's sincerely held beliefs from government overreach could be more vital given the Supreme Court's approaching gay marriage ruling – which is expected by the end of June. The proposed law, which died in the Republican-controlled Senate in December after being passed by the House, was reintroduced the same day as Snyder's State of the State address.

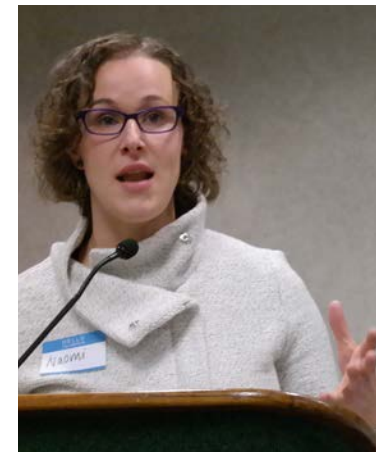
"We're very hopeful it will get a warmer reception," said Tom Hickson, vice president for public policy and advocacy at the Michigan Catholic Conference, which has lobbied for the legislation for at least 15 years. "I don't see any reason to think that this isn't something that's going to have certainly some robust discussions."

Backers of the Michigan religious liberty bill point to cases such as a suburban Denver baker who refused to make a cake for a same-sex wedding and is fighting an order requiring him to serve gay couples against his religious beliefs.

During the recent lame-duck session, Snyder expressed concern with enacting religious liberty legislation if it didn't coincide with also updating the 1976 Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

Senate Minority Leader Jim Ananich, D-Flint, said he hopes the GOP majority decides against pursuing the religious freedom bill.

"I'm hopeful that they'll realize that we need to be finding solutions that help all Michigan families, not pandering to ideologues within each of our parties," he said.



State Sen. Rebekah Warren (L), Greg Varnum, director of external relations at Equality Michigan (C) and Naomi Goldberg, leader of research analysis and research support at the Movement Advancement Project (R), each address the crowd on updating the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act in Ypsilanti, Monday, Jan. 26. (BTL photos/AJ Trager)

Elliott-Larsen: How Michigan Is Falling Behind

BY AJ TRAGER

YPSILANTI – State Sen. Rebekah Warren spoke Jan. 26 with members of local and national LGBT organizations on the importance of passing federal, statewide and municipal LGBT protections and how far Michigan has to go to become a fully inclusive state.

Sponsored by the Equality Research Center at Eastern Michigan University, Warren was joined by Greg Varnum, director of external relations of Equality Michigan, and Naomi Goldberg, who leads the research analysis at the Movement Advancement, an independent think tank that provides research, insight and analysis that help speed equality for LGBT people. Varnum was standing in for Equality Michigan's executive director, Emily Dievendorf.

Warren has introduced amendments to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA), Michigan's Civil Rights law, every session since winning her first position into state elected office nine years ago and vows that she will continue to do so until the state gets it done.

"It's often said that the states become the incubators for the federal government. And here we find that sometimes the localities, or municipal governments, become the incubators for the state, and they can push policy up to us (the legislature)," Warren said.

Polling shows that upwards of 75 percent of Michiganders believe that LGBT protections under ELCRA should be granted in the state and 70 percent believe those protections are already available, Varnum said.

Eighteen states in the country lack sexual orientation and gender identity protections in the workplace, covering nearly 52 percent of LGBT individuals. Turning up the temperature on the legislature through lobbying and calling elected officials when a bill has been introduced is one way to push for an update to those protections, but establishing municipal LGBT protections will also move the state forward.

"In the last few years we have actually passed so many local ordinances (for LGBT protections) that we now have more than any other state in the United States," Varnum said. "Last year we passed Pennsylvania. They had 32; we now have 35."

ELCRA was a point of tension last term with two different bills having been introduced into the state legislature; one version, introduced by Warren in the Senate and Rep. Sam Singh in the House, provided for sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression protections and the other, introduced by Rep. Frank Foster, only provided for sexual orientation protections. Efforts to pass ELCRA failed in 2014, but 2015 is a new year, and Warren is expected to reintroduce the amendment containing all protections.

The original Republican bill was to be passed in conjunction with the Michigan Religious Freedom Restoration Act (MiRFRA), which sought to protect people's "deeply held religious beliefs" from certain government actions. Activists and the LGBT community have nicknamed the act a "license to discriminate," fearing that the

passing of this act could provide avenues for religion to be used as a weapon.

While both sides of the political spectrum are seeking protections for sexual orientation, leaving gender expression and gender identity out of the equation poses significant dangers for all LGBT individuals. Removing the expression protections leaves those who act or present as more "butch" or more "femme" than an assumed gender presentation, for example, at risk for discrimination that can come from any corner. ELCRA is more than just a workplace equality issue; it is a statewide incentive to keep more innovative, diverse minds from leaving the state.

A recent Gallup poll found that 5.4 million people in the workplace identify as LGBT. Studies on résumé content have found that individuals who identify as LGBT or have LGBT qualifications listed on their résumé are less likely to get a call back than someone who doesn't have those skills listed, Goldberg said.

"When we think of America, we think of the basic bargain: you work hard, you get ahead. For LGBT people, that basic bargain is broken," Goldberg said. "For LGBT people it is harder to find and keep a good job. And then once you get that job, you work just as hard but get fewer benefits and pay more in taxes."

Equality Michigan, big businesses and other groups such as Freedom Michigan (a coalition of people focused on updating the ELCRA with all LGBT protections included) fought hard last year to

See Elliott-Larsen, next page

Political Hors D'oeuvres

Mich. Religious Freedom Bill Returns Snyder Wants More Dialogue On LGBT Equality

BY TODD HEYWOOD

It's Baaaaaaack!

Michigan State Senator Mike Shirkey, R-Clark Lake, has re-introduced the Michigan Religious Freedom Restoration Act (MiRFRA). That's legislation lovingly dubbed "license to discriminate" by activists because it justifies nearly all discrimination, as long as a person claims a "sincerely held religious belief" to back it up.

For those who have been living under a rock for the past several months, MiRFRA is legislation originally introduced by former Speaker of the House Jase Bolger (R-Marshall) as a "balance" to legislative activity to amend the state's civil rights law to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes. While the move to amend the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA) failed, Bolger was undeterred and pushed his MiRFRA legislation through the House. It died in the Senate at the end of the lame duck session in 2014.

"Sadly, it's not surprising that the GOP-controlled Senate reintroduced a discriminatory piece of legislation like RFRA that serves no real purpose other than to further

enshrine backwards thinking into our state government," says Sam Ingot of Progress Michigan. "Bigotry and discrimination have no place in Michigan, whether it's coming from Gov. Snyder, Dave Agema or the Tea Party. Michiganders won't stand for legislation that makes us a national embarrassment and only drives hardworking people and loving families from our state."

There's an irony here that as Gov. Rick Snyder was dotting the I's and crossing the T's for his state of the state address on Tuesday, Jan. 20, Shirkey was pushing his legislation in the Senate. It was formally introduced and referred to the Judiciary Committee on Tuesday. So what irony? Well, Snyder took the opportunity in the State of the State address to call for "more dialogue" about amending the law at the same time Shirkey was creating a special rights bill to allow religious discrimination.

Oh, and that dialogue? Don't expect it from the even further right wing House. Speaker Kevin Cotter, R-Mt.Pleasant, who is beholden to the unholy right wing trinity of Reps. Todd Courser, R-Lapeer, Cindy Gamrat, R-Plainwell, and Gary Glenn, R-Midland, told the Detroit Free Press "that's a discussion we had last session," and, "I'm not looking to bring that up."

"Talk is cheap," Ingot said. "The Michigan GOP can't seem to get Agema to stop talking and it's time for Gov. Snyder to take real leadership instead of offering more hollow words."

► Elliot-Larsen

Continued from p. 6

keep MiRFRA from showing up on Snyder's desk for signature. However, MiRFRA has been reintroduced into the House by State Sen. Mike Shirkey, R-Clark Lake. Organizers are urging Michiganders to get active in fighting the bill by joining LGBT equality groups and contacting their state representatives.

An amendment to the ELCRA may not happen in 2015 despite a push from the LGBT movement. In his State of the State speech, Gov. Snyder said that he would like to see continued discussion on the ELCRA amendment. However, House Speaker Kevin Cotter, R-Mt.Pleasant, has already stated that ELCRA is not on the top of his list. Thus, Equality Michigan has started preparing for a 2016 ballot initiative that could cost upwards of \$20 million.

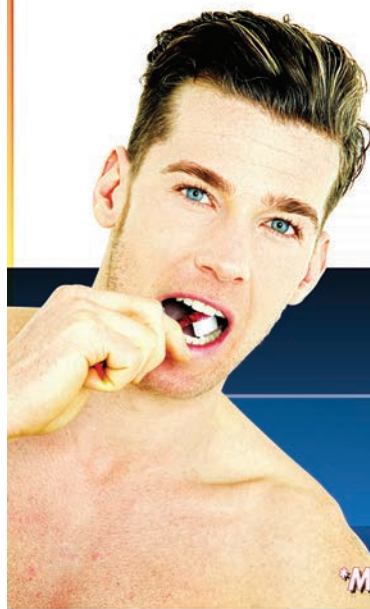
"We've gotten smarter in our organizing,"

Warren said. "I think we have the best coalition that we've ever had with activists from the LGBT community, with allies, with business folks, with folks from academia and folks from public policy. We have everybody coming to the table in a very different way to say, 'This is morally the right thing to do,' because everyone deserves protection in the workplace, at home, and to not worry about being evicted because their landlord doesn't like how they look or who they share their home with. We also know economically it is one of the most important things that we can do."

The Eastern Michigan Equality Research Center was established in 2010. Since then it has been working to stimulate academic research on LGBT equality issues on an interdisciplinary basis and to accelerate the movement of that research from the academic sphere into the public sphere.

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Cari Searcy and Kim McKeand with their 9-year-old son. The couple have been fighting to co-adopt their son in the state of Alabama since he was born.

Couple Behind Ala. Gay Marriage Case Grateful For Ruling

BY KIM CHANDLER

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) – The couple whose lawsuit toppled Alabama’s gay marriage ban said they are grateful, overjoyed and still a little a bit in disbelief.

“We are still trying to take it all in. It’s overwhelming. We’re very grateful. Wow. It happened,” Kim McKeand said.

Cari Searcy and McKeand, along with their 9-year-old son, filed a lawsuit this year challenging the ban that prevented Alabama from recognizing their California marriage and Searcy as a parent to their son that McKeand birthed.

“It was never about marriage equality for us. It started with me trying to gain parental rights to our son that we created,” Searcy said.

U.S. District Callie V.S. Granade on Friday ruled in the couple’s favor declaring both Alabama’s statutory and constitutional gay marriage bans to be in violation of the U.S. Constitution. The ruling was the latest in a string of wins in the South for advocates of gay marriage rights, but one that the couple’s friends doubted would happen in conservative Alabama.

“There were so many people who believed it couldn’t happen here,” Searcy said. They got the news Friday with a phone call.

“We three immediately started dancing and doing the happy dance and giggling and laughing and crying, and we’ve been celebrating ever since,” McKeand said.

Searcy, 39, and McKeand, 38, are both from Texas and met in college. Searcy, the owner of a video production company, and McKeand, a marketing manager, moved to Mobile 13 years ago.

“Everybody was like, ‘Why Alabama?’ We found it, Mobile in particular, to be very inviting and just a great community and we loved it,” Searcy said.

McKeand in 2005 gave birth to a son who was conceived with the help of a sperm donor. The boy was born with a hole in his heart and needed surgery. Searcy said that her status as a non-parent became clear when a nurse said she needed proof of guardianship to show her procedures needed for the boy’s care.

“I was a total legal stranger,” Searcy said.

Searcy filed an adoption application but said she was denied on the basis that only married couples or single people could

Federal Judge Stays Ala. Gay Marriage Ruling For 2 Weeks

BY KIM CHANDLER AND JEFF MARTIN

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) – A federal judge has put a temporary hold on her decision that overturned Alabama’s gay marriage ban, but indicated she will soon answer a key question: Must state probate judges issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples when the stay is lifted?

U.S. District Judge Callie V.S. Granade on Sunday refused the Alabama attorney general’s request to put her ruling on hold until the U.S. Supreme Court takes up the issue of gay marriage later this year. However, Granade did issue a 14-day stay to give the state time to ask the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for a lengthier delay.

Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange called the delay a “step in the right direction” because it will allow the state time to prepare appellate arguments and perhaps settle questions about the effect of the ruling. Advocates of gay marriage rights expressed disappointment but were confident they would ultimately prevail.

“While we’re disappointed that committed, loving gay and lesbian couples in Alabama will not be able to marry (Monday), we’re hopeful the final legal barriers will be overcome quite soon,” Human Rights Campaign Alabama Director Ashley Jackson said.

Some hoping to get married swiftly expressed disappointment over the two-week hold.

Tori Sisson and Shante Wolfe of

Tuskegee were prepared to camp outside the Montgomery courthouse all night Sunday in hopes of securing a marriage license first thing Monday from a judge who indicated he would be issuing them absent a stay.

“It’s aggravating. The judge ruled and everybody got so excited and now, this,” Sisson said.

The stay will expire Feb. 9 unless the court extends it.

Granade said within that time that she will issue a separate order clarifying the effect of her ruling on those seeking and issuing marriage licenses across Alabama.

Lawyers for the Mobile couple that brought the original suit requested the clarification after the Alabama Probate Judges’ Association advised judges that they should not issue licenses to same-sex couples.

The group maintained that ruling declaring the ban unconstitutional only applies to the parties in that case, and that it doesn’t require judges to issue marriage licenses to other same-sex couples.

“As probate judges, our duty is to issue marriage licenses in accordance with Alabama law and that means we cannot legally issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples,” Monroe County Probate Judge Greg Norris said.

Some judges disagreed with that view and indicated they were prepared to issue licenses on Monday.

David Kennedy, an attorney for the plaintiffs in the case, said the judges’ association needed to “embrace reality” that the ban had been struck

down.

Granade had ruled Friday that Alabama’s statutory and constitutional bans on gay marriage were in violation of the U.S. Constitution. That ruling was the latest in a string of victories for same-sex marriage advocates around the Deep South. Still, the judge’s order reverberated in a state considered one of the Bible Belt’s most socially conservative, drawing praise and disbelief from some and scorn from others.

The ruling striking down the marriage ban came out of a case filed by Cari Searcy and Kim McKeand of Mobile. The couple said the ban prevented Alabama from recognizing their 2008 California marriage and Searcy as a parent to the son they had together. McKeand gave birth to the child in 2005, but the court rejected Searcy’s adoption petition because the couple was not legally married.

Strange’s office had sought to put Granade’s order on hold until the U.S. Supreme Court rules. The state argued there would be widespread confusion if couple’s got married, but the marriages were later ruled invalid.

Granade said it was inappropriate, in her view, to continue to delay.

“As long as a stay is in place, same-sex couples and their families remain in a state of limbo with respect to adoption, child care and custody, medical decisions, employment and health benefits, future tax implications, inheritance and many other rights associated with marriage,” she wrote.

adopt. The couple wed in California in 2008. They applied again, but said they were rejected again because of the state’s prohibition on recognizing their marriage.

The judge’s Friday decision was met with sharp criticisms from conservatives in and out of Alabama who called it an affront to state voters who in 2006 overwhelmingly approved putting a prohibition on the recognition of same-sex marriages into the Alabama Constitution.

“This federal judge is throwing out the votes of the people of Alabama and attempting to shut down the debate over marriage. In exercising their right to vote, Alabama voters overwhelmingly sent a message that that they want to see society rebuild and strengthen marriage – not have it redefined by unelected

judges,” said Tony Perkins, president of the Washington D.C. – based Family Research Council.

The legal fight is not over, however. Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange’s office quickly filed a motion Friday night asking Granade to put her order on hold since the U.S. Supreme Court is supposed to consider the issue of gay marriage later this year.

David Kennedy, a lawyer for the couple, said they will file an objection to the request to stay the order. He said the couple also plans to refile their adoption paperwork first thing Monday.

Additional litigation is almost a certainty. The Alabama Probate Judge Association issued a statement Saturday saying there was nothing in the order to require judges to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

“As probate judges, our duty is to issue marriage licenses in accordance with Alabama law and that means we cannot legally issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. The recent federal ruling does not change that,” said Monroe County Probate Judge Greg Norris, the president of the judges’ association.

Searcy and McKeand said despite living in a state considered one of the most conservative in the country, that they received mostly positive support. They said their son has long been aware of their legal fight.

“To him our family has really been no different than any other family. He just knew we had this court thing. He was very happy. He told one of his friends, ‘We changed the law,’” McKeand said.

Nagging Questions Behind 6th Circuit Marriage Cases

BY LISA KEEN

There is at least one small nagging question looming over the happy news that the U.S. Supreme Court will hear the appeals of same-sex couples challenging laws in four states that refuse to license or recognize their marriages.

Most legal observers are saying these four cases – from Michigan, Tennessee, Ohio and Kentucky – will be the means by which the Supreme Court will strike down such laws in 22 states. (Thirteen states are still enforcing their bans and nine are still in court defending their bans.)

In making its announcement, the Supreme Court spelled out two questions for attorneys to argue. Does the 14th Amendment require a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex?

“A ‘Yes’ to the first question is (the) whole ball game. We very much want that,” said Al Gerhardstein, lead counsel for same-sex couples in the case from Ohio, *Obergefell v Hodges* (along with a companion case, *Henry v Hodges*).

The second question is the nagging one: Does the 14th Amendment require a state to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-state?

The second question presupposes the possibility of a “no” answer on the first question.

Thus the stage is set once again for a dramatic “Most Important LGBT Case Ever Before the U.S. Supreme Court.”

A “yes” answer on the first question would enable same-sex couples to obtain marriage licenses in any of the 50 states. Currently, they can marry in 37 (including Missouri, whose most populous counties are issuing licenses). A “yes” answer would also bolster the likelihood that LGBT people could rely on existing laws for equal protection and due process arguments in other arenas, including employment, public accommodations and adoption.

The cases challenging the Defense of Marriage Act and California’s Proposition 8 carried that dramatic mantle in 2013. The decisions in those cases struck down a federal law that prohibited same-sex couples with marriage licenses from receiving federal benefits and allowed same-sex couples in California to marry. But they also signaled to lower courts that the Supreme Court could no longer be counted on to tolerate the sort of contortions most courts used to find a “gay exception” to every rule.

“A lot would depend on the wording of the decision, but conceivably a ‘yes’ answer on the first question could provide



Michigan Attorney Dana Nessel addresses media Jan. 19 as colleague Ken Mogill looks on.

an important basis for challenging any other law that discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation,” said Richard Socarides, a long-time LGBT activist who writes on legal and political issues for *The New Yorker*.

Dana Nessel, one of the key attorneys for the same-sex couple in the Michigan case, agreed. If the court says the bans are not justified by any rational reason, the impact might be limited. But if the court says that laws, such as these, that disfavor LGBT people fail to identify a compelling reason to do so – a much tougher hurdle to clear – “the decision could have a very broad impact and apply to all other areas” of discrimination.”

Nessel noted that, in Michigan and other states, some adoption agencies are attempting to refuse to place children with same-sex couples and some bakeries refuse to provide services to same-sex couple weddings, often citing religious objections. And the state legislature, she said, is expected to pass laws in the coming session to enable businesses to use religious claims to discriminate against LGBT people.

“In Michigan, there are no protections of any kind for the LGBT population – in employment, housing, anything,” said Nessel. “We would love to see something that could be applied to other areas.”

So the best case scenario in the 6th Circuit marriage appeals would be akin to that in *Loving v Virginia*, the 1967 decision that struck down state bans on interracial marriages. That 1967 decision said that state laws banning marriage between persons solely on the basis of racial classifications violated the 14th Amendment’s guarantees of equal protection and due process. With the 6th Circuit marriage appeals, the best language

The LGBT groups and their allies must file argument briefs by Feb. 27. State officials must file their briefs by March 27. Then attorneys for the same-sex couples can file one last “reply” brief by April 17.

would find that laws banning marriage on the basis of sexual orientation violate the constitution.

But even a “yes” to the second question alone would “at least provide some relief,” said Gerhardstein.

That’s why attorneys for same-sex couples in three of the four cases on appeal (all but Kentucky) posed the question themselves, along with the question of whether the states could refuse to issue licenses.

In November, the 6th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals became the first federal appeals court to answer “no” to both questions.

LGBT legal groups have been working with private attorneys on the four cases to make the appeals: Lambda Legal and the ACLU are working in Ohio on *Obergefell v Hodges*; the National Center for Lesbian Rights is working with lesbian activist attorney Abby Rubinfeld and others in Tennessee in *Tanco v Haslam*; Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders is working in Michigan on *DeBoer v Snyder*; and the ACLU is involved in Kentucky in *Bourke v Beshear*.

The LGBT groups and their allies must file argument briefs by Feb. 27. State officials must file their briefs by March 27. Then attorneys for the same-sex couples can file one last “reply” brief by April 17. That suggests the oral arguments – which have been allotted a total of two-and-a-half hours – will probably be held on April 27, 28 or 29, the last days calendared for oral arguments in the 2014-15 session.

“The court may give additional direction to the parties in the cases regarding structuring oral argument on each of the questions,” said Susan Sommer, Lambda’s director of constitutional litigation. “There also may be some variations in the facts and legal issues presented in the different cases that will be taken into account as well in planning for oral argument.”

But the LGBT groups and attorneys working on the cases have been “working together, very effectively, for decades towards our shared goal to win equality,” she said. “And I’m confident we will continue to work together effectively in this home stretch.”

Indiana Legislature To Soon Take Up Religious Freedom Bill

BY TOM DAVIES

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) - Broadly worded proposals backed by conservative lawmakers that would give the state’s residents and businesses expansive religious freedom protections will be discussed in the Indiana Legislature in the coming weeks.

One of the proposals, sponsored by Republican Sen. Scott Schneider, would prohibit any state laws that “substantially burden” a person’s ability to follow his or her religious beliefs, and extends the definition of a “person” to include religious institutions, businesses and associations.

Schneider, R-Indianapolis, declined to discuss the specifics of the proposal this week, saying he would comment closer to a scheduled Feb. 9 committee hearing.

Social conservatives in several states in recent years have pushed similar bills as gay marriage bans fall across the nation. Those measures asserted the right to have no involvement with gay marriages, but the Indiana proposals make no mention of gay marriage.

The legislation comes after last year’s failed effort to advance a proposed state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage, which federal courts later legalized in Indiana.

Republican Senate President Pro Tem David Long said he didn’t regard the proposal as one intended to allow businesses such as bakeries and photographers to refuse dealings with gay couples.

“That’s a fine line you walk when you have constitutional rights on both sides, we understand that,” Long said. “Ultimately, the courts will continue to guide us on what you can and can’t do out there.”

Long said more than 20 states have religious freedom laws similar to those proposed in the Indiana bills and a comparable federal law enacted in the 1990s was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Arizona’s governor vetoed a bill last year that supporters said was designed to give added protection from lawsuits to people who assert their religious beliefs in refusing service to gays. But it drew blistering criticism from major corporations. A similar bill also failed last year in the Kansas Legislature.

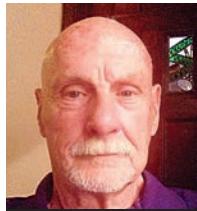
Jane Henegar, the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana’s executive director, said the proposals aren’t very specific and could easily let people or businesses claim that government actions burdened their exercise of religion, which could result in tax money being spent to defend the state against frivolous lawsuits.

The ACLU of Indiana represented gay couples in the federal lawsuit that led to the state’s same-sex marriage ban being overturned last year.

“The cries and the fear that religious liberties were going to be trampled upon just haven’t manifested,” she said, adding that the bill is unnecessary.

The leaders of two conservative lobbying groups didn’t return telephone messages Friday seeking comment on the proposals.

Days Of Wine And Roses



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

"It's a pity that youth is wasted on the young," said George Bernard Shaw, whose play "Pygmalion" was given a fresh start and a heart pacer as the Broadway musical "My Fair Lady."

Shaw – who married late in life but didn't care tuppence for romantic dalliance – lived to be a feisty 94. He talked and talked and talked himself into old age, and probably a number of his audiences who sat through his three-act, four-hour marathons as well.

In spite of Shaw's misspent youth quip, if a Cosmic Fairy Godmother zapped me back to my carefree 20s, I'd do my darndest to learn a few more dance steps with an even livelier set of gay Arthur Murray dance partners. Bunny Hop, anyone?

Truth is, I don't remember much about turning 25, 30 or 40. (If only I had kept a daily journal instead of my "Saint For A Day" address book.)

But getting older hasn't bothered me as much as I thought it would. At least I don't think it has. ("Nobody wants you when you're old and gay," my mother cautioned me when I entered kindergarten, Little Lulu lunch pail in hand.)

I've never experienced a panic at finding myself over the hill. (Or, taking my turn in the barrel for that matter.) And though I've been around the block so many times it doesn't have any corners to stand on, I've been stoic about losing my hairline in life's turbulent wind tunnel

I've never experienced a panic at finding myself over the hill. (Or, taking my turn in the barrel for that matter.) And though I've been around the block so many times it doesn't have any corners to stand on, I've been stoic about losing my hairline in life's turbulent wind tunnel. Resigned to experiencing full-body Mach 3 gravitational sag.

If aging is something that happened only to me (or Queen Elizabeth), I'd have a legitimate gripe, so I counsel myself over morning coffee. "Go not quietly into that good night!" I say at bedtime, snoring soundly in spite of myself.

The truth is, aging – like taxation – will chat up anybody who stands in line long enough to chit chat. (Just don't stand naked in front of a full-length, two-way mirror or before a sharp-eyed IRS auditor.)

I do, however remember two birthdays fondly: my gay bar 21st and a surprise party 50th. In between, I haven't a clue where I blew out my allotted candles or, if in the act of such celebratory ID checking, I got my wish (or, my man).

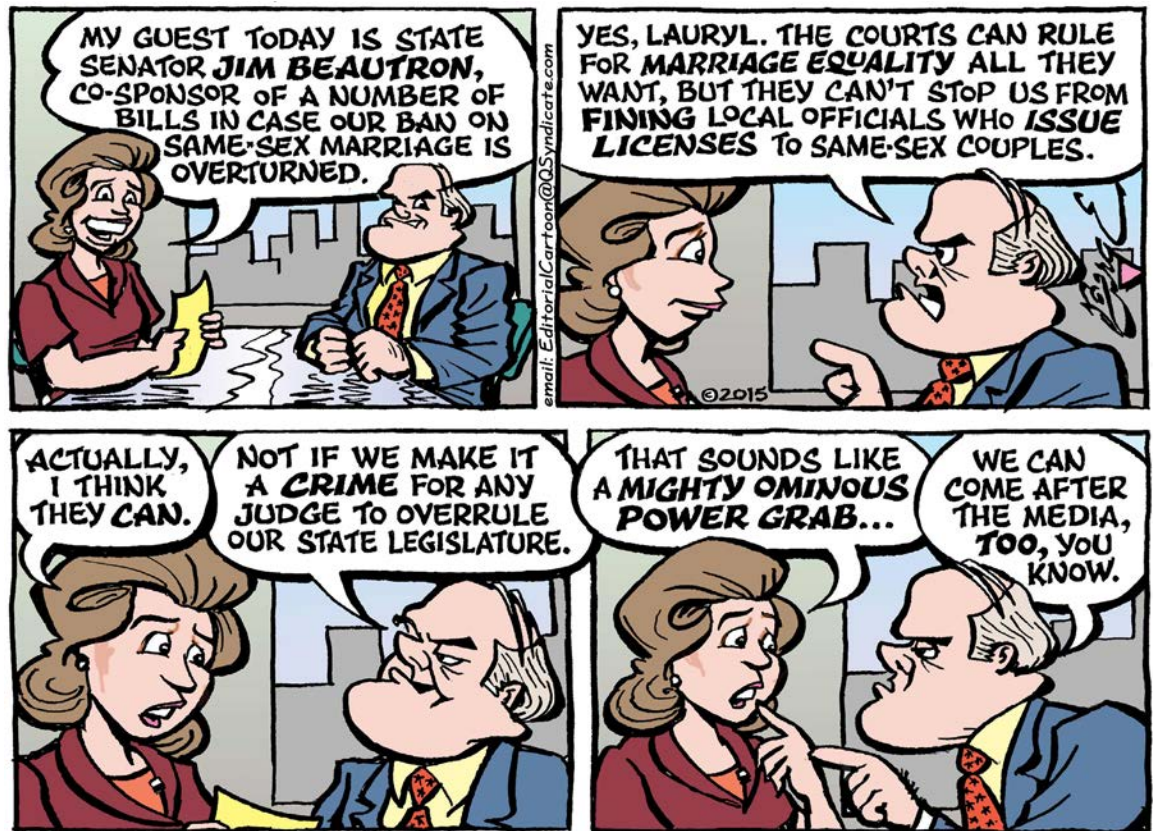
We all remember our Coming of Age. "Thank God I'm 21. No more 3.2 Zing Beer for me! It's all disco lights and bubbling champagne from here on in." (Please have three pieces of picture ID handy. Pay the cover charge. And, what are you doing at closing time, Big Guy?)

And 50! Wow! 600 months. 18,250 days. 43,800 hours. How time unzips flies. ("You took too long to powder your nose, Mary. You were too busy finding out what the backroom boys were having, Charley.") Ah, yes...

At some undesignated point past ages 60 or 70 – you'll know when you get there, Bruce – one stops counting. And, to quote a famous poem: "They are not long, the days of wine and roses./ Out of a misty dream; Our path emerges for a while, then closes./ Within a dream." The poet, Englishman Ernest Dowson, died at 32. Short changed. An alcoholic.

Unasked for advice: Enjoy life. It's never later than you think. Or, is it?

Charles@pridesource.com



OPINION BY JAN STEVENSON

Schuetze's Cowardly Plea To Discriminate

If Schuetze is so committed to following the rule of law and the decisions of our highest courts, why did he not follow Judge Friedman's decision?

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuetze's op-ed in Sunday's Detroit Free Press attempted to defend his decision to continue fighting marriage equality all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. He argued it is his duty, and that he has no choice but to uphold the law and follow directives of federal judges. He cited his allegiance to the recent decision by the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals to reverse U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman's decision of last March that declared Michigan's marriage ban unconstitutional.

Schuetze's argument reeks of moral cowardice. "I was just following orders" is an argument used by some of the most dastardly villains in human history – Nazi soldiers, genocidal rampagers in Laos and figures in Rwanda and Serbia to name just a few in recent memory. Schuetze's attempt to put on a cloak of legal justification is just a sham to hide behind his deeply felt animus towards the state's LGBT community.

Are Nazis and genocide extreme examples? Perhaps – but we chose them specifically because, in his op-ed, Schuetze equated his "duty" to uphold the marriage ban to his legal duty to uphold

Michigan's constitutional ban against the death penalty. We are disgusted that he would try to equate the risk involved in two people seeking to marry and build a life and family together with the risk of killing someone. In fact, we are insulted that Schuetze would even suggest it, directly or subliminally.

And by the way – if Schuetze is so committed to following the rule of law and the decisions of our highest courts, why did he not follow Judge Friedman's decision? At the time, that was the law of the land. Instead, Schuetze chose to challenge that decision by appealing to the 6th Circuit. He did not have to. Attorneys General in other states including Wyoming, North Carolina, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Virginia, West Virginia, South Carolina, New Mexico and Illinois opted to follow the courts' rulings and not challenge their decision to strike down their state's marriage bans. U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder issued an order that state's attorneys general do not have to uphold discriminatory constitutional amendments. It was solely Schuetze's decision to preserve discrimination in Michigan.

Last November, this paper strongly supported Mark Totten to replace

Schuetze as Michigan's Attorney General. We analyzed Schuetze's record and found him to be ideologically committed to driving LGBT people out of Michigan's economy and social fabric and out of the state entirely. We strongly felt this was not only devastating for the LGBT community but also for the state as a whole. The new 21st century economic engines are fueled by diversity and inclusion of the finest minds with unique perspectives and ideas. Michigan will fall behind if differences continue to be perceived as risks and not assets.

We continue to wish that Bill Schuetze was not our Attorney General. We can only hope that the general populace of Michigan will read his op-ed argument for what it is: a weak plea for permission to openly discriminate.

BTL is co-producing the LGBTQ&A Career Fair March 5 at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. There will be up to 40 of Michigan's largest employers actively recruiting hundreds of LGBT people, many of them young people just graduating from colleges and universities. We invite Attorney General Bill Schuetze to come see and meet exactly the extraordinary people he is trying so hard to drive away from Michigan's work force.

Creep of the Week

Sally Kern

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Mental illness is a serious, unfairly stigmatized issue in this country. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, one in four Americans deal with some



Sally Kern

kind of mental illness yearly and many receive no treatment.

So please know that I'm not joking when I say that Oklahoma State Rep. Sally Kern is a very sick woman and that I hope that she gets the help she so desperately needs.

Now, I'm not a psychologist, but I don't see how a mentally healthy person can maintain the kind of obsessive hatred of LGBT people that inspires the bills she

recently introduced in the Oklahoma legislature. All three serve no purpose other than to make life harder for LGBT Oklahomans.

For example, take the so-called "Preservation and Sovereignty of Marriage Act," a desperate move to try to thwart marriage equality, which is legal in Oklahoma.

"No employee of this state and no employee of any local governmental entity shall officially recognize, grant or enforce a same-sex marriage license and continue to receive a salary, pension or other employee benefit at the expense of taxpayers of this state," the bills reads. "No taxes or public funds of this state shall be spent enforcing any court order requiring the issuance or recognition of a same-sex marriage license."

In other words: "Hey government employees, you like your job? Better not play nice-nice with any gay couples or you'll be filing for food stamps (ha ha just kidding, we're Republicans, we'll probably cut those, too)."

Kern is not alone in her marriage-equality desperate-measures freak out. Todd Russ, another State Rep., wants to do away with marriage licenses in the state altogether just to spite the gays.

Kern also authored the "Freedom to Obtain Conversion Therapy Act," which guarantees people the "freedom" to mentally and emotionally damage their LGBT children by trying to get them "cured." As you may know, California and New Jersey have banned so-called "conversion therapy" because it is bullshit. Kern's bill is a proactive measure to keep Oklahoma from making the same move.

The bill reads in part, "The people of this state have the right to seek and obtain counseling or conversion therapy from a mental health provider in order to control or end any unwanted sexual attraction, and no state agency shall infringe upon that right. Parents may obtain such counseling or therapy for their children under eighteen years of age without interference by the state."

It's sad that Kern's interest in mental health exists solely to harm rather than help others.

Then there's the "freedom to discriminate" bill that's been popular in other states as of late in order to address the horror of bakers having to make cakes for a same-sex couple's wedding when said bakers believe that homos make Jesus vomit.

While other states have used CYA terms like "religious freedom" to justify the refusal of service, Kern comes right out with it: "No business entity shall be required to provide any services, accommodations, advantages, facilities, goods or privileges related to any lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender person, group or association."

Could these bills pass? They shouldn't, but that doesn't mean they won't. After all, Republicans dominate Oklahoma and marriage equality is scaring the shit out of them.

As for Kern, she's been crying for help since at least 2008 when she said that homosexuality is "the biggest threat that our nation has, even more so than terrorism or Islam, which I think is a big threat."

It can't be fun to be her.

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SHOP LGBT

Discrimination Continues In States With Marriage Equality

New HRC Report Also Highlights Michigan's LGBT Legislation

BY BTL STAFF

A new report by the Human Rights Campaign, in partnership with the Equality Federation, reveals that equal treatment remains out of reach for LGBT Americans in most states, including Michigan.

The inaugural State Equality Index (SEI) reveals that, even with progress on marriage equality, there are extraordinary state-to-state disparities in LGBT non-discrimination protections, including in the workplace, and efforts continue by equality opponents to pass state-level legislation that would sanction discrimination and undermine even minimal existing protections.

Michigan is one of 32 states in the country that lacks explicit state-level workplace protections for all LGBT employees. It is also one of 14 states that does not have marriage equality.

"Despite historic progress on issues like marriage equality, a majority of states still struggle to reach even a basic level of equality for LGBT people," said HRC President Chad Griffin. "Most states lack statewide non-discrimination laws to protect LGBT people, putting countless individuals and families at risk and creating inequalities in adoption and surrogacy, employment benefits and youth safety and well-being."

"Even worse," Griffin said, "equality opponents continue to push deeply harmful laws forward, including those seeking to undermine critical protections in the guise of 'religious liberty.'"

Though same-sex marriage is legal in 36 states and Washington, D.C., more than 111 million people, or 35 percent of Americans, live in states where LGBT people are not fully protected from discrimination in the workplace. And more than 206 million people nationwide live in states where every LGBT person lacks fully-inclusive statewide workplace sexual orientation and gender identity protections.

Last year Michigan's Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a bill potentially allowing for discrimination against LGBT people on the basis of religious beliefs, stalled in the Senate after being introduced and passed in the House. Lawmakers reintroduced the bill Jan. 21, modeled after a federal version that would allow individuals or businesses to seek exemptions to

government regulations that they feel may substantially burden their sincerely held religious beliefs. Advocates are working closely with business leaders to defeat that measure and build support for non-discrimination legislation.

The SEI assesses states on their LGBT-related legislation and policies, good and bad, in six areas: relationship recognition, parenting laws and policies, non-discrimination laws, hate crimes laws, anti-bullying laws and health and safety laws and policies. Based on that review, the SEI assigns states to one of four distinct categories.

Michigan and 29 other states fall into the lowest-performing category: "High Priority to Achieve Basic Equality."

Most of these states have many laws that undermine LGBT equality, from those that criminalize HIV and sodomy, to measures allowing religious-based discrimination against LGBT people. A handful of states have court-ordered marriage equality; none have non-discrimination laws that include

The SEI helps bring to light that there are a lot of challenges ahead and our work in Michigan is far from over. But while our victory is not inevitable, we can be increasingly confident it is achievable."

Seven states and the District of Columbia are in the highest category: "Working Toward Innovative Equality"

These high ranking states have marriage equality, robust LGBT non-discrimination laws that include employment, housing and public accommodations as well as protections in the realm of credit, insurance and jury selection. Most allow transgender people to change official documents to reflect their gender identity. Many bar private insurers from banning transition-related healthcare. LGBT youth are protected by anti-bullying laws, as well as innovative measures in some states that address conversion therapy, inclusive juvenile justice policies, homelessness and sexual education.

Seven states are in the category of "Solidifying Equality."

Michigan and 29 other states fall into the lowest-performing category: "High Priority to Achieve Basic Equality."

sexual orientation or gender identity protections; and few have hate crime laws. LGBT advocates largely work on killing bad bills and on passing municipal protections for LGBT people.

Michigan Targets Municipalities

"Equality Michigan is proud of the work that Michigan's LGBTQ communities have accomplished this past year. There are now more local municipalities in Michigan with LGBTQ protections than any other state in the country, and over 300 LGBTQ couples were able to marry this past March," Equality Michigan Executive Director, Emily Dievendorf, said. "However, too many families in Michigan are once again being denied the freedom to marry or having challenges getting their marriages recognized, and our state laws do not adequately protect LGBTQ people or people living with HIV.

These states have marriage equality and non-discrimination protections and are considered high-performing, but not cutting edge, on LGBT equality. Some states, however, lack explicit non-discrimination protections on the basis of gender identity. These states have relatively strong anti-bullying laws, but bad laws begin to crop up in this category.

Seven states are in the category of "Building Equality."

These have marriage equality and have taken steps toward more LGBT equality efforts, including passing basic non-discrimination and hate crimes laws. Some lack explicit gender identity protections, and several lack comprehensive anti-bullying laws. Bad laws are more common, so advocates work to stop bills that undermine LGBT equality and pass more comprehensive non-discrimination laws.

The full report is available online at www.hrc.org/sei.

Is The Michigan Tea Party Movement About To Erupt In A Civil War?

BY TODD HEYWOOD

Well if the posts on social media are any indication, the long simmering battle for control of the movement being waged by social conservatives and economic conservatives may very well be erupting into a full-fledged and public not-so-civil war of words.

The movement has been in a tizzy for weeks since word broke that Dave Agema, the Republican National Committeeman from Michigan, had posted a link to a white nationalist website. That link claimed to be a first-hand account of the court system by a public defender and the actions of black defendants.

It has been roundly condemned as racist, and led to the national committee leaders censuring Agema – a political term for slapping him on the wrist.

But a very vocal, exceedingly anti-gay cadre of loyalists and tea party movement voices have continued to defend Agema. For his part, Agema posted a defense of his post, claiming he was just reposting something former Florida Congressman Allen West posted.

That defense was enough for Bishop Ira Combs from Jackson to call for Agema's resignation. Combs, for those unaware, is a virulently anti-gay pastor from Jackson who, in the '90s, opposed the formation of a gay-straight alliance at the high school. When the school board, citing federal law, refused to disband the group, Combs recruited a kid to create a straight club. It didn't go very far, but he tried.

"Finally, please cease trying to hide behind Allen West, for posting what Mr. West correctly identified as the most racist article he had ever seen," Combs wrote in his Jan. 22 letter to Agema. "Allen West is a public figure who has no current official role in the Republican Party, but is more aptly considered a part of media. He can afford to take those risks. He has no official role; you, on the other hand, as National Committeeman do. That you decided to sacrifice our Party to seek attention is inexcusable."

That was followed by the scathing line, "Let us close this chapter of controversy with a final parcel of nobility which is your voluntary resignation."

That, of course, set off the Agema defenders – most of them white. Many accused him of putting his race over party politics.

Enter Combs's new right-hand man: convicted felon and pastor Stacy Swimp. Swimp, who does not shirk his hate of LGBT people, has purportedly emailed members of the tea party movement.

Mark Petzold, of Grand Rapids, posted

the following to the Facebook page of Grassroots in Michigan, a tea party movement. He says the text is from an email from Swimp:

I asked you guys to stop pushing this race narrative.

To stop demeaning Black Americans to gain political capital

You refuse to do so.

Therefore, Every Black pastor I know and have stood with are going to come against this Michigan Tea Party war on Black people.

We will not stand idly and let you get away with it under the guise of standing with a handful of Black conservatives who do not repeat our perspective, but represent the stereotypical ideas of rigid ideologues (sic)

We will defeat your war on our community.

- Stacy Swimp.

"Do not allow yourself to be consumed by this and develop the type of anger Stacy is apparently trying to find," Petzold writes in introducing Swimp's message. He says the movement has been accused of racism in the past, but always from "a person or organization removed from our circles and not considered a friend." The Swimp

message, however, is "more troublesome and volatile."

It should be noted that Swimp has been instrumental in bringing together what he characterizes as a national coalition of black pastors and ministers to fight marriage equality. The groups have filed legal briefs with the 5th and 6th Circuit Courts of Appeals relating to marriage cases. And Swimp has gone so far as to accuse homosexuals of perpetrating a holocaust on black Americans.

Incidentally, the newly elected unholy trinity of Reps. Cindy Gamrat, R-Plainwell; Todd Courser, R-Lapeer; and Gary Glenn, R-Midland, have remained silent on the Agema controversy. All three accepted donations from Agema's political action committee.

Courser, for his part, said commentary on the Agema situation would have to wait a bit while he continued to draw attention to the "fraud" perpetrated on Michigan voters in delegating assignments by lottery in the Michigan House. He published a nearly 1,1400 word blog post on the situation, apologizing for his part in the fraud. He claims leadership had already pre-assigned seats and the lottery was for show.

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Photo: IFC Films

THE PERFECT MATCH

'Star Trek' Legend Patrick Stewart On Playing Gay, His Hair Intervention & BFF Ian McKellen

BY LAWRENCE FERBER

In the new indie film “Match,” now available via VOD, Patrick Stewart plays a queer Julliard dance instructor, Tobias, who meets with a couple, played by Matthew Lillard and Carla Gugino, for an interview. The interview, however, proves to be a ruse, and Tobias finds himself ambushed and forced to confront the possibility he fathered a child many decades back during a sexual free-for-all heyday.

Written and directed by Stephen Belber, who adapted his own play of the same name, “Match” is driven by Stewart’s powerhouse performance, by turns flamboyant, angry, flirtatious, edgy, vulnerable, seductive and profound.

Sitting down in New York City for a one-on-one chat – svelte and charismatic, wearing a handsome lavender shirt and dark blue jacket – the “Star Trek” actor (and BFF of frequent co-star Ian McKellen) dished about the film, his past gay roles, and whether he’ll appear in the next “X-Men” movie.

“Jeffrey’ was the first (gay role I did). It was 1994 and we had just wrapped the seventh and final season of ‘Star Trek,’ and I said to my agent, ‘Find me a job, I don’t care what it is but let it be as far removed from science fiction and outer space as possible!’”

First of all, I must give you thanks on behalf of bald men everywhere for making baldness sexy. Your status as a bald sex symbol, for both gays and straights alike, helped rid the world of god-awful comb-overs, and I’m not at all joking.

You shouldn’t thank me. I once had a

combover. You should thank George Kushvaldy. He was in drama school with me, but much older, Hungarian, and we got on very well. I went to have lunch with him and his wife, and they both went into the kitchen, I thought, to make

coffee. All of a sudden my arms were grabbed behind me and the chair I was in was turned around violently. I was like, “What the fuck’s going on?” George had me in an iron grip and his wife appeared with a pair of scissors. I screamed, yelled, shouted, kicked and lashed out and he held me there and his wife cut off my combover. Then, he crouched in front of me and said, “Now, you be yourself! NO! MORE! HIDING!” No more hiding.

I understand that there is, in fact, a real-life Julliard instructor you took some inspiration from for your performance in “Match.”

More than a little. Tobi’s life is based on it. He’s a teacher of classical dance at Julliard, and I spent quite a lot of time with him talking in his apartment in Inwood. Most importantly, I was allowed into his classroom on three occasions just to sit in a corner. That was the foundation on which I began to build Tobi – watching him work.

Was he also obsessed with party mix snacks?

I think that idea came from his life, the party mix. Actually I like them. They're good!

Have you been offered many gay roles during your career? You famously played Sterling, a gay man whose boyfriend, played by Bryan Batt, is HIV-positive in the AIDS-era 1995 gay rom-com "Jeffrey."

Yeah. "Jeffrey" was the first. It was 1994 and we had just wrapped the seventh and final season of "Star Trek," and I said to my agent, "Find me a job, I don't care what it is but let it be as far removed from science fiction and outer space as possible!" And very shortly he rang me and said, "I've got ittttt! There's a movie they're making called 'Jeffrey'..." I said, "I saw the play!"

I had seen Paul Rudnick's wonderful play here in N.Y. and I met with the director. I think that was my first time playing an openly gay character and I enjoyed it immensely. Having led a life in the theater, I had been in the company of homosexual men and women (since being a teenager. It was familiar and completely normal. When we were prepping for the movie, the production designer said he wanted to have lots of photographs around Sterling's apartment - of them on holiday and with friends and so forth - so how would you feel if you and Bryan and Steve Weber (who played Jeffrey) go off and walk around the West Village. It was a Saturday afternoon during a hot summer, so without quite knowing exactly where he was with his camera, we spent a couple of hours just hanging out and it was the loveliest experience. Liberating. And intimate. And fun. We went into bars, through the park.

Did you get recognized a lot?

You know, it was the strangest thing, because I do get recognized a lot. That's why hats and keeping my mouth shut are most important. But not that afternoon. Maybe I scared people off.

Or they respected your privacy.

They don't usually! Why that afternoon? Then I played someone who had a crush on Frasier in the series. It was the last season and tellingly titled, "The Doctor is Out." I played an opera director who begins a relationship with Frasier.

Will we see you in the next "X-Men" film, which is titled "Apocalypse" and will come out in 2016?

I have been told I will not be in it, but Ian is! I don't quite know how that will work. But there is another "X-Men" project I think I'm going to be part of. It's not over. I mean, Jean Grey vaporized me in the third film and I came back in the fourth. How much harm can you do with a vaporizing?

Since original "Trek" cast members Shatner and Nimoy are reportedly making cameos in the new film, do you think we should get a Picard cameo too?

It makes sense in the J.J. Abrams movies that there would be Kirk and Spock. I don't know how they would incorporate Picard. I think it's unlikely. I'm not saying I wouldn't.

Getting back to LGBT roles, how much of an effect did Jeffrey have on the roles you were offered afterwards, if any? That was back when actors were still nervous to take on gay parts for fear it could damage their careers.



In cases it probably did. Not anymore. Last night I watched, for the second time, "Love Is Strange." It is so fucking beautiful. Beautiful. I saw it alone in England, and sat there sobbing on my own in my house. And I knew my wife would love it, so last night I said, "Tonight's the night," and we both sat down ... and John Lithgow and Alfred Molina give such exquisite performances! I can't think of performances (that I've seen lately) that are so beautiful in their delicacy and subtlety and truthfulness."

You and Ian McKellen are so close - and famously frolicked in a Twitter photo series last year - that UK newspaper The Guardian incorrectly identified you as gay too! So, if you open your relationship with Ian, I think you should bring in Alfred Molina for a throuple.

You do? (Laughs) Alfred's too tall!

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Ani DiFranco performs Jan. 31 at Hill Auditorium. Photo courtesy of Fleming Artists

Feeling The Folk In Ann Arbor

Brandi Carlile, Ani DiFranco To Perform During 38th Annual Festival

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

The renowned Ann Arbor Folk Festival comes to Hill Auditorium this weekend for its 38th year. The annual festival, which serves as a fundraiser for The Ark, will bring two dynamic and different nights of folk and roots music, from celebrated musicians to up-and-coming artists. The Ark is Ann Arbor's non-profit venue for folk, roots and ethnic music.

The first evening will feature performances by Brandi Carlile, Jason Isbell, Yonder Mountain String Band, Baskery, Bahamas, Mandolin Orange and Billy Strings & Don Julin, with Steve Poltz as MC. Of these acts, many will be familiar with Isbell, the Alabama native who has shown a unique evolution and maturation in his sounds. Inspired by soul-tinged rock, country and blues that he grew up hearing in Northern Alabama, Isbell has earned three Americana Music Awards including Artist of the Year, Song of the Year (for "Cover Me Up") and Album of the Year for his most recent release, "Southeastern." The Wall Street Journal describes the artist, who will be performing a duo acoustic set at the festival, as "a composer of

splendidly crafted songs. He performs with an intensity that connects the listener to the deep and genuine emotions that inspire his work."

The Yonder Mountain String Band also brings its artistry to the Ann Arbor stage. The Colorado-based foursome takes bluegrass to the next level, showing influences from traditional acts like Del McCourty and Jimmy Martin and blending it with the punk rock sounds of Bad Religion, Black Flag and the Dead Kennedys. Alternative rock band sounds, like the Postal Service, and 20th-century classical composers work their way into the unique sound of the band as well.

Saturday's performances include Amos Lee, Ani DiFranco, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Holly Williams, The Dustbowl Revival, Laith Al-Saadi, with Cheryl Wheeler as MC. An LGBT-favorite, DiFranco has made her mark on the music industry over the last 20 years. Proudly identifying as a "little folksinger," DiFranco has brought forth music in genres like soul, funk, jazz, electronic and spoken word. Through her 20-plus album discography, the singer's evolution of sound has never taken away from her prime objective: using her voice

and her guitar to convey the nuanced lyrics that have attracted millions of fans. She'll perform selections from her newest release, "Allergic to Water."

On the same night as DiFranco, Lee will perform his gritty American roots sound, presenting his tremendous vocal range and "perfectly constructed songs," according to The Ark. The Norah Jones-discovered singer has been dubbed by Willie Nelson as "an exceptional artist (and) a true story teller unique to his generation."

Buffy Sainte-Marie, who helped found the Canada's Music of Aboriginal Canada JUNO category, performs her soulful folk-country as influenced by her Canadian Cree background. The singer-songwriter is known for her songs like "Universal Soldier," an anthem of the peace movement in the 1960s, and "Until It's Time for You to Go," which has been covered by the likes of Elvis, Barbra Streisand and Cher.

The Ann Arbor Folk Festival will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 30-31 at Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. The Ark is located at 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. For more information on line-up and tickets, call 734-761-1800 or visit www.theark.org.

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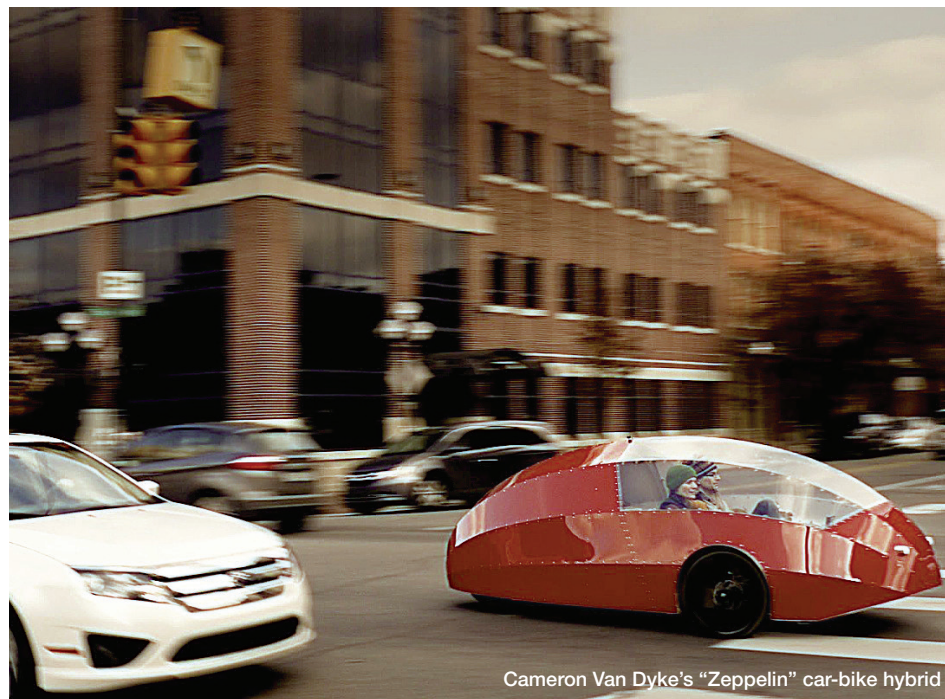
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Cameron Van Dyke's "Zeppelin" car-bike hybrid

UM Student's Innovative Car-Bike Hybrid Featured At Detroit Auto Show

There were many new concept cars at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit this year, but none quite like the Future Cycles vehicles built by Cameron Van Dyke, a graduate student at the University of Michigan's Penny W. Stamps School of Art & Design.

The MFA candidate's design project was completed as part of his master's thesis and introduces a new transportation option to American roads. The vehicles combine the weather protection and carrying capacity of a car with the low energy usage of a bicycle to create a "hybrid" vehicle – half car, half bicycle.

"These are concept cars in the true sense," Van Dyke said. "They propose an alternative set of values in relation to transportation. My hope is to get people to imagine new possibilities for the way we travel."

Van Dyke displayed two exquisitely made, human-powered vehicles at the Detroit auto show, each with a different focus.

The larger of the two, the "Cyclone," is pedaled by two riders with the capacity for cargo and an additional two passengers. Constructed using boat-building techniques in combination with bicycle technology, it features brushed aluminum details and an interior of fine leather and mahogany. The design references the Model T in a mash-up with, what Van Dyke calls, "iPod styling."

The result is a retro-futuristic luxury vehicle.

"The Cyclone offers an idea for a future vehicle, but it also poses questions about the history of automobile culture itself, including its values and its priorities," Van Dyke said.

The second smaller, lighter and more aerodynamic car, the "Zeppelin," is a human electric hybrid vehicle. It is powered by two riders in combination with a 750-watt electric rear motor, and achieves a cruising speed of 25 mph on flat ground. Constructed of aluminum and polycarbonate, it weighs just 270 pounds, has a 20-mile electric range and achieves 700 mpg equivalent.

The Zeppelin meets the legal definition of a bicycle at the federal level and in many states, making it street legal with no additional license, registration or insurance required.

"The goal with the Zeppelin was to find an ideal point for which a bicycle and car could coexist within the same object to create a truly hybrid design," Van Dyke said.

The Future Cycles project began in September 2012 when Dyke enrolled in the Stamps School of Art & Design to pursue a master of fine arts degree after operating his own furniture design studio for more than 16 years. Van Dyke wanted to shift his design practice to something that was more focused on exploring alternative value systems related to housing and transportation.



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Editor's Pick



Birmingham Restaurant Week (featured as one of Birmingham's Neighborhoods pieces earlier this month in BTL) is still happening! Eat delicious menu items at discounted prices during Birmingham's popular Restaurant Week event. Enjoy three-course lunches for \$15 and three-course dinners for \$30.

Brand new this year, each time diners enjoy a Restaurant Week meal, they will have an opportunity to enter a raffle. The more times visitors dine, the more opportunities to win a prize. Following the Restaurant Week event, five lucky winners will receive gift cards to Birmingham restaurants.

Birmingham Restaurant Week continues in various downtown Birmingham restaurants until Friday, Feb. 6. For more information, call 248-530-1200 or visit www.facebook.com/EnjoyBirminghamNOW.

Happenings

OUTINGS

Friday, Jan. 30

Mini Farmers Market 11 a.m. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

Saturday, Jan. 31

Coat Drive for The Women's Center of Southeastern Michigan Customers are encouraged to donate clean gently used or new coats for women. Hats, gloves and scarves will also be accepted. J. Jill, Ann Arbor. Womenscentersemi.org/

Mt. Brighton Skiing & Snowboarding

9 a.m. For beginners and experienced alike. Ann Arbor LGBTQA Young Professionals' Social Meetup, 4141 Bauer Road, Brighton. Meetup.com/Ann-Arbor-LGBTQA-Young-Professionals-Social-Meetup/events/

Michigan Pride First Bowling Tournament

1 p.m. Tickets: \$15-25. Michigan Pride and Lansing Lesbians - L2L, 4722 W. Grand River Ave., Lansing. Meetup.com/Lansing-Lesbians-L2L

LGBTQ-Friendly Yoga Class

Just B Yoga, 106 Island Ave., Lansing. Justbyyoga.com

KGLRC Winter Gala and Fundraiser

Wonderful entertainment, fantastic food and cocktails as well as sought after silent auction items from your favorite local businesses. Tickets: \$25-55. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 314 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Kglrc.org

Sunday, Feb. 1

Transitions 2 p.m. Free transgender support group. Transitions, 1055 E. South Blvd., Rochester Hills. 586-838-0825.

Lansing Capital Roller Derby: Winter Boot Camp

3:30 p.m. Mitten Mavens, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing. Mittenmavens.net

Monday, Feb. 2

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

265-0740. outloudchorus@gmail.com Olconline.org

TransPeace

7 p.m. Ruth Ellis Center, 77 Victor St., Highland Park. 313-867-6932. Ruthelliscenter.org

Whole Lives, Healthy Lives Adult Support Group

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

Tuesday, Feb. 3

LGBTQ+ Support Group 4 p.m. For teens age 14-18. Call number for location. True Teen Group, East Lansing. 725-222-TRUE. trueelgbt@gmail.com

Talk Tuesdays

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

Transgender Life Support

7 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Wednesday, Feb. 4

Trans & Gender Queer Group 12:30 p.m. Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti. 734-487-4149. Emich.edu/igbtrc

Senior Koffee Klatch

1 p.m. A lively, discussion and social group for LGBT adults over 45. Group covers topics pertaining to aging and outside speakers. Potluck dinners at members homes, lunches out and holiday parties. Meets ever Wednesday on the upper level of the Affirmations building. Senior Koffee Klatch, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. GoAffirmations.org

Sistrum Weekly Rehearsal

6:30 p.m. Sistrum, Lansing Women's Chorus, 215 N. Capital Ave., Lansing. Sistrum.org

Thursday, Feb. 5

Birmingham Restaurant Week Birmingham Restaurant Week, Birmingham. Facebook.com/enjoybirminghamnow

CardioVista: Detroit Street Photography

1 a.m. Featuring photos on LGBTQ culture in Detroit, the city and more. University of Michigan-Dearborn, Dearborn. Umd.umich.edu

Re-imaging Gender 15 promising artists take on one of the thorniest challenges facing contemporary art: how to render the modern spectrum of gender, going beyond the simple male/female binary to include a wide variety of identities and sexualities. University of Michigan, Inst. for Research on Women and Gender, 204 S. State St., Ann Arbor. 734-764-9537. schwarze@umich.edu lrwg_research.umich.edu/events/exhibitions.html

Free HIV Testing 2:30 p.m. Free anonymous HIV testing in-store at S3 every Thursday 2-8. Call to make an appointment, or walk-ins welcome. S3 Safe Sex Store and HARC, 1209 S. University, Ann Arbor. 734-741-1434. info@bak-inc.com S3safesexstore.com

Family & Friends 7 p.m. Topics vary from month to month. This is a gathering of people who have family or friends who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. Join us as we offer support, share our experiences, and learn about the issues impacting the LGBTQ and allied community. The Jewish Gay Network of Michigan (JGN), 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 248-432-5661. Jgnmi.org

Ladies Night 10 p.m. Third Thursdays: For women who love women. Pronto Video Bar, 608 S. Washington Ave., Royal Oak.

MUSIC & MORE

Classical

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Firebird!". Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 30 - Jan. 31. 313-576-5111. Dso.org

Comedy

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Andy Pitz". Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 29 - Jan. 31. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

Concerts

Blind Pig "The Whigs" 18+. Tickets: \$10-12. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. Jan. 29. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Blind Pig "Grizfolk" 18+. Tickets:

See Happenings, page 22

Hear Me Out

Meghan Trainor, Belle and Sebastian

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI



Meghan Trainor, 'Title'

It's true: We weren't ready for this jelly. But Meghan Trainor plopped her booty down anyway and made a seat for herself with "All About That Bass," 2014's doo-wop polemic that had her preaching how all women are perfect "from the bottom to the top." In an image-conscious industry built on supermodel ideals, releasing Trainor's inner-beauty declaration as the first single was as bold as it was controversial – a daring takedown of the same machine that's given her a place among her pop peers. The radio behemoth is the launchpad for "Title," a debut that's as lovable as Trainor's own personal defiance. But even though "Close Your Eyes" rides the wave of body-positive anthems, "Title" isn't all Oprah-style self-helpisms. And thank god. It is, however, all about that bass. Sound-wise, there's a lot of bump and thump among the bunch, and its blatant victory laps are no more obvious than with "Lips Are Moving," which tries to sustain the glory of her breakthrough single. Trainor fares better when she's listing off her lady needs in an open letter called "Dear Future Husband," a kitschy girl-group-esque throwback with a bebop bounce and some saucy bon mots. "I'll be sleeping on the left side of the bed,"

Trainor sings, setting up the punch line. "Open doors for me and you might get some ... kisses." Ultimately, Trainor's "Title" is girl-power that, uh, goes down easy. *Grade: B*



Belle and Sebastian, 'Girls in Peacetime Want to Dance'

Arcade Fire got the memo a couple years back when they turned to the

romanticized sounds of '70s-inspired disco for "Reflektor." Now, indie darlings Belle and Sebastian cut through the "twee"-ness and start cutting the rug. Whatever led them to the glow of the disco ball, they've realized this: You, everybody, the "girls in peacetime" – we all just wanna dance. To shimmer their sound, the Glaswegian sextet enlists outside producer Ben H. Allen III, who swaps pastels for neons and Nick Drake for Giorgio Moroder, while still maintaining a navel-gazing melancholy and overall hopefulness. The payoff is immediate, as the wistfully wonderful opener, "Nobody's Empire," is like flipping through a photo album ("I was

like a child / I was light as straw / And my father lifted me up then"). "Enter Sylvia Plath" sparkles with a Europop sheen that soars beyond the tortured soul of its namesake; is it suggesting that two-step has the power to release people from self-torment? Was ABBA all that Sylvia Plath needed to fend off her demons? Regardless, the song is a lively epic that fortifies the spirit. Said soul nurturing loops throughout the escapist vibes of "Girls in Peacetime Want to Dance," as frontman Stuart Murdoch finally addresses their motive on Belle's most quintessential track off the album, "Ever Had a Little Faith?," a jangly little daydream. "Drop your sad pretense," Murdoch orders. After this, you'll be left with no other choice. *Grade: B+*

Also Out



D'Angelo and the Vanguard, 'Black Messiah'

He's bared his body – who could forget the shot-from-the-waist-up hotness in

"Untitled (How Does It Feel)?" – but soul giant D'Angelo has even more to show you: His whole soul. Throughout his long-anticipated junior album, the polished, trend-bucking neo-R&B "Black Messiah," a shock drop that arrives nearly 15 years after his iconic chest-baring, he uncovers himself but also a society in peril. "Black Messiah" isn't all about despair, however. From these spirited songs emerges a moving manifesto: the power to overcome.



Ella Henderson, 'Chapter One'

Suffering from AHS – Adele Hiatus Syndrome? A temporary cure is upon us: Ella Henderson, the UK

"X Factor" finalist, and fellow Brit, giving us all the Adele we need in the meantime. It is, perhaps, unfair to compare the songstresses, but their resemblance is undeniable: Henderson, too, belts from the depths of her soul, and "Chapter One," her solid-if-predictable debut, is a reliable source of blazing ballads.

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SHOP LGBT

Thursdays at Go Comedy! The evening opens at 8 p.m. with a different program each week (\$10), plus additional programs throughout the night (\$5-10). [CLICK HERE](#) for complete show information.. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. Through Jan. 29. 248-327-0575. [gocomedy.net](#)

Tongues A dark farce exploring three socially taboo relationships, this new play by Bailey Boudreau takes uncouth to the next level. Tickets: \$10. Slipstream Theatre Initiative, Upstairs at Checkers Pub and Grille, 124 Cadillac Square, Detroit. Through Jan. 28. 248-298-9617. [slipstreamti.com](#)

Wednesdays at Go Comedy! The night begins at 8 p.m. with the "ITTY BITS Tournament" (\$10), followed at 9 p.m. by "Go Labs: Beta Testing" (\$7) and at 10 p.m. "StandProv" (\$5). [CLICK HERE](#) for complete show information.. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. Through Jan. 28. 248-327-0575. [gocomedy.net](#)

Yellowman A two-person multi-character drama about an African-American woman who dreams of life beyond the confines of her small town South Carolina upbringing and the light-skinned African American man whose fate is tragically intertwined with hers. Tickets: \$25-41. Performance Network, Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Feb. 15. 734-663-0681. [Pntheatre.org](#)

ART 'N' AROUND

Ann Arbor Art Center "Drawing with color" 18+. Ann Arbor Art Center, 117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 12 - March 9. 734-994-8004. [Ann Arbor Art Center.org](#)

Ann Arbor Art Center "Developing Your Artistic Voice". Ann Arbor Art

Center, 117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 12 - March 9. 734-994-8004. [Ann Arbor Art Center.org](#)

Cranbrook Art Museum "The Cranbrook Hall of Wonders: Artworks, Objects and Natural Curiosities". Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 23 - March 22. 877-462-7262. [Cranbrook.edu](#)

Cranbrook Art Museum "Theater of the Mind". Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 23 - March 29. 877-462-7262. [Cranbrook.edu](#)

Cranbrook Art Museum "Cranbrook Goes to the Movies: Films and Their Objects, 1925-1975". Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. June 21 - Feb. 28. 877-462-7262. [Cranbrookart.edu](#)

Cranbrook Art Museum "Warhol On Vinyl: The Record Covers, 1949-1987+" Drawing from the world's preeminent collection of record covers by Andy Warhol, this exhibition showcases how Warhol used the record cover as a means to popularize his name and directly impact popular culture. Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. June 21 - Feb. 28. 877-462-7262. [Cranbrookart.edu](#)

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) "It's Like Toys In Here" Three generations serious about play. Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 16 - Feb. 14. 313-832-8540. [Detroitartistsmarket.org](#)

DIA "Ordinary People by Extraordinary Artists: Works on Paper by Degas, Renoir and Friends". Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1 - March 29. 313-833-7900. [Dia.org](#)

DIA "Photographs from the Detroit

Walk-In Portrait Studio by Corne Vermeulen". Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1 - May 17. 313-833-7900. [Dia.org](#)

Downriver Council for the Arts "A

of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 25 - May 24. 313-832-6622. [Mocadetroit.org](#)

MOCAD "Detroit City: Detroit Affinities" Detroit: Affinities, Speaks and Stages.

Pewabic Pottery "Ware Wolves in Sheep's Clothing". Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. Jan. 23 - March 29. 313-626-2000. [Pewabic.org](#)

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Permeated Surfaces" Original works from three Chicago based artists. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. Dec. 12 - Feb. 6. 269-857-2399. [Sc4a.org](#)

South Oakland Art Association "Presentation by Bruce Griffin Freelance Photographer". Paint Party Royal Oak, 2554 Crooks Road, Royal Oak. 7 p.m. Feb. 2. [Paintpartyroyaloak.com](#)

Sphinxcon "Sphinxcon" The power of diversity through arts. Tickets: \$35+. Westin Book Cadillac Detroit, 1114 Washington Blvd., Detroit. Jan. 30 - Feb. 1. [Sphinxcon.org](#)

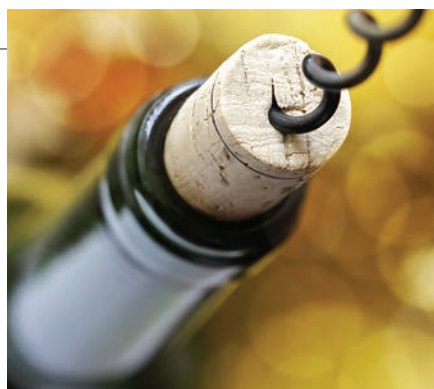
The Scarab Club "the MUNDANE show". The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Jan. 1 - Feb. 14. 313-831-1250. [Scarabclub.org](#)

UMMA "Medicinal Plants and Gardens: The Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum". University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 25 - May 3. 734-763-4186. [Umma.umich.edu](#)

UMMA "Suspended Moments: Photographs from the David S. Rosen Collection". University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 1 - Feb. 15. 734-763-4186. [Umma.umich.edu](#)

UMMA "Guido van der Werve: Nummer veertien, home". University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 1 - April 26. 734-763-4186. [Umma.umich.edu](#)

UMMA "Flip Your Field: Objects from the Collection" An exhibition from the Museum's collection of three-dimensional objects. University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 24 - June 30. 734-763-4186. [Umma.umich.edu](#)



also have a chance to purchase Judy Shepard's book, "Kicked Out," bid on youth designed work and even meet Ozone House staff.

Ozone House's event will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 18 at Vinology in downtown Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$75, and all proceeds benefit Ozone House. For more information, visit [www.ozonehouse.org/home](#).

Light Within the Darkness". Downriver Council for the Arts, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Jan. 22 - Feb. 13. 734-720-0671. [Downriverarts.org](#)

MOCAD "Radical Scavengers: the MOCAD Quilting Bee Project" This winter the Mobile Homestead space transforms into a contemporary quilt making workshop for the community. Museum

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sep. 12 - Jan. 31. 313-832-6622. [Mocadetroit.org](#)

N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art "Michael Luchs, Christine Hagedorn and Anita Bates". N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art, 52 E. Forest, Detroit. Jan. 16 - March 14.

Public Pool Art Space "Picnics in the Polar Vortex" An exhibition and series of events which showcase the collective wandering and inspired observations of Picnic Club Detroit. Public Pool Art Space, 3309 Caniff, Hamtramck. Jan. 10 - Feb. 21. 313-587-9572. [publicpool.tumblr.com/](#)

Editor's Pick

It's not too early to start planning for Valentine's Day, especially when those plans benefit a good cause. Ozone House is hosting its second annual event, "Home Sweet Home: An Evening of Wine, Cheese and Chocolate to End LGBT Youth Homelessness," this February.

Attendees of the event can partake in an exclusive wine tasting chosen by the sommeliers at Vinology. Edibles include delectable chocolate confections, expertly chosen cheeses and more. All guests will

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Thursday, February 12 • 7:30 pm
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With the bootleg recording of Detroit musician Rodriguez's album, "Cold Fact"; South Africa found a voice that would inspire a generation of disaffected Afrikaners. Once the album was banned by the government, his cult following was cemented and Rodriguez became a household name in South Africa as the belief spread that he had died under mysterious circumstances. This is the documentary that led two Afrikaners to the truth about Rodriguez.



SEARCHING FOR SUGARMAN



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www.TheForumFoundation.org



Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Thanks for the 'Wet Hot American' sitcom, Netflix

In 2001's absurdist, summer-camp-themed cult comedy "Wet Hot American Summer," the counselors – a huge cast of future stars – vow to reunite in 10 years. And because math is hard, 13 years later that's what's about to happen. Netflix has been developing a sitcom based on the film for a while now, but the cast is reportedly set and shooting has begun. Original co-writers David Wain and Michael Showalter (with Wain directing) are back on board, as is most of the original cast. And what a cast: Paul Rudd, Elizabeth Banks, Amy Poehler, H. Jon Benjamin, Judah Friedlander, Janeane Garofalo, David Hyde Pierce, Chris Meloni, Molly Shannon, and the gay makeout team of Michael Ian Black and Bradley Cooper. Apparently the show is meant to be a prequel, which would mean that the middle-age adults would play teenagers, and frankly that fits the tone of "WHAS" perfectly. Anyway, at this rate, we probably won't see the show until later this year. Or maybe next summer. But we're ready now, Netflix. We've been ready. Don't keep us waiting forever.



Photo: Bradley Cooper

Todd" and "Company" by placing musical instruments in the hands of the actors, so he's not afraid to take chances. They're trying to get Erivo to come over to resume her role as Celie, and there's already a name-recognized Shug Avery waiting in the wings: Jennifer Hudson. The Academy Award winner will make her New York stage debut in the role, proving the physical law that states that no matter what happens to you after "American Idol," eventually you will do Broadway. When do the tickets go on sale?

'Downsizing' is the new supersizing

Gone, it seems, are the days when big studios were interested in funding projects written by Academy Award-winning filmmakers and starring A-list actors. How else to explain the hardship of financing Alexander Payne's ("The Descendants," "Nebraska") latest film, "Downsizing"? It does, after all, star Reese Witherspoon, Matt Damon, Alec Baldwin, Neil Patrick Harris and Jason Sudeikis. So what's the deal? That's a rhetorical question, by the way. The answer would take all day and involve superheroes. But no matter, art has a patron in lesbian super-producer Megan Ellison and her respected Annapurna brand. The company has stepped in to keep the project going and that's good news for everyone. The futuristic satire, about a family struggling to make ends meet, involves the father deciding to shrink himself to minimize his use of expensive resources. That this possibly bears any resemblance to "Honey, I Shrank The Kids" and, more pointedly, its 1997 sequel, "Honey, We Shrank Ourselves," will be entirely coincidental when the finished film arrives in theaters. We think. Once Damon finishes his new Bourne movie, this one will get moving for a 2017 release.

Magneto the Man-Servant

Playwright Ronald Harwood's 1980 play "The Dresser" is about the gay personal valet to an aging stage actor during The Blitz in World War II-era England, and it encompasses the comedic and tragic aspects of staying devoted to an imperious diva. In 1983 it became an acclaimed film starring Albert Finney and Tom Courtenay, but in recent years has become a bit of an obscurity outside its home country. This looks to change when the BBC partners with Starz to produce a new TV adaptation starring Anthony Hopkins as the actor and everyone's favorite gay wizard and X-Man, Ian McKellen, as the dresser. The film is due to air at an unspecified later date, which gives you plenty of time to hunt down the 1983 version and catch up. Look, sometimes culture is a homework assignment.

J-Hud will kiss a girl eight times a week

They're already reviving "The Color Purple" on Broadway. And this makes sense, really. The crowd-pleasing musical already tours the country regularly to appreciative audiences, especially when Fantasia Barrino resumes her role as Celie and shakes the rafters with her big gospel voice. But in its most recent engagement in London's West End, director John Doyle revamped the show, cutting it down to a leaner, more intimate experience and wowing crowds with actress Cynthia Erivo's critically-acclaimed performance. Doyle is also the man who revived "Sweeney

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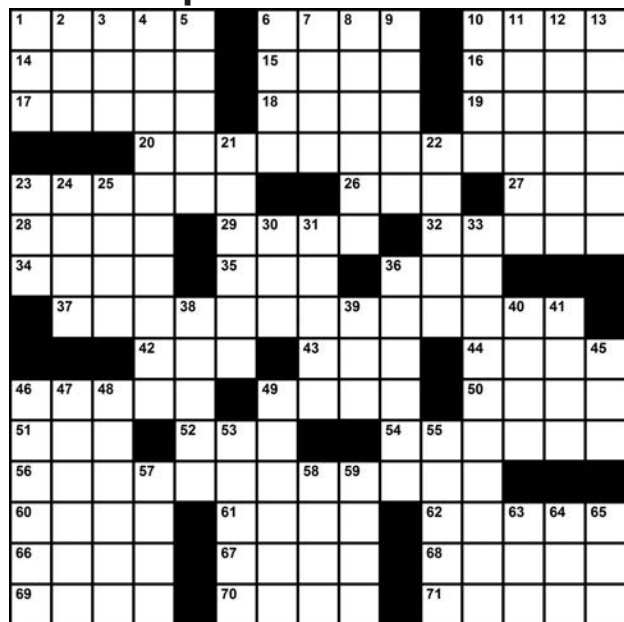
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Q Puzzle

Ecce Homophobe



Across

- 1 Rainbow maker
- 6 Drag queen Justin
- 10 Lickety-split
- 14 Kilmer simile phrase
- 15 Locker room emanation
- 16 Gore Vidal work, with "At"
- 17 Had in mind
- 18 Where to find a top on the level
- 19 Protected, to seamen
- 20 Homophobe Kansas governor
- 23 Award for Ursula LeGuin
- 26 He made boxers more visible
- 27 When repeated, a dance
- 28 Room for Marga Gomez
- 29 Waterproof cover
- 32 Say hi to

- 34 Asian inland sea
- 35 Thurman of "Even Cowgirls Get the Blues"
- 36 Mandy Patinkin's "Evita" role
- 37 "Duck Dynasty" homophobe
- 42 ___ kwon do
- 43 Type of toy
- 44 Coal porter's vehicle?
- 46 Has more than a one-night stand
- 49 Revealing fashion
- 50 Verdi slave girl
- 51 Billy Budd, for one
- 52 Word in Brazilian place names
- 54 Chewy candy
- 56 Anti-family homophobe with 19 kids
- 60 Artist Catherine
- 61 "Perry Mason" star Raymond
- 62 Perineum, in slang
- 66 Asshole
- 67 Non-speaking part in "Born Free"
- 68 Come after
- 69 Lammy award winner Donnelly
- 70 Votes of approval
- 71 Bear
- character
- 10 Moby Dick chaser
- 11 Comfort in sorrow
- 12 Don of "Cocoon"
- 13 Watch like a voyeur
- 21 Like R-rated-film audiences
- 22 Shakespearean's "Twelfth ___"
- 23 Top-secret org.
- 24 He shot off at O.K. Corral
- 25 Not so exciting
- 30 First in a Latin threesome
- 31 Steven Greenberg, for one
- 33 Milieu of Stephan Pyles
- 36 "For ___ out loud!"
- 38 Wonder Woman weapon
- 39 Forever and a day
- 40 First ed.
- 41 Lorca's zip
- 45 Where wrestlers lie together
- 46 Next step for Elton after knighthood?
- 47 City where you can "Taiwan" on?
- 48 Risk adversaries
- 49 Vehicle for a moonshot
- 53 "The Sound of Music" setting
- 55 One of the "Maneater" singers
- 57 "Ed Wood" role
- 58 Bear that roams the night
- 59 End of a favorite holiday
- 63 Stein words that pop up between roses?
- 64 "Sister Act" extra
- 65 Homophobe senator Cruz

Down

- 1 Homophobe attorney general of Florida
- 2 USPS beat
- 3 "Got a Rainbow" lyricist Gershwin
- 4 Characteristic of Mapplethorpe's photos
- 5 Rock music subgenre
- 6 Flop on Broadway
- 7 River of Ulrichs' country
- 8 "You're out of luck"
- 9 Talk like a Tennessee Williams

Solution on pg. 22



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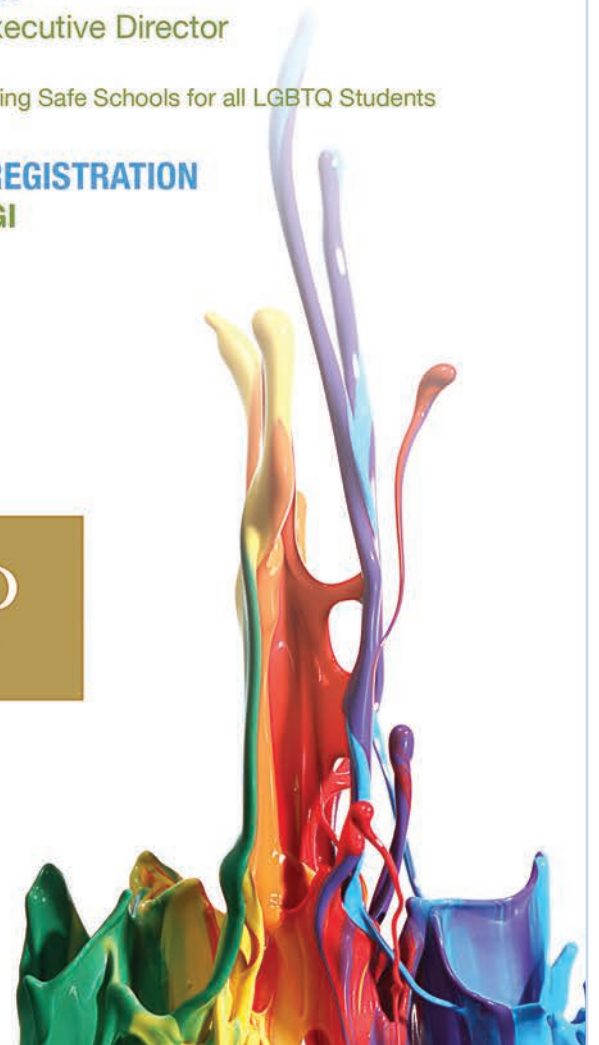
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Kris Hermanns, Executive Director
Pride Foundation
The Next Frontier: Ensuring Safe Schools for all LGBTQ Students

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