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Dems Introduce Legislation Seeking Marriage Equality

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COVER

4 LGBT wedding expo embodies hope

Pictured: Alicia Skillman (left) and Lisa Brown (right)

BTL Photos: Andrew Potter



“Equality Michigan joins Michiganders around the state in being concerned by our elected officials’ desire to enshrine discrimination into our laws. Children need homes and loving families, and the actions being taken by our elected leaders does nothing to help this long-standing problem.”

– Emily Dievendorf, Equality Michigan Executive Director, pg. 10



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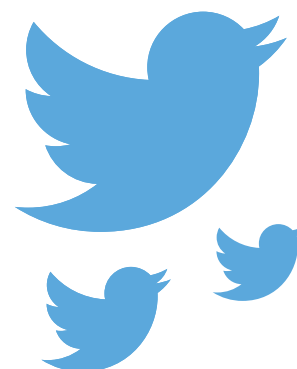
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The LGBT Wedding Expo Online Gallery

Head over to the Wedding section on Pridesource.com and check out the Ultimate LGBT Wedding & Anniversary Expo online gallery.

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PUBLISHERS

Susan Horowitz & Jan Stevenson

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EDITORIAL

Editor in Chief

Susan Horowitz, 734.293.7200 x 12
susanhorowitz@pridesource.com

Entertainment Editor

Chris Azzopardi, 734.293.7200 x 24
chrisazzopardi@pridesource.com

Assistant Editor

Shelby Clark Petkus, shelby@pridesource.com

Calendar Editor

Shelby Clark Petkus, shelby@pridesource.com

Staff Writers

AJ Trager, ajtrager@pridesource.com

CREATIVE

Art Director

Benjamin Jenkins, ben@pridesource.com

Webmaster & MIS Director

Kevin Bryant, kevinbryant@pridesource.com

Contributing Writers

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

Cartoonists

Paul Berg, Dave Brousseau

Contributing Photographers

Andrew Potter

ADVERTISING & SALES

Director of Sales

Jan Stevenson, 734.293.7200 x 22
jan@pridesource.com

Sales Representatives

Ed Bohach, 734.293.7200 x 15
ed@pridesource.com

Ann Cox, 734.293.7200 x 13
anncox@pridesource.com

National Advertising Representative

Rivendell Media, 212.242.6863

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LGBT Wedding Expo Embodies Hope In Anticipation Of Nationwide Marriage Equality Decision



BTL Photo: Andrew Potter

View the Online Gallery
www.pridesource.com

BY AJ TRAGER

SOUTHFIELD – This year the BTL Ultimate LGBT Wedding and Anniversary Expo was held on the anniversary weekend of Judge Friedman’s decision in *DeBoer v. Snyder*. That decision struck down Michigan’s same-sex marriage ban for less than 24 hours, allowing 323 couples to become legally married in the state.

It was a weekend filled with complicated emotions. Visitors to the expo discussed marriage equality and the excitement of getting married juxtaposed with the anxiety of the same-sex marriage hearing set before the U.S. Supreme Court next month.

The fifth annual expo brought in more than 500 individuals from across the state, some married and others looking to see which vendors in the area are affirming and welcoming of LGBT identities. This year also brought in the most attendees BTL has ever seen.

“This event is amazing and brings people together and shows us the businesses in the



Famika Edmond and Reese Williams have been together for close to seven months and met at Ruth Ellis Center. BTL photo: AJ Trager

“We had a wonderful time. You don’t have to be ready to get married tomorrow to come and find out what is here. There are a lot of places that offer venues for things other than a wedding.”

– Reese Williams of the Ruth Ellis Center

area that support us and are willing to work with us, especially with all the crazy legislation and the crazy things going on – it’s really important to know,” April DeBoer said. There were over 100 such businesses present.

DeBoer, Jayne Rowse and their now five children made a surprise visit at the expo. As the plaintiff couple in the *DeBoer v. Snyder* case, they received a lot of attention as they walked in the door, especially once their kids

saw the play area.

“We came out here to support Between The Lines and the Wedding Expo and to get information for ourselves, because it could very possibly be that we will be planning a wedding very soon,” DeBoer said.

“I felt that the expo was especially energetic this year, so much positive buzz! I am always honored to have models that are champions for the LGBT community in the issue of marriage equality, and so encouraged and proud that every year, I have friends who are eager to volunteer their time to model in the show,” said Brittany Blase, co-owner of B. Ella Bridal. B. Ella provided all of the bridal gowns for the fashion show. This year Emily Dievendorf, executive director of Equality Michigan; Kristy Pagan, state representative for Canton; Lisa Brown, the Oakland County Clerk who issued 132 licenses to same-sex couples last year; and Alicia Skillman, previous executive director of Equality Michigan, all participated in the fashion show and were joined by Jon Hoadley and Jeremy

See LGBT Wedding Expo, page 6

Michigan Dems Introduce Legislation Seeking Marriage Equality

BY BTL STAFF

LANSING – A group of Democratic lawmakers from the state House and Senate introduced a package of bills March 19 that would recognize same-sex marriages in Michigan.

State Representative Jeremy Moss, D-Southfield, and state Senator Rebekah Warren, D-Ann Arbor, introduced resolutions that would place a repeal of Michigan's 2004 voter-ban on same-sex marriage.

The bills are being introduced nearly one year after 323 same-sex couples were married in the state. That small window of opportunity followed Judge Bernard Friedman's ruling in *DeBoer v. Snyder* which determined the state ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional.

"Marriage is more than just two people declaring their commitment to each other before friends and family. It affects everything from their ability to buy car insurance together to their ability to visit a spouse in the hospital, and their legal standing as co-parents to their children," Moss said. "For all these reasons and more, a majority of Michiganders now say it's time for marriage equality in our state, and I'm proud to sponsor the legislation that would put a referendum to repeal our state's same-sex marriage ban before voters."

“Marriage is more than just two people declaring their commitment to each other before friends and family. It affects everything from their ability to buy car insurance together to their ability to visit a spouse in the hospital, and their legal standing as co-parents to their children.**”**

– State Rep. Jeremy Moss

State Reps. Jeff Irwin, D-Ann Arbor, and Adam Zemke, D-Ann Arbor and state Sen. Curtis Hertel, D-East Lansing, introduced legislation to allow same-sex marriage and recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states. House Democratic Floor Leader Sam Singh, D-East Lansing, sponsored a bill allowing married same-sex couples to file state taxes jointly. State Rep. Robert Wittenberg, D-Oak Park, sponsored legislation concerning the filing of certain marriage licenses.



State Rep. Jeremy Moss, D-Southfield, at the LGBT Wedding Expo March 21. Moss modeled tuxedos and also discussed legislation he introduced with State Sen. Rebekah Warren, D-Ann Arbor, to repeal Michigan's 2004 voter-ban on same-sex marriage. BTL Photo: Andrew Potter

"The state of Michigan must treat all of its citizens with dignity and respect," Wittenberg said. "The time for policies of exclusion is over. It's time now to make certain that Michigan is open and welcoming to everyone, which is why it's time to make marriage equality a reality in our state."

Glenna DeJong and Marsha Caspar, the first legally married same-sex couple in the state, joined the legislators for the official announcement of the package. Caspar and DeJong, accompanied by seven other couples married during the small window last year, had filed a lawsuit with the ACLU against Gov. Snyder claiming that they were legally married under state law and are entitled to protections and benefits provided to all legally married couples. In January, Judge Mark A. Goldsmith ruled in their favor. In February, the state was ordered to recognize those marriages as legal.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments in *DeBoer v. Snyder* in April with an expected decision on nationwide same-sex marriage by the end of June.

"As the U.S. Supreme Court weighs this decision, it's important we take action to put Michigan on the right side of history. Should the court declare that marriage equality is the law of the land, the Michigan Legislature will need to clean up bad statutes and an unconstitutional provision of our state's constitution," Moss said. "We deserve to live in a state that values all of its citizens."



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► LGBT Wedding Expo

Continued from p. 4

Moss, the two openly gay state representatives for the state, and Ken Silver, candidate for Southfield Mayor.

Couples Make Plans

On April 5, Jermaine Moore and Matirio Matters will celebrate their 14 year anniversary. They attended the expo to gather ideas and compile schemes for an upcoming announcement.

“We may have decided on our colors – green... ish,” Moore said. “There’s going to be some green in there somewhere.”

They met at a holiday party held by some friends but didn’t come together as a couple until two years later. Their plan is to finally get married after spending over a decade together. As Michigan residents they would prefer to have their wedding in the state so that family and friends can attend.

“I think that they (SCOTUS) are going to get on and catch up with the times with all of the other 37 states,” Moore said. “I think they are going to make it equal. Which is the best thing for everyone.”

“I think that when people finally start being brave and start coming out and being visible, we can show that gays and lesbians come from all walks of life and it isn’t just what you see



The Comerica team at Saturday’s expo offered information for same-sex couples and money management. Comerica has been a major sponsor of the expo since 2012. BTL photo: Andrew Potter

on TV nowadays,” Matters said. “I think that once it gets more visible, this is going to push the boundaries a little more and that would be fantastic.”

As soon as it is legal, the couple will be at

the courthouse. As residents of Wayne County, they were ready to make the leap of legal love last year but were unable to get married on March 22, 2014 since Wayne wasn’t among the group of court houses to open its doors.

“The expo has been a great experience. It’s wonderful to see that there are so many different companies that support marriage equality,” Moore said.

When BTL asked Samone Marion and Pamela Coleman if they were married, the couple responded in perfect unison, “Not yet.” They are planning on getting married in late August or early September.

Marion and Coleman met at church 13 years ago. They are waiting until Coleman finishes her doctorate in June to get married; that date also lines up with the SCOTUS decision, which will impact their plans. If the court rules against marriage equality, Marion and Coleman will seek out a place with marriage equality and get married there. But they’d rather get married in Michigan.

“This is where we live; our families are here,” Marion said.

For their wedding they are thinking on a theme, but haven’t made a decision yet though they plan to steer clear from the traditional black and white.

Famika Edmond and Reese Williams have been together for close to seven months after they met at their work and hit it off immediately.

“We are just checking things out, wanting to see who is open and inviting if we ever decide to go to that point,” Edmond said.

They both work with LGBTQ youth at the Ruth Ellis Center in Highland Park. Before joining the team at REC, Williams worked at Affirmations.

“I thought the event went really well, it was great,” Williams said.

“I saw that Affirmations was in the back so I was kind of wishing that we (REC) had a booth here also,” Edmond said.

Edmond brought her daughter, who spent the entire day on the go and was able to catch a quick nap while the couple checked out rings and floral arrangements.

“We had a wonderful time. You don’t have to be ready to get married tomorrow to come and find out what is here,” added Williams. “There are a lot of places that offer venues for things other than a wedding. There was a bunch of people here; it was great!”



Plaintiffs in the Michigan marriage case now before SCOTUS, April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse, made a surprise visit to the expo. They are hoping to finally marry pending a positive SCOTUS ruling in June after a multi-year battle. BTL photo: AJ Trager



On April 5, Jermaine Moore and Matirio Matters will celebrate their 14 year anniversary. They attended the LGBT Wedding Expo to gather ideas for an upcoming announcement. BTL photo: AJ Trager

A woman with her hair styled up, wearing a white wedding dress with a beaded bodice and a full, ruffled skirt. She is holding a large bouquet of white flowers. The background is a dark, solid color.

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Yummy Cupcakes offers a delectable treat to one of the Detroit Derby Girls, on hand as bridesmaids during the fashion show.

5th Annual BTL Wedding Expo

Over 100 vendors were on hand Saturday to help same-sex couples plan anniversary and wedding events. Held at the Southfield Civic Pavilion, over 500 people attended throughout the day.

Gold Sponsors included Comerica Bank, Motif, C&N Party Rental, B. Ella Bridal and Jeff Zak Catering. Silver Sponsors included The Tux Shop, Sweet Dreams Bakery and Miner's Den. BTL photos: Andrew Potter

Couples Married In Michigan Celebrate Anniversaries

BY AP AND BTL STAFF

Families and friends gathered Sunday in four Michigan counties to celebrate the anniversary of over 300 same-sex couples who wed last year during a brief legal window as a result of a challenge to Michigan's 2004 constitutional ban on gay marriages.

In the few hours between federal district court judge Bernard Friedman's ruling overturning the state's same-sex marriage ban and a federal appeals court decision freezing its implementation, 323 marriages were performed March 22, 2014 in Ingham, Muskegon, Oakland and Washtenaw counties where clerks chose to open their doors to accommodate couples.

Now that case and others from Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee are set to be heard before the U.S. Supreme Court April 28.

"Every time we introduce each other, 'This is my husband,' it has such a powerful impact," said Greg McNeilly, celebrating with husband Douglas Meeks at Midtown Brewing Company in Lansing.

"This weekend's anniversary celebrations were incredible. We heard from many of the couples that the events felt like reunions – a chance for folks to catch up with people they had met while standing in line at the clerk's office a year ago," said Gina Calcagno, spokeswoman for Michigan for Marriage.

Roughly 60 people attended the afternoon anniversary event held at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Ann Arbor. Attendees included Washtenaw County Clerk, Lawrence Kestenbaum, who was one of the four clerks to open his doors last year; State Rep. Jeff Irwin, D-Ann Arbor; Elizabeth Patten and her wife Jonnie Terry, the first couple married in Washtenaw County; and many others. Roughly 35 people were at /aut/BAR later that evening for champagne and celebration. Just shy of 100 people attended the Ingham County event at the Midtown Brewing Company which was attended by the first couple married in the state, Glenna DeJong and Marsha Caspar, and other members of the community.

Despite the cakes and the champagne, Calcagno said it was a "bittersweet" anniversary because of the fact that the same-sex marriage ban remains in effect in Michigan.

"The parties also served as a reminder that there are still couples across the state whose relationships are not recognized. Same-sex couples who didn't happen to get to a certain county courthouse on a certain Saturday in March a year ago can't get married in the state of Michigan," Calcagno said.

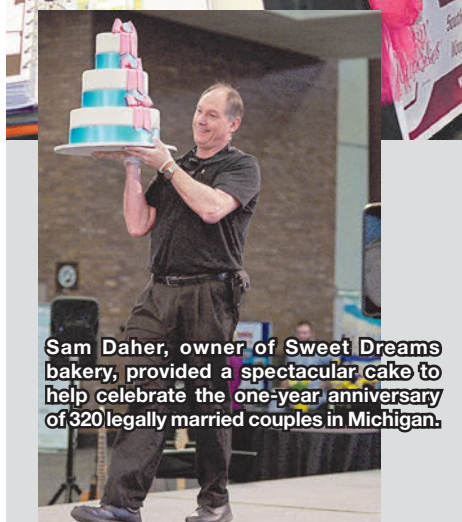
The difference between those who made it through the window last year and those who didn't was a matter of luck as much as anything, Calcagno said. They not only had to be "in the right county" but also had to "wake up early enough."

The earliest of the early, she said, were DeJong and Caspar, who were married at 8:05 a.m. by Ingham County Clerk Barbara Byrum, five minutes after opening her office on March 22, 2014.

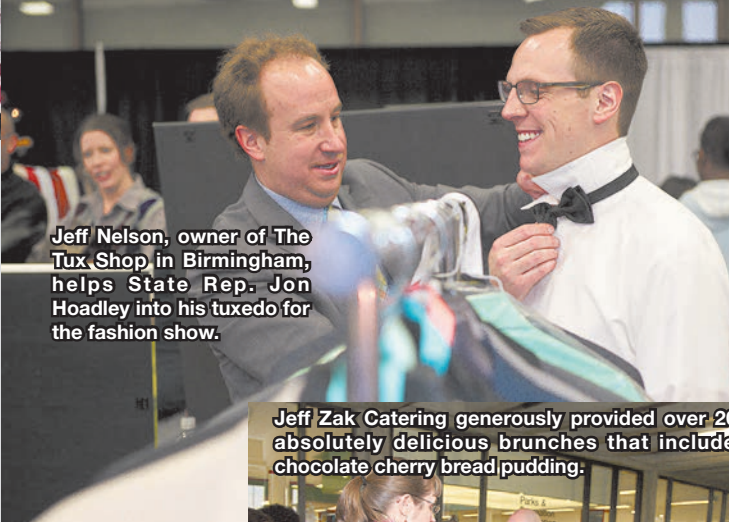
Doug Meeks and McNeilly had been together about 11 years before they made their relationship a legal one last year in Ingham County.

"It's been amazing," said McNeilly, a 43-year-old executive with a Grand Rapids venture capital business. "It's been a wonderful year for both of us."

"Marriage does matter, and we're both very lucky to have been able to get married a year ago," said Meeks, a 38-year-old lawyer in private practice in Lansing. "The word marriage – there are ideas behind it like loyalty, commitment, love."



Sam Daher, owner of Sweet Dreams bakery, provided a spectacular cake to help celebrate the one-year anniversary of 320 legally married couples in Michigan.



Jeff Nelson, owner of The Tux Shop in Birmingham, helps State Rep. Jon Hoadley into his tuxedo for the fashion show.



Jeff Zak Catering generously provided over 200 absolutely delicious brunches that included chocolate cherry bread pudding.



Hillary from B. Ella Bridal organized the fashion show and modeled one of the beautiful gowns while the owner of B. Ella Bridal, Brittany Blase, describes the gown to the crowd.



The weekend marked the one year anniversary of Judge Friedman's decision striking down Michigan's marriage ban, when over 300 couples got married before Attorney General Schuette was granted a stay. Pictured are the first couple in Oakland County, James Ryder and Frank Colasonti, Jr., with Oakland County Clerk Lisa Brown, who married them. She was an expo model this year.



View the Online Gallery



www.pridesource.com





Darnell Jones. BTL Photo: AJ Trager

Ally In Focus: More Than A Pharmacist

BY AJ TRAGER

REDFORD – Darnell Jones, a pharmacist from Redford, was honored as the Community Pharmacist of the Year at the Michigan Pharmacists Association Annual Convention & Exposition held last month.

This award, presented by the Michigan Society of Community Pharmacists, recognized Jones for his community pharmacy practice and teaching contributions, as well as for his community outreach working in the trans community over the past few years. MSCIP is a practice section of Michigan Pharmacists Association, representing community, independent, chain and outpatient pharmacists in Michigan.

“As a pharmacist I had always prided myself on saying, ‘I know where my place is and I know where everybody else’s place is.’ But when I started working with the trans community, I kept being challenged on it over and over again. One could not be spoken about without the other,” Jones said. “I couldn’t fix the problem that way because in the trans community, to speak about a healthy transition, you have to speak about the social condition and you have to attack the isolation.”

Darnell received his degree in pharmacy from the University of Illinois College of Pharmacy in 1984. For 17 years he practiced as a pharmacy supervisor, manager and staff pharmacist then spent 12 years as a pharmacy team leader, serving as an immunization trainer, community outreach participant and preceptor to Wayne State University Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences student pharmacists.

He began working with the trans community after developing a project with his interns looking into trans care for presentations for

Arlene Kish’s Transgender Life Support program at Affirmations. As the project went forward, Jones realized that he had to dig to find the information and encountered multiple roadblocks.

Not long after, he started to dive deeper into

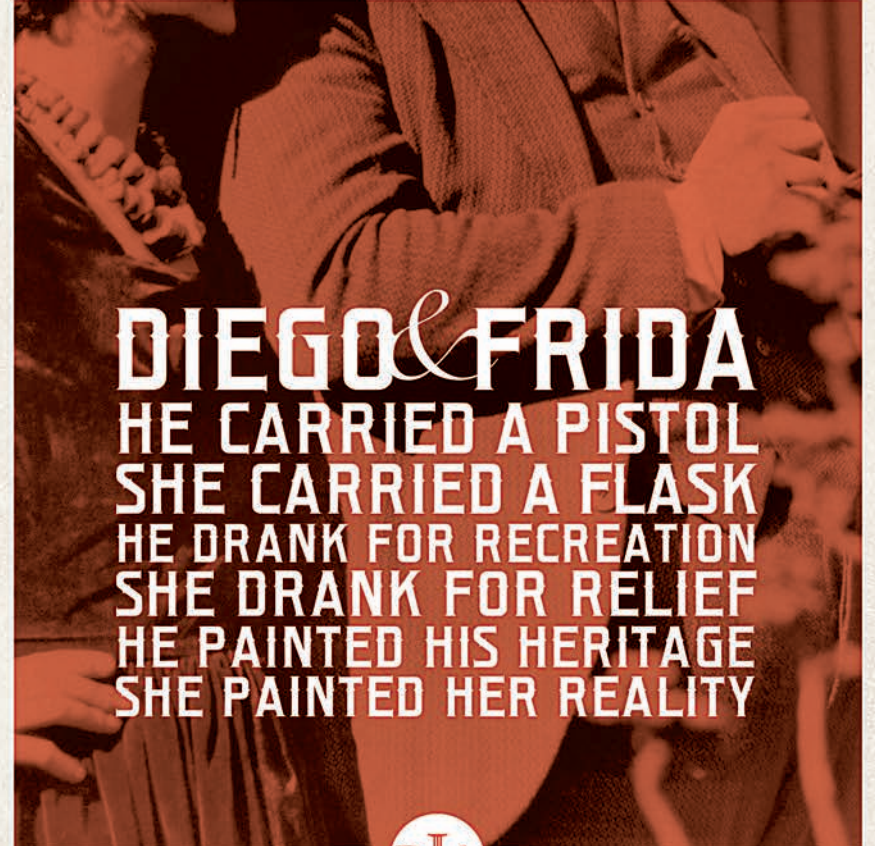
“...in the trans community to speak about a healthy transition you have to speak about the social condition and you have to attack the isolation.”

– Darnell Jones

the disparities affecting trans individuals and familiarized himself with the trans community. He wanted to provide free, individual hormone consultations for trans men and women and other health care avenues that didn’t exist. Through his work, Jones and the team at the Gender-Identity Network Board, a volunteer for trans hormone counseling at Affirmations, developed a pharmacist-centered model of holistic trans care. This model focuses on eliminating the roadblocks in place against current flow of care; addressing the total client social and medical needs in order to increase overall patient health while directly addressing the health disparities for the transgender community; and building a sustainable model for further expansion.

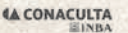
“I went into this knowing that, the first time

See Ally: Jones, page 19



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HIGHLAND PARK

REC Announces New Program Director

The Ruth Ellis Center, a youth social services agency that serves the needs of runaway, homeless and at-risk youth, announced March 17 the nomination of the new program director.

Pamela E. Alexander, MUP, MSA, NCAC II, CADC, ICADC, joins the Ruth Ellis Center as program director. Alexander is responsible for the planning, development, implementation, management, supervision and evaluation of all the center's programs in accordance with the national standards set out by Ruth Ellis Center.

When the opportunity presented itself for Alexander to consider working at the Ruth Ellis Center, she expressed her deepest gratitude and honor in serving at-risk LGBTQ young people.

Alexander has more than 25 years of experience working in the human service field and working with youth from at-risk homes. She has an extensive management background in program development and compliance and she is credentialed in the field of substance disorders at the state, national and international level.

Alexander also has a long history as an activist in the LGBTQ community and is one of the founding members and president of the Detroit Regional LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce.

"I hope that throughout the past 25 years I have made a difference in the lives of others who have struggled, even in my own family! Hopefully I have left some alternative ways of handling life's ups and downs," Alexander said.

DETROIT

Bringing Pride To Hockeytown

The Detroit Red Wings are teaming up with the Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce (DRLGBTCC) to offer a night out to support the local LGBT community.

Exclusive ticket packages are available for all Chamber of Commerce members, family and friends to attend the Hockeytown Pride Night as the Wings face off against the Boston Bruins at 7:30 p.m. on April 2 at Joe Louis Arena in downtown Detroit.

All proceeds from the event will be given to the Ruth Ellis Center, Affirmations and GALA, Chrysler's LGBT Employee Resource Group.

The Chamber hosted a similar pride night event in December for a Pistons game held at The Palace of Auburn Hills. That evening was a huge success and brought together many members of the DRLGBTCC as well as their allies. The Palace and Joe Louis hope to plan more game oriented pride nights in the future.

Chamber of Commerce tickets cost \$40 for seats in the upper level covering rows 13-21. To order online, visit www.detroitredwings.com/drlgbtcc and use the code "hockey." For groups of ten or more, please contact Jenna Michlin, group sales account executive, at 313-471-7408.

Michigan House Passes Adoption Discrimination Bills

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING – In a series of 65 to 44 votes, the Michigan House has approved a three bill package to allow discrimination by adoption agencies which receive state funding. The bills are part of a growing "religious liberty" movement found both here in Michigan and across the U.S.

"No matter how well intentioned, these will produce bad results," State Rep. Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo, told the House March 18 in a floor speech. "My colleagues on this side of the aisle have offered a number of reasons why to oppose these bills. They put the best interest of the agency over the best interest of the child, they are discriminatory despite the language added in the substitute bill and they violate the state constitution by elevating some religious beliefs above others."

Hoadley, who is one of two openly gay state representatives in the state, told the House the bills were a "bad solution in search of a non existent problem."

The state currently has 14,000 children in foster care. Over 3,000 of those children are in need of adoptive homes as the state has terminated the parental rights of the biological parents. Under the measures, adoption agencies – many of which are religious based agencies contracted with the state to provide adoption services – can refuse to adopt a child to a family, even if the adoption is in the best interest of the child, because of the agency's religious beliefs.

Hoadley said that the agencies do not even have to provide prospective adopters with their statement of faith by which a decision to adopt can be rendered.

The proposal would also protect state dollars being paid to the adoption agencies, even if they do engage in discrimination during adoptions.

Equality Michigan tried to rally opposition to the legislation, supporting a citizen's rally against the bills as well as lobbying lawmakers and testifying against the bills.

"Equality Michigan joins Michiganders around the state in being concerned by our elected officials' desire to enshrine discrimination into our laws. Children need homes and loving families, and the actions being taken by our elected leaders does nothing to help this long-standing problem," said Emily Dievendorf, executive

director of the agency.

"Our leaders need to stop wasting precious time and our money harming children in need, and get back to the business of making Michigan better. Equality Michigan's members have sent thousands of emails opposing these bills, and they will continue to speak up against these bills until our leaders finally realize that Michigan wants to be a state known for our economic savvy



Equality Michigan Executive Director Emily Dievendorf speaking at the anti-adoption bill rally in Lansing. BTL photo: Todd Heywood

Catholic Conference. Tom Hickson, vice president for public policy and advocacy at the Michigan Catholic Conference, said, "Securing diversity in child placement and protecting religious liberty rights for faith-based agencies will move children out of the foster care system. Without this legislation there will likely be fewer providers, which means fewer opportunities to find homes for kids that need them."

The bills now head over to the Senate, which is also controlled by a Republican majority. It is unclear if they will receive a hearing or a vote. But the fact the fourth bill introduced this session in the Senate was the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, it's highly likely this package will get a vote and land on Gov. Rick Snyder's desk for a signature.

“Equality Michigan joins Michiganders around the state in being concerned by our elected officials' desire to enshrine discrimination into our laws. Children need homes and loving families, and the actions being taken by our elected leaders does nothing to help this long-standing problem.”

– Emily Dievendorf

and compassion towards our citizens – not one known for wasting resources creating problems where known exist in an effort to politicize children," said Sommer Foster, director of political advocacy with the agency.

Liberal advocacy group Progress Michigan also slammed the legislature for passing the bill.

"Conservatives need to prioritize helping kids find loving families, not pushing their extremist ideology that seeks to enshrine discrimination into state law," said Hugh Madden, communications director at Progress Michigan. "Families are families – no matter what they look like – and it's time the House Republicans started realizing that fact. We're already battling enough discriminatory laws like this in our state and enough is enough."

Supporters of the bill include the Michigan

The bills now head over to the Senate, which is also controlled by a Republican majority. It is unclear if they will receive a hearing or a vote. But the fact the fourth bill introduced this session in the Senate was the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, it's highly likely this package will get a vote and land on Gov. Rick Snyder's desk for a signature.

Extended coverage available online at:
>> www.PrideSource.com

Michigan Civil Rights Panel Endorses Model Non-Discrimination Ordinance

BY BTL STAFF

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission endorsed a model local non-discrimination ordinance model that will add sexual orientation and gender identity to protected classes under municipality law.

At a meeting held March 23, the commission approved the language which states that no one should be denied "civil rights or be discriminated against" due to the following characteristics: age, disability, education, marital status, family status, race, religion, national origin, sex, weight, gender expression, gender identity and sexual orientation.

The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, Michigan's civil rights law, does not include statewide protections for the LGBT community, though 36 cities across the state have adopted LGBT inclusive language. There was significant movement in the lame duck last year to get an amendment passed to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes but was continuously roadblocked by Republican members of the state legislature.

"The concept of developing a model non-discrimination ordinance grew from the fact that more than 30 Michigan municipalities have non-discrimination ordinances that vary significantly in their structure, wording and

scope," commission chairman Arthur Horwitz said in a statement.

Horwitz said the state Department of Civil Rights, which operates under the commission, "developed model language that municipalities could access if, in their own discretion, they decided they wanted a starting point for their own discussions and deliberations."

The commission is urging legislators to add sexual orientation and gender identity to Elliott-Larsen but there has been no indication that the state will discuss those amendments in 2015. Meanwhile statewide organizations and advocacy groups are pushing local governments to adopt inclusive ordinances so that LGBT people are protected at the municipal level.

"Communities all over Michigan have been waiting for the legislature to expand civil rights law to protect their LGBT residents, and many are deciding they can wait no longer," Matt Wesaw, director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, told MLive. "The right thing to do is to expand Elliott-Larsen to include protection for gender expression and gender identity."

The full model template for municipalities interested in adopting the ordinance can be found here: www.michigan.gov/mdcr/0,4613,7-138--350620--,00.html

Marriage Lawyers At Odds Over Who Will Argue Cases

WASHINGTON D.C. – Just six weeks before April 28 arguments, the chief lawyers for gay and lesbian couples who are challenging marriage bans in four states asked the high court for divided argument time.

Counsel representing all plaintiffs from the Michigan, Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee marriage lawsuits submitted a proposal to the U.S. Supreme Court March 17 requesting that argument time be divided equally among the cases from the four states.

The National Law Journal reported that, as with other potentially landmark challenges in the U.S. Supreme Court, lawyer egos, client wishes and historic high stakes have caused friction among the attorneys. The Court previously had mandated that only two attorneys would be permitted to argue the pro-marriage side, but the attorneys have been unable to agree on whom those attorneys should be.

Instead, their proposal requests that four attorneys – one from each state – be permitted to speak for 15 minutes each. Parties regularly ask for divided argument, but the justices rarely say yes. The court's Rule 28 flatly states, "Divided argument is not favored."

The American Civil Liberties Union, Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, Lambda Legal and the National Center

for Lesbian Rights and private counsel partners representing couples from Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee issued the following statement:

"We have an incredible wealth of talent available to argue on behalf of same-sex couples' freedom to marry and right to have their marriages recognized in all 50 states. Each of the attorneys who argue will stand on the shoulders of thousands in the movement who worked for decades for this day to arrive and will have the best minds helping them prepare. We look forward to this historic opportunity for advocates from each case to present our compelling arguments to the Court and to share this defining moment with our entire community and the nation."

The Court previously allocated 45 minutes each to petitioners and respondents to question 1: "Does the Fourteenth Amendment require a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex?" and 30 minutes each to petitioners and respondents to question 2: "Does the Fourteenth 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?" In addition, the U.S. Solicitor General has requested 15 minutes.

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BRIEFS

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

Gay Therapy Ban Passed Illinois House Committee

(AP) – Gay conversion therapy opponents say the treatment causes harm to teenagers struggling with their sexuality and should be banned in Illinois.

Supporters of the treatment say certain methods work and are helpful when they are backed by proven techniques.

Advocates on both sides of a proposed ban on gay conversion therapies testified March 17 in front of Illinois lawmakers. The measure passed with a 9-5 vote out of the House Juvenile Justice and System Involved Youth Committee.

The legislation sponsored by Chicago Democrat Rep. Kelly Cassidy would prevent mental health providers from using therapy with a goal of changing the sexual orientation of anyone under the age of 18. A similar measure has been introduced in the Illinois Senate.

The bills are HB217 and SB11. Online: <http://www.ilga.gov>

MONTGOMERY, ALA

Alabama Probate Judge Asks Court To Amend Gay Marriage Order

(AP) – A probate judge is asking the Alabama Supreme Court to concede that gay couples can marry in Alabama if the U.S. Supreme Court rules same-sex marriage bans unconstitutional later this year.

Montgomery County Probate Judge Steven Reed on March 17 filed a motion for rehearing with state justices who on March 3 ordered probate judges to stop issuing marriage licenses to gay couples.

Reed said he “respectfully disagrees” with the court’s decision. He asked justices to amend the order to make it clear that the U.S. Supreme Court has final say.

Reed said it’s important the state not engage in “foot dragging” regarding constitutional rights.

Reed was one of the first judges to issue marriage licenses to gay couples after a federal judge ruled Alabama’s gay marriage ban was unconstitutional.

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO Puerto Rico Seeks To Recognize, Allow Gay Marriages

(AP) - Puerto Rico’s Justice Department announced March 20 that it will not defend the U.S. territory’s laws banning gay marriage in a major turnaround for the socially conservative island that surprised many.

Justice Secretary Cesar Miranda said that the government can no longer continue to discriminate against the gay community.

“It’s neither fair nor correct to defend the constitutionality of that law,” he said. “Same-sex couples cannot get married and therefore do not have access to those rights. They should be available to all those who love each other, who take care of each other, who work and contribute to this society like everyone else.”

The announcement comes a year after several gay couples in Puerto Rico filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Puerto Rican laws that define marriage as between a man and a woman, as well as those that prohibit same-sex marriage and the recognition of such marriages.

Transgender Questions Lead To CATA Policy Change

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING – Diane was returning from window shopping at the Meridian Mall on Feb. 27. As she settled into her seat on the CATA bus to downtown Lansing, she realized in horror the unthinkable had happened.

“I looked down and it looked like one of my breasts was gone,” the 52-year-old said in a phone interview. “I was scared, and I was panicked.”

For Diane, her missing breast form felt as if a piece of her was missing. She’s transgender and the simple prosthetic device is a key tool as she transitions from male to female. They assist her in achieving a physical look of a woman that comports with her sense of self.

Worried about her breast form, and how others might respond should they find it on the bus, she approached CATA station customer service staff. When she explained her predicament, customer service staff laughed at her, she said.

And things took a turn for the worse when she asked for a private area other than a bathroom, where she could check to make sure the breast form hadn’t just slid into her clothing. CATA staff told her they would have to clear the mens bathroom, close it down and let her use it alone. She says she tried to explain that was discrimination, but to no avail. Ultimately, she left the station and called her wife who came and picked her up.

A week later, Diane was in the station again and needed to use the bathroom. After her last run in with CATA support staff she thought it was important to ask what bathroom she was supposed to use. A supervisor, she said, told her to “do what you gotta do.” She used the women’s room without incident, but when she exited the same supervisor approached her and informed her in the future, staff would have to close off and shut down a bathroom for her.

Incensed, she began reaching out to any local leader who would listen. She called the CATA customer service line. They told her the same thing – CATA staff would have to close off the bathroom for her. She called Mayor Virg Bernero’s office. Staff there referred to her to the city attorney’s office. A representative from that office called her back and referred her to the county prosecutor. The prosecutor’s advice?

“She told me I could hire a lawyer and sue, or I could get arrested and fight it in court,” Diane said.

BTL is only identifying Diane by her first name because she fears retribution from a cadre of radical anti-transgender activists, including lesbians, who target transgender

women for public ridicule.

National, state and local transgender activists say Diane’s experiences are not uncommon, but they are befuddled that her calls for her help did not trigger the city of Lansing’s 2006 human rights ordinance, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity in public accommodations – such as bathrooms.

“The transgender community depends on our municipal officials to protect human rights. In fact, they are the first-line of protection when conflicts arise,” says Madeleine Townsend, a transwoman from Lansing who serves on the Lansing Association for Human Rights board of directors. The group is a local LGBT equality organization. “When they don’t, or don’t realize that transgender people are included in the ordinance, they put us in a potentially dangerous position, to say nothing of becoming agents of misinformation.”

Potential Violation

“The incident at CATA is a quintessential legal matter since it concerns a potential violation of our Human Rights Ordinance, so the referral to the City Attorney’s Office was proper,” Randy Hannan, spokesman for Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero, wrote in an email to BTL. “Interns are trained in basic office procedures, but they are not expected to have a working knowledge of city ordinances and the circumstances to which they should be applied.”

“That said, the City Attorney’s representative who was contacted certainly should have identified the matter as a potential violation of the HRO and made the appropriate referral to the HRCS Department so the complaint could be investigated in accord with the provisions of the ordinance,” Hannan continued. “The City Attorney has been apprised of this situation and will be taking corrective action to ensure that her staff is familiar with the ordinance and will make appropriate referrals in the future.”

Education Needed

Lansing City Councilmember Carol Wood, who chairs the council’s Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity and Inclusion which is reviewing the implementation of the ordinance, said even though the city has a law on the books to address various forms of discrimination, it’s clear knowledge about the law is “weak.”

Last week during a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee, Joan Jackson Johnson – the director of the city’s human relations department which is tasked

Lansing City Councilmember Carol Wood, who chairs the council’s Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity and Inclusion which is reviewing the implementation of the ordinance, said even though the city has a law on the books to address various forms of discrimination, it’s clear knowledge about the law is “weak.”

with investigating complaints under the ordinance – reported that since the law went into effect, only three complaints have been filed. Two of them were from former activist John Pollard.

Wood also noted that the committee, which is made up of three council members and a range of community representatives, also had a dreadful knowledge level related to the ordinance. She says only 25 percent of the community representatives were aware of the ordinance.

“The answer is education,” Wood says. “All departments in the city of Lansing should be having training on the human rights ordinance and filing a complaint.”

And she wants to extend that training to local agencies and other government leaders – like the prosecutor’s office, state representatives and CATA.

For their part, CATA says Diane’s situation has led to policy changes for the transportation agency.

Laurie Robison, marketing director for CATA, says staff received the following directive Monday.

“Should an individual request to use one bathroom or the other, please know that you should not question or engage in any conversation that relates to the individual’s gender,” the new directive reads. “Additionally, individuals should be allowed to use the restroom that conforms with their gender identity. At no point should a CATA supervisor or DK security officer restrict access to, clear others from or stand outside any restroom.”

“That’s exactly what I expected CATA to do,” says Townsend. “I’m impressed. I think they’re going in the right direction.”

Originally published in City Pulse Newspaper

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

Political Hors D'oeuvres

BY TODD HEYWOOD

Planet Fitness Sued Over Transgender Support

The folks at Planet Fitness, who have weathered a blistering national campaign to denigrate their pro-transgender rights stance in Midland, Michigan are now facing a lawsuit over that stance.

Yvette Cromier of Midland was shocked that a transgender woman would be allowed to use a woman's locker room to stow her purse. So she bothered many of the other gym members about it. In response, Planet Fitness called her and explained their no judgement policy and why the woman was allowed to use the locker room. Officials asked Cromier if she was going to stop hounding the woman and other patrons. She said she wouldn't, the Midland Daily News reports. In response, Planet Fitness revoked her membership.

Now Cromier is suing the gym. She claims the revocation of her membership caused "aggravation, annoyance, discomfort, disgrace, feelings of oppression, humiliation, inconvenience, indignation, insult, mental

anxiety, mental suffering, mortification, outrage, scorn, shame, sorrow, vexation and worry." Not that her insistent harassment of others in the gym could possibly have caused those same responses, or caused the same trauma for the transwoman in question, right?

Anyway, Cromier argues in her lawsuit that the revocation of her membership was "breach of contract, an exemplary damages claim, invasion of privacy, intentional infliction of emotional distress and three counts of sexual harassment under the Elliott-Larsen Act."

She's hired a crack right-wing lawyer for the gig too – David Kallman and Stephen Kallman are the genius attorneys behind the Kallman Legal Group. They penned a multipage document slamming a Delta Township human rights ordinance for protecting gender identity and sexual orientation, but failed to acknowledge in public statements that Kallman serves on the board of directors of the Salt and Light Foundation. Salt and Light is a Colorado based nonprofit which believes the Bible is infallible, and that all governments should be ruled by their distinct Christianity. Because you know, religious freedom – as long as you are a straight, white, charismatic Christian. Otherwise, shut up.

Rep. Gary Glenn Issues 'Agenda Alert' Because News Editor Is Gay

Speaking of Kallman and his desire to force his brand of Christianity on all of us, one of his buddies is also making news. Rep. Gary Glenn, R-Midland, president of the American Family Association of Michigan, wants his constituents to know that Tony Lascari is gay. Um, so what? Glenn has his knickers in knots because Lascari was named as the news editor of the Midland Daily News.

So, Glenn on Sunday issued an "Agenda Alert" because clearly Lascari's sexuality will control all his news editorial decisions – like budgeting for murder reporting, investigative reporting on government actions and other "Super Dooper Secret Gay Agenda" items.

This is a rich irony coming from a man who has built a career in Michigan pursuing an agenda to destroy public education and unions, and attacking the gay community with such non-agenda ideas as throwing gay people in jail for, you know, being gay, and encouraging citizens to just ignore any Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality.



Rep. Gary Glenn

There is a rich irony coming from a man (Glenn) who has built a career in Michigan pursuing an agenda to destroy public education and unions, and attacking the gay community with such non-agenda ideas as throwing gay people in jail for, you know, being gay, and encouraging citizens to just ignore any Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality.

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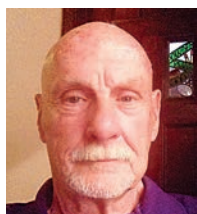
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Save A Dolphin For Jesus



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

An overly zealous biblically based consortium called Noah's Ark Angels is spending big tax-free bucks providing dolphins with bodysuits to stop that species' penchant for gay activity.

Dolphins are one of 450 animals known to enjoy same-sex cavorting. (One curious exception: that odd-ball Old Testament whale that had a thing for Jonah. Three days of bellying up and down with uncircumcised Jonah proved to be a little too much of a good thing.)

The bodysuits designed by Noah's Ark Angels emit electric AC/DC shocks when proximity or touching occurs between similarly dressed dolphins. The bodysuits are color-coded to show preferred taboo activity. Blue: likes to rub. Green: indulges in beak-genital propulsion. Grey: Ex-gay dolphin. Suits also show glow-in-the-dark Bible verses.

The NAA project was first tried on flamingos, a breed known to be fond of same-sex pairing. Unfortunately, the NAA teams had problems suiting the birds because the flamingos started exhibiting courtship behavior toward three of the thinner men, who fled into the marshes for prayer and pecking order safety.

If things go according to plan, NAA bodysuits will next be provided to giraffes. It's felt that this will curtail "necking" – which can last for hours, with up to five of the big guys rubbing away on each other – and repeated mountings that "just look kinky and funny."

Because female giraffes do not "neck" – they do however bond – they will be spared body suiting. Such suiting involves time-consuming measuring, color coordinating, hand stitching, pinning, padding, huffing, puffing, praise Jesusing, Amening!

Much also depends upon whether a female giraffe is a soft or a hard butch. NAA admits a few boners on that score.

NAA spokesperson, Rev. Parlee P. Pepperpod – with three years duty as a missionary in the African savannah bodysuiting rhinos – warns that "such perceived same-sex carryings on is not biological error because free choice is not an issue for non-English-NT speaking animals.

"That distinction is reserved only for unsafe homo erectus gay/lesbian in an outdoor urban setting. Usually following a barbecue and several Bloody Marys."

"It's important," notes this same NAA moral gamekeeper, "to make the animal kingdom free of any same-sex activity that might set a bad example for families who view animals in zoos, circuses, aquariums, aquatic shows or at Southern Baptist church Halloween Haunted Houses.

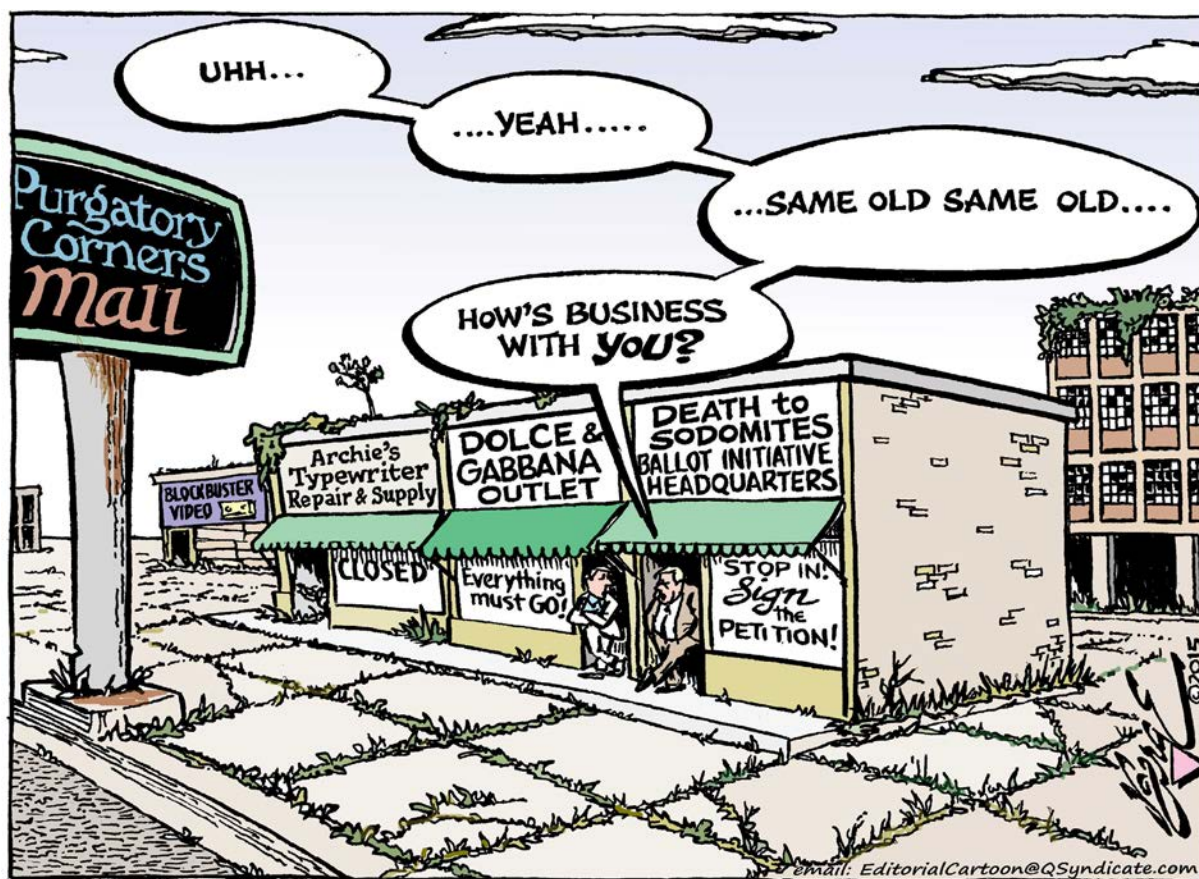
"It's just not American to feed peanuts to a gay elephant (unless – hee, hee – he's Republican) is it?"

Predictably, animal rights activists are protesting the whole costly business. They argue that dolphins exhibit loyalty to same-sex partners, often spending a lifetime in committed relationships. (Not that such loyalty counts for anything among rightwing fundamentalist types.)

What's more, gay dolphins take turns guarding a sleeping or wounded lover. They also fight off sharks and other predators. And when one partner dies, the survivor often seeks a new same-sex and monogamous bonding.

Sadly, if Noah's Ark Angels go global in its missionary zeal, no

See Parting Glances, next page



OPINION BY GWENDOLYN A. SMITH

After five hours of public comments that often proved contentious, Charlotte, North Carolina voted down a non-discrimination ordinance that would have provided protections for LGBT residents of the city. This would have been North Carolina's first LGBT anti-discrimination ordinance, but it failed on a 6-5 vote.

Yes, one of the biggest issues on the table was transgender use of public facilities. Those opposed to the bill ran radio advertisements raising the specter of sexual predators using transgender bathroom protections as a way to assault women and children. It was this more than anything else that caused lawmakers to pause.

Prior to the vote, the bill was amended to disallow transgender people the use of appropriately gendered facilities. This led two Democratic council members to vote against the bill.

That the bill was amended to deny the rights of people like me is offensive. That Charlotte will continue

Transmissions: The Real Predators

to allow discrimination against all LGBT people is also offensive. Yet there was something worse done in Charlotte that night, and something that points to the future of the debate about transgender people being allowed appropriate facilities.

At the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, while the hearing was ongoing, a 17-year old girl went into the public restroom on the second floor. After doing her business, local anti-LGBT street preacher Flip Benham confronted her. "Young Man," called out Benham, "you got to get out of there!"

This was one of two transgender people that Benham so assaulted at the Government Center, both of which Benham called "transvestites" and that they were "dressed in drag." Benham also made it clear that he would be willing to go even farther.

"You know I'd be greatly concerned if my daughters were in the bathroom and I saw a man dressed in drag," said Benham. "I'd be more than concerned, I'd drag that queen right out of that bathroom. I mean, that would be the responsibility of the father. And then I'd go to jail for that."

Flip Benham has previously been convicted for stalking an abortion doctor, and is no stranger to provocative – even dangerous – actions.

I've talked previously about a bill

currently pending in Kentucky that will block transgender students from using gender-appropriate restrooms. One of the more disturbing facets of that bill is that it will award other students \$2,500 every time they discover a transgender student in their school's restrooms.

That bill has now passed the Kentucky Senate. It has also been added as an amendment to HB 236, a bill requiring committees to screen new school superintendents that has been widely expected to pass.

I've also spoken about a bill in Florida to criminalize transgender restroom use, which would jail transgender people for up to a year and fine them up to \$1,000 for entering a public facility in line with their gender identity.

This bill is also moving forward.

Finally, I talked about Texas, which had a bill similar to Florida's, but with higher penalties – including penalties for businesses who allow transgender people to use appropriate facilities. Texas now has additional bills along the same lines, including HB 2801 which will not only make schools liable for transgender students using appropriate facilities but – like the Kentucky bill – will include a \$2,000 bounty for catching transgender people

See Transmissions: Predators, next page

► Transmissions: Predators

Continued from p. 14

as well as whatever amount a judge might award for the “mental anguish” of having been in the restroom with a transgender person.

The argument that so many of these bills and attacks is that allowing transgender people to use appropriate facilities will “open the stall door” for predators. To date, this has not shown to be the case in any place where these protections already exist. That basic fact, however, has not swayed the emotion-based thinking of those swayed by fears of these unseen sexual predators.

One thing I think worth noting; by equating transgender rights with sexual predators, a false connection is made. It is the same argument that was used to blunt gay rights in the 1980s and 1990s, with the connection between gay rights battles and fears of organizations such as the North American Man-

I never thought that the big battleground for transgender rights would be the toilet. I look at how many of us – particularly trans women of color – are murdered. I look at our suicide rate. I look at all the other ill treatment we face, and it bemuses me that it all boils down to bathrooms.

Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) assaulting straight youth. The more the “bathroom predator” concept is introduced into this battle, the more transgender people come closer to being painted as these predators.

I never thought that the big battleground for transgender rights would be the toilet. I look at how many of us – particularly trans women of color – are murdered. I look at our suicide rate. I look at all the other ill treatment we face, and it bemuses me that it all boils down to bathrooms.

I want to leave you with my greatest fear in all this. This is the “end game,” of all these bills, presuming they pass. These bills will give people like Flip Benham the ammunition he so craves. This will allow for discrimination of transgender people on a grander scale and will cause an at-risk community to be even further at-risk.

This will not just affect transgender people too, of course: imagine being a non-transgender person who gets netted in all this and has to prove – perhaps even the court of law – what your gender is.

Think of that 17-year-old transgender girl, who had to face Benham when she used the restroom. She was obviously not there to assault anyone, but Benham treated her as the worst of criminals. Imagine for a moment if you were that girl, facing an angry man calling you names when you stepped out of the restroom.

That person will gain a bounty of thousands of dollars for doing so – and you will end up in jail.

Gwen Smith can't hold it much longer. You'll find her on Twitter at @gwenmers.

► Parting Glances

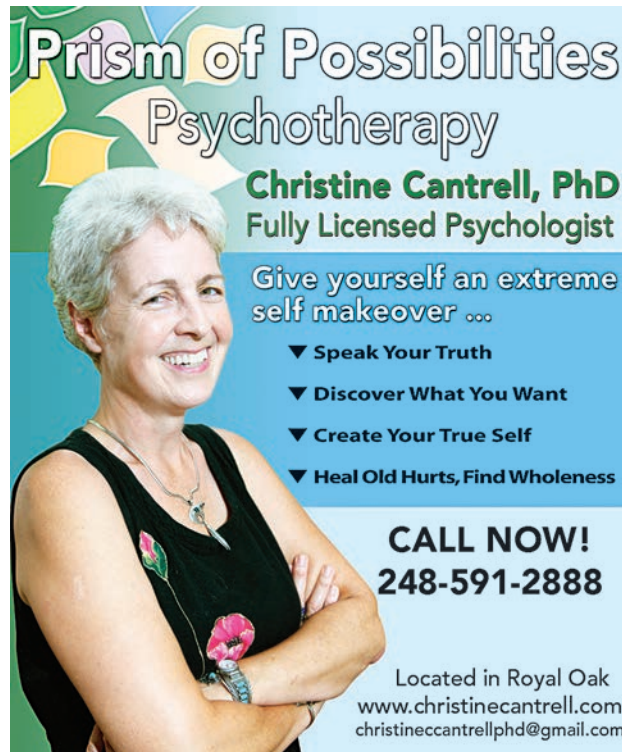
Continued from p. 14

penguin, chimp, skunk, prairie dog, hedgehog, pink poodle or non-spawning trout will be safe.

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Hard-right Sen. Cruz 1st To Announce Presidential Candidacy

BY STEVEN R. HURST

WASHINGTON (AP) - Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, one of the Republican Party's most conservative members, announced on Monday he is running for the party's 2016 presidential nomination, making him the first among what is expected to be a crowded field of White House hopefuls to officially enter the race.

Cruz apparently hopes to get the jump on several top Republicans who are expected to enter the race in the coming weeks: former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and two Senate colleagues, Kentucky's Rand Paul and Florida's Marco Rubio.

Recent Republican history, however, could work against Cruz and other deeply conservative candidates as they battle through state-by-state primaries and caucuses. That selection process is dominated by the most conservative Republican voters and can lead to the nomination of a candidate who is not acceptable to more moderate Republicans and independent voters.

Cruz, 44, is the son of an American mother and Cuban-born father and would be the nation's first Hispanic president.

He has considerable appeal among the Republican Party's base of conservative and small-government, low-tax tea party voters. After his election to the Senate in 2012, the former Texas solicitor general quickly established himself as an uncompromising conservative willing to take on Democrats and fellow Republicans alike.

Criticized by members of his own party at times, he won praise from ultraconservative tea party activists in 2013 for leading a 16-day government shutdown in an unsuccessful drive to repeal President Barack Obama's health care overhaul.

Cruz is set to release a book this summer that he has said would reflect themes of his White House campaign. In

Cruz is a staunch social conservative who opposes both gay marriage and abortion rights. His father, Rafael, is an outspoken evangelical pastor.



a recent Associated Press interview, he said he wants to counter the "caricatures" of the right as "stupid," "evil" or "crazy."

"The image created in the mainstream media does not comply with the facts," said Cruz, who does not believe in climate change.

The senator was born in Canada, but two lawyers who represented presidents from both parties at the Supreme Court recently wrote in the Harvard Law Review that Cruz meets the constitutional requirement to run.

Cruz has hinted openly at his interest in seeking the White House for months, and his intention to jump into the race was confirmed by a strategist for the first-term senator, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity so as not to preclude the formal announcement.

Details about Cruz's Monday campaign launch were first reported by The Houston Chronicle.

Cruz gave the convocation at Liberty University, a private Christian college, in Virginia on Monday. He has courted evangelicals and other social conservatives as part of an attempt

to build a coalition of conservatives frustrated with Republican elders in Washington.

Cruz continues to be a leading voice for repeal of the Affordable Care Act, widely known as Obamacare. He promises to abolish the tax-collecting Internal Revenue Service, scrap the Education Department and curtail federal regulators, likening them to locusts.

He also is a staunch social conservative who opposes both gay marriage and abortion rights. His father, Rafael, is an outspoken evangelical pastor.

On foreign policy, Cruz was among 47 Republican senators who signed a letter to Iran's supreme leader warning that any nuclear deal that is struck with the Obama administration and five other world powers could become null and void after the 2016 election when the current president leaves the White House. Cruz is a strong backer of Israel.

He also is opposed to Obama's executive action to ease deportations of millions of immigrants in the country illegally and to the White House opening to communist Cuba, his father's homeland.

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Presbyterians Approve Gay Marriage In Church Constitution

BY RACHEL ZOLL

NEW YORK (AP)— The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has expanded its definition of marriage to include a “commitment between two people,” recognizing gay marriage as Christian in the church constitution after decades of debate over same-sex relationships.

The redefinition was endorsed last year by the church General Assembly, or top legislative body, but required approval from a majority of the Louisville, Kentucky-based denomination’s 171 regional districts, or presbyteries. The critical 86th “yes” vote came March 17 night from the Presbytery of the Palisades in New Jersey.

“So many families headed by LGBTQ couples have been waiting for decades to enter this space created for their families within their church communities,” said the Rev. Robin White, a leader of More Light Presbyterians, which advocates for gay acceptance.

After all regional bodies finish voting and top Presbyterian leaders officially accept the results, the change will take effect June 21. The denomination has nearly 1.8 million members and about 10,000 congregations and is now the largest Protestant group to authorize gay weddings churchwide.

Last year, Presbyterians allowed ministers to preside at gay weddings if local church leaders approved in the states where same-sex unions were legally recognized. The new wording for the church Book of Order extends that authorization to every congregation and reads, “Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives.”

The amendment includes a provision that no clergy would be compelled to preside at a gay marriage or host such a ceremony on church property. So far, 41 presbyteries have rejected the redefinition and the vote in one presbytery was tied, according to a tally by the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, which advocates for gays in the church and also works to keep Presbyterians united despite theological differences.

In statements, church officers urged “mutual forbearance” amid disagreements over the amendment. “We hope that such ‘up/down’ voting does not



mark the end, but the continuation of our desire to live in community,” the two top General Assembly officials said.

Between 2011, when the Presbyterians authorized gay ordination, and 2013, the latest year for which figures are available, 428 of the denomination’s churches left for more conservative denominations or dissolved, though some theological conservatives have remained as they decide how to move forward. The losses helped pave the way for approval of gay marriage, since many opponents had left the church.

Carmen Fowler LaBerge, president of the conservative Presbyterian Lay Committee, said the new definition was a repudiation of the Bible and approved “what God does not bless.” She urged Presbyterians to protest by redirecting donations away from the national church until the original marriage definition is restored.

The Rev. Paul Detterman, national director of The Fellowship Community, a network of conservative Presbyterian churches that have stayed with the denomination, said his organization will “remain faithfully engaged in conversation” with those of different views in the church. He said the Fellowship’s opposition to the amendment is not intended to be anti-gay but aims to uphold the traditional Bible view of marriage.

Although several Protestant denominations have taken significant steps toward recognizing same-sex relationships, only one other major Christian group has endorsed gay

marriage churchwide.

In 2005, the 1.1 million-member United Church of Christ became the first major Protestant denomination to back same-sex marriage, urging its individual congregations to develop wedding policies that don’t discriminate against couples because of gender.

The Episcopal Church, which blazed a trail in 2003 by electing the first openly gay Anglican bishop, Gene Robinson, does not have a formal position on gay marriage, but allows bishops to decide whether their priests can officiate at the ceremonies. Episcopalians will take up gay marriage at a national meeting in June.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which eliminated barriers to gay ordination in 2009, takes a similar approach, allowing some discretion by clergy and congregations to officiate at same-sex ceremonies without formally recognizing same-sex marriage as a denomination.

The United Methodist Church, the second-largest Protestant denomination in the U.S., bars “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” from ordination and prohibits gay weddings. Many Methodist clergy have been performing gay marriages as a protest of church policy.

The Rev. Brian Ellison, executive director of Covenant Network of Presbyterians, said he recognized there will be disagreement about the new marriage definition.

“We’re very committed to helping the church continue working through this issue,” he said.

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Creep of the Week

Mat Staver

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Like many a homo, I am anxiously awaiting the Supreme Court's ruling on whether or not my marriage is allowed by law or a Satan-spawn union of evil. Obviously, I am hoping for the former so I can do things like be on my wife's health insurance and be a legal parent to my own son. Or what right-wingers call "Destroying America."



Mat Staver

And if one were to take a quick survey of right-wing punditry, it's pretty clear that they're very worried that the Supreme Court will rule that gays and lesbians across the land can Put a Ring On It Beyoncé-style.

Liberty Council's Mat Staver, for example, is encouraging widespread "civil disobedience" if he doesn't get his anti-gay way.

"Civil disobedience has a long and noble history in Western culture, and we will need a primer on it if, as seems likely, the Supreme Court rules against natural marriage in June," Staver writes in a March 20 column on BarbWire, a virtual town hall for terrible people and ideas.

He then invokes Martin Luther King Jr. because, you know, the fight against racial injustice and the fight against two ladies in wedding dresses is the same thing.

"Merely because a legislature or a judge passes a law or issues an opinion does not make a law just," Staver writes. "To cite an extreme example, if you lived under the Nazi regime and the law required you to not hide or aid a Jew in any way, would you comply with Hitler or obey God?"

I totally agree with Staver that some laws are unjust. But then he goes and equates the Supreme Court with Hitler. And while he admits it's an extreme example, it really cannot be overstated that he is comparing the mass extermination of Jews with allowing same-sex couples to marry. It's not an analogy someone with a rational argument makes.

But I get it, he's trying to say that God wants same-sex couples to, like, uncouple or something and go forth and be straight. God hates fags and all that. Got it. But God doesn't make the laws because of that whole separation of Church and State thing we've got going in the U.S. Which Staver no doubt rejects.

And it's true that the Supreme Court sometimes makes terrible rulings. Staver uses the Dred Scott case as an example where, he writes, "the definition of 'human' was at issue. Now the definition of 'marriage' is at issue."

Uh, no. The Dred Scott case, where the court ruled that "blacks are inferior human beings," is not comparable to the marriage equality case. Such a claim minimizes the ugly history of racism in this country. Letting two men get legally married is not the same as legally oppressing an entire race of people.

If marriage equality becomes the law of the land, Staver writes, "The temptation for many will be to cave or compromise. The temptation even for the faithful will be to retreat into our churches and cloisters."

Presumably with plenty of canned goods, jugs of fresh water, plastic sheeting and duct tape.

"But what would happen if, instead of quiet retreat, many thousands of individuals, agencies, charities, churches and schools all came together, prepared, prayed and peacefully refused to countenance a Supreme Court decision that violates not only our highest legal document, but the laws of Nature and Nature's God?" Staver asks.

Nothing much, probably. I mean, for one thing, there are millions of people in this country. And "many thousands" break all kinds of laws, just and unjust, every day.

"Whatever the outcome, the hour is late. It's past time for us to get ready," Staver writes.

Staver and his ilk have had years to pray for the end of homosexuality. They're welcome to keep praying, but he's right. The time has passed.

Utah OKs Bill For Officials To Refuse To Officiate Marriages

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) – Utah's Republican governor has signed a bill allowing government officials to refuse to marry couples, including same-sex couples, for religious reasons.

The measure signed by Gov. Gary Herbert on Friday requires a county clerk's office to designate someone to marry all couples if the clerk opts out.

LGBT rights groups have had mixed reactions to the proposal.

Equality Utah Director Troy Williams says his organization is neutral on the proposal.

He says the opt-out is objectionable but the law guarantees LGBT couples can find someone to marry them in every Utah county. Clerks were not required to perform marriages before.

The Utah-based Mormon church supports the proposal. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also backed another bill Herbert signed that protects LGBT people from discrimination in housing and employment.

Protesters Rally Against Ga. 'Religious Freedom' Bill

ATLANTA (AP) – Demonstrators gathered at the Georgia Capitol building to rally against a bill critics say could lead to discrimination of gays, lesbians and others.

Protesters on March 17 rallied at the Georgia state Capitol building against a Senate bill sponsored by Republican Sen. Josh McKoon of Columbus.

The bill would forbid state government from infringing on a person's religious beliefs unless the government can prove it has a compelling interest. The bill has drawn both support and opposition from clergy members.

The American Civil Liberties Union has said similar bills have been introduced this year in more than a dozen states, including Michigan, as conservatives brace for a possible U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide.

Idaho House Panel Backs Federal Judge Impeachment Resolution

BOISE, Idaho (AP) – Idaho Republican lawmakers upset with federal judges overturning same-sex marriage bans across the country are pushing Congress to impeach judges who fail to uphold the U.S. Constitution.

The House State Affairs Committee endorsed the non-binding resolution March 17. It now goes to the House floor for a full vote.

Republican Rep. Paul Shepherd of Riggins, who's backing the resolution, says recent rulings ending bans on same-sex marriage show that federal judges are adjudicating against the intent of the U.S. Constitution.

Idaho's gay marriage ban – passed in 2006 – was overturned on Oct. 15.

Extended briefs are available online at:

>> www.PrideSource.com

Kansas Senate Passes Bill Protecting Campus Religious Groups

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) – The Kansas Senate approved a bill March 19 designed to protect religious groups on public college campuses that want to restrict their memberships to people who share their beliefs.

The vote Thursday was 30-8 and sends the measure to the House.

The bill says that state universities, community colleges and technical colleges can't refuse to recognize or deny campus facilities to groups that limit membership based on their religious beliefs.

Supporters of the bill say it protects groups' religious liberties.

Some critics have worried that the bill would force taxpayer-funded colleges to recognize groups that exclude gays and lesbians.

The measure is a response to a 2010 U.S. Supreme Court decision saying that universities could adopt anti-bias policies requiring religious groups to accept anyone who wants to join.

Texas Attorney General Sues Over Same-Sex Benefits

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) – The Texas attorney general is suing the federal labor department over a plan that would extend family and medical leave benefits to married same-sex couples.

Attorney General Ken Paxton filed the lawsuit March 18. He argues that a proposed federal rule changes the definition of a spouse, requiring Texas agencies to violate state law by granting those benefits to gay couples legally married in other states. The rule is set to take effect March 27.

Paxton also advised state agencies to ignore the rule and instead follow a state law that bans gay marriages. A federal judge has ruled the law unconstitutional, but Texas has been allowed to enforce the ban while it appeals the ruling.

A message seeking comment was left with a Labor Department representative March 19.

Transgender Students At School Can Choose Cap, Gown Color

NORTH CONWAY, N.H. (AP) – Students at a New Hampshire high school will now be able to choose between black and white for their graduation gowns, after a group representing transgender students asked the school board to allow that.

Traditionally, boys at Kennett High School in North Conway wear black caps and gowns and girls wear white ones for graduation. WMUR-TV reports two weeks ago, members of the Gay-Straight-Transgender Alliance asked the board to change that after transgender students were assigned robes for the gender they don't identify with.

The school board decided Wednesday night to let each person decide if they want to wear black or white. Graduation is scheduled for June 20.

► **Ally: Jones**

Continued from p. 9

I walked into Affirmations, if I was going to take this path, I would probably be here for about a year before anybody speaks to me. I recognized that. Trust is important,” Jones said.

Currently there is no accreditation for trans medical or mental health therapy practices. Individuals interested in that speciality receive continued education training outside of scheduled graduate study.

Jones is a member of the Board of Directors for Affirmations and was honored with the 2014 Affirmations Ally of the Year Award. He is also board president of GNA. Jones says he is constantly transforming himself while assisting in moderating conversations surrounding self actualization and personal growth.

“I’ve had situations where people have come in and two or three sessions later I say, ‘Are you the same person?’ Not because I don’t recognize them, but because they’ve transformed; they’re sure,” Jones said.

One of Jones’s strongest skills is his ability to listen, he says, and change. During his first session at Affirmations, he received one very important comment from a participant that he honors to this day: “Thank you for the opportunity for me to be my real self and be accepted by you.”

Jones’s first approach when he started this work was to focus on the pharmacy aspects of transition. But after being immersed in the trans community, Jones realized that there was a need beyond his skill set in medication – that the rest of the trans*formation is important.

Many hurdles exist for the trans community, from finding a welcoming place to call home to maintaining a beneficial relationship with a health care physician. Discrimination is around every corner. Community organizations like Affirmations and the Jim Toy Community Center are working in the state to change hearts and minds, but the shift towards nationwide trans inclusion has a long ways to go.

A recent study published in PLOS Medicine

Currently there is no accreditation for trans medical or mental health therapy practices. Individuals interested in that speciality receive continued education training outside of scheduled graduate study.

found that social disconnection has a similar effect on the body as smoking 15 cigarettes per day. Previous studies have found that maintaining strong social networking connections, like staying involved in a chosen community, significantly increases an individual’s energy and happiness. Jones believes that opening up to someone greatly improves feelings.

“They may have brought up all the courage that they’ve ever had to get into that room. If I don’t make it so that I can help them, then that may be the difference between them keeping on or saying, ‘Well, that was that, I’m done,’” Jones said.

Jones talks about all the benefits and risks of hormone replacement therapy with his clients so they make more educated decisions moving forward in their transition. However, like most medication, HRT isn’t the right avenue for everyone and neither is surgery.

“A lot of my clients are really surprised because they’re used to people telling them which direction to go in,” he said. “And I sit there and listen for you to figure it out; together we help you get to your desired end point. People get empowered very quickly.”

Those interested in working with Jones are encouraged to send him an email at labofvlad@sbcglobal.net. Jones prides himself on responding in a timely fashion and works diligently to help those who request his aid. Free hormone consultations are held at Affirmations every Wednesday, by appointment, beginning at 6 p.m.

Indiana House Passes Religious Freedom Bill

BY AP AND BTL STAFF

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana House Republicans passed a sweeping religious freedom bill, in a 63-31 vote, that allows private parties – including businesses open to the public – to invoke a religious defense in legal cases.

The state GOP deflected Democrats’ attempts March 19 to shield local civil rights ordinances and church and home day care regulations from the bill that supporters say could allow people to cite strongly held religious beliefs to deny services for activities, such as same-sex weddings.

Democrats proposed amendments they said were aimed at ensuring the measure couldn’t be used to overturn local civil rights protections or overturn day care rules that the legislature approved last year after years of opposition from conservative groups. Those local ordinances go further than state law to protect gays and lesbians from discrimination.

Democratic Rep. Gail Riecken of Evansville argued the legislature needed to be clear that religious objections weren’t sufficient to challenge requirements, like day care providers receiving taxpayer money to meet safety and nutritional standards and limiting the number of children they can oversee at one time.

“This bill will only complicate, confuse and provide conflicts for the very basis that we have held for the protection of our children,” she said.

If signed by Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, the bill would prohibit any state laws that “substantially burden” a person’s ability to follow his or her religious beliefs and has a definition of a “person” that includes religious institutions, corporations, partnerships and associations.

Supporters say the proposal is aimed at protecting religious freedom and preventing the government from compelling people to be involved in same-sex weddings or other activities they find objectionable.

Pence resisted calls to veto the bill March 23 and issued a statement that said the measure “is about respecting and reassuring Hoosiers that their religious freedoms are intact. I strongly support the legislation and applaud the members of the General Assembly for their work on this important issue. I look forward to signing the bill when it reaches my desk.”

Sponsors of the bill say it is closely modeled on a federal religious freedom law passed in 1993 and that 19 other states already have similar laws.

Religious Freedom bills have begun to pop up all over the country as state legislatures weed through the wave of same-sex marriage laws and court decisions.

Similar efforts are being pushed through the Michigan legislature. Earlier this month House Republicans passed HB 4188-4190 which would allow discrimination against the LGBT community on the basis of “firmly held religious belief.”

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, similar bills have been introduced this year in more than a dozen states as conservatives brace for a possible U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide. Gay marriage opponents in Indiana were angered last year when the Legislature failed to advance a proposed state constitutional ban on same-sex marriages. Federal courts later legalized same-sex marriage in the state.



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WHY MADONNA'S 'REBEL HEART' IS HER BEST ALBUM IN A DECADE

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Like a virgin, Madonna is pure again. Cleansed of the unbecoming trend grabs that marred the icon's erratic predecessors – namely the sinfully juvenile “Hard Candy” and “MDNA,” better but still pastiche – our Blessed Goddess steps back into her ray of light and applies a new shine to an old sound.

For once, Madonna doesn't keep nostalgia at bay. In fact, during “Rebel Heart,” her most sophisticated release since 2005's “Confessions on a Dance Floor,” she keeps wistfulness close by. The result is tangled, tortured but shockingly authentic, as she basks in all the heyday glory that earned the Michigan dreamer her seat and, eventually, a crown. Whatever life's done to Madonna lately – the kids are growing up; Madonna's growing up – she and “Rebel Heart” are better for it.

Witnessing the 56-year-old in self-reflection mode, à la “Ray of Light” and “American Life,” is refreshing, and also, despite Madonna's refusal to actually age, befitting. She holds your hand during the perseverance paean “Ghosttown,” a surging mid-tempo with a melancholic narrative reminiscent of “This Used to Be My Playground.” The world hurts, Madonna muses, but love heals. The song is a pillar of hope, a theme recycled during the uplifting “Hold Tight”; like a hug as she reluctantly sends her children out into this “mad world,” Mother Madonna is reassuring – “hold tight; everything's gonna be all right” – over a sonic spill of rumbling drums and electronic fuzz. Harnessing an organic energy that's been noticeably lacking from the fabricated

Pharrell-produced pop confections of her most recent efforts, “Rebel Heart” gets into the groove by recapturing the rawness heard

particularly on the under-appreciated “American Life.” “Body Shop” encapsulates that quality best, the sexy innuendo taking a backseat to the very modest, Indian-influenced folk vibe. Her voice wispy and mesmeric, Madonna sounds like she's leading a yin yoga retreat.

Less effective are Madonna's unabashed attempts at relevancy, when the sexual provocateur essentially parodies her own cone-wearing self on “Holy Water,” an exercise in excess. Have all the sex you want, Madonna. And by all means, make that pole your bitch. But album-audible moaning? Equating your bits to a Baptismal liquid? Love you, lady, but this just might be a good time to retire the fornication-fueled religious allegories.

The even weaker, slinky bedroom-bumper “S.E.X.” doesn't even bother with thinly veiled metaphors (at one point she randomly drops “raw meat” like an afterthought) as she promises to “take you to a place you will not forget,” but then she doesn't.

And poof. Gone.

Most memorable about “Rebel Heart” is Madonna as a messenger of love, unity and peace – “the sorcerer down in the deep,” as she puts it on the deluxe edition's penultimate powerhouse “Messiah.” There's an ease about Madonna during these moments of musing, where she looks inward and sends her light outward, and the crown, though briefly, comes off. The ego is disbanded. For once, whether we like it or not, the icon, the diva, the high priestess of pop – she's real. “I can't be a superhero right now / Even hearts made of steel can break down,” she laments on “Joan of Arc,” a surprisingly direct acknowledgement of facets that have, particularly as of late, evaded the star's essence: sensitivity, candor and sincerity.

It all comes full circle with the title track “Rebel Heart,” the closer. A blast from the past, a content Madonna recounts the trail she blazed for herself – and, obviously, others – through fierce determination and, you know (and she knows), by being a “narcissist.” Madonna's “Rebel Heart” album is the nearly lifetime-long result of broken boundaries and bravado – and, for the first time in 10 years, it's beating stronger than ever. *Grade: B*



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Ann Arbor Theater Performs Classic Children's Tale

ANN ARBOR – Award-winning Wild Swan Theater continues its 35th season of bringing the finest professional theater to families with “The Ugly Duckling.” Resident playwright Jeff Duncan puts his spin on Hans Christian Andersen’s tale of a homely little bird born in a barnyard who is looked down on by everyone around him until, much to his delight (and to the surprise of others), he matures into a majestic swan. Jeremy Salvatori portrays the Ugly Duckling, with Sandy Ryder, Michelle Trame Lanzi and Barbara Scanlon rounding out the cast.

Wild Swan Theater is dedicated to producing professional children’s theater of the highest artistic quality and to making that theater accessible to low income, minority and disabled children through low ticket prices and innovative outreach programs. The theater puts on performances with



the tagline of, “Artistic, accessible, affordable theater for families.” For more information about the company,

its current season, touring programs and theater camps, visit the Wild Swan website at www.wildswantheater.org.

The rest of the “The Ugly Duckling” performances run 10 a.m. March 26 and 27, 12 p.m. March 27 and 11 a.m. March 28. Tickets are \$8 for youth and seniors, \$12 for adults. There are \$3 lap passes available for patrons under 2 years of age. Call 734-995-0530 for accessibility reservations, including wheel chair seating, ASL interpreting and audio-description and backstage touch tours.

All performances are held at Towsley Auditorium inside the Morris Lawrence Building at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor. Michele Tocco provides the American Sign Language interpreting for the show. Backstage touch tours and audio-

description are available for blind theater patrons. These services are free but must be reserved by calling 734-995-0530.

Performance Network To Host Film Festival For Two Nights

The Ann Arbor Film Festival will present two nights of its Cinema and Music Performance series at 11:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26 and Saturday, March 28 at the Performance Network Theatre. Performances on March 26 are “A Home Inside,” a live presentation with three 16mm projectors by Berlinbased artists OJOBACA (Anja Dornieden and Juan David González Monroy) and a performance by Warsawbased artist and musician Wojciech Bąkowski.

On March 28, Ann Arbor-based musician and Kranky recording artist Justin Walter will perform analog electronics with projections by New Orleans based multimedia artist Jane Cassidy. Following that, San Francisco BayArea artists and filmmakers Alfonso Alvarez and Steve Dye will perform “In This Tunnel,” a work for four 16mm projectors, sound and FM

broadcast.

“We are very excited to partner with the Ann Arbor Film Festival to present these two nights of performances,” said Sara Dean, company manager at the Network. “One of the first things someone said to me when I started working here in Ann Arbor last summer was how awesome the festival is and how I should make sure I get to go, so when it worked out that we were going to have this partnership it was a great moment. The Network is happy to host and get involved in such a great Ann Arbor tradition.”

The Ann Arbor Film Festival, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is the longest-running independent and experimental film festival in North America, founded by George Manupelli in 1963. Internationally recognized as a premiere forum for independent filmmakers and artists, each year’s

festival engages audiences with remarkable cinematic experiences. The six-day festival presents 40 programs with more than 180 films from over 20 countries of all lengths and genres, including experimental, animation, documentary, fiction and performance-based works. AAFF receives more than 3,000 submissions annually from more than 65 countries and serves as one of a handful of Academy Award-qualifying festivals in the United States. The awards program presents more than \$20,000 in cash and film stock/services to filmmakers.

For tickets and more information, visit www.aafilmfest.org/53. For information on productions and events at the Network or to donate, please visit www.pntheatre.org or call the box office at 7346630681. Performance Network Theatre is located at 120 E. Huron St. in Ann Arbor.

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| Ann Arbor Animal Hospital..... 12 | Frick, LMSW, BCD, CBT, Julie.....* | Mitchell Gold & Bob Williams..... 14 | Tios Mexican Cafe..... 21 |
| Ann Arbor Civic Theatre..... 3 | Gail van Langen Ph.d..... 9 | Necto..... 15 | Top of the Lamp.....* |
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Angie Martell, co-chair of WCBA LGBTQ Rights Section. BTL Photo: Andrew Potter

Ann Arbor To Host Marriage Equality Events

BY BTL STAFF

Ann Arbor will play host to a variety of events related to the upcoming same-sex marriage case put in front of the U.S. Supreme Court.

First, Necto Nightclub will present "S.C.O.T.U.S. or BUST!" This variety show, presented by the Jim Toy Community Center, will support the National Marriage Challenge.

The March 27 event will feature a VIP Happy Hour attended by special guests, Jayne Rowse and Aprile DeBoer, as well as local political officials and community members close to the cause of same-sex marriage equality. Hor d'oeuvres will be provided, and VIP guests will have early access to a silent auction.

The variety show will feature Michigan talent: The Understorey, Kate Peterson (of Nervous but Excited), Tyler Duncan (Ella Riot, Michelle Chamuel, s/he), Sam Slottow (Western Michigan University student songwriter) and the premiere of Chris Good & The Sweet Insurrection's new music video, "Beautiful." In addition to these musical acts, burlesque, dance, drag and other performances will be presented. Maxi Chanel, Luna Legare of Tickled Fancy, A-Train and Freddie Cougar of Drag King Rebellion and Thrustin Beiber are other featured performers.

Mary Larkin, Eastern Michigan University's LGBTRC program coordinator, will emcee the event.

The special event will run from 5-9:45 p.m. on Friday, March 27 at Necto Nightclub, 516 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Tickets range from \$10-20 and can be purchased in advance at necto.com or at the door. Ages 18 and over are welcome. Necto's "Pride Friday" will follow the event; eventgoers are invited to stay and dance for free.



More information about the event can be found on Facebook at <http://bit.ly/SCOTUSorburst>. Please use #SCOTUSorburst for tagging. Direct donations can be made at <http://bit.ly/1C9LY3c>.

In April, JTCC will sponsor an event together with the Washtenaw County Bar Association LGBTQ Rights Section and Michigan Law's Outlaws. The panel discussion, "The Road Forward: A Community Conversation On LGBTQ Rights in Michigan," will feature Jay Kaplan (ACLU Michigan), Lisa Ruby (Michigan Poverty Law Program) and Angie Martell and S. Kerene Moore (Co-chairs of WCBA LGBTQ Rights Section). The community conversation will involve these local professionals weighing in on the national marriage equality decision in June, as well as answering the questions, "How will the decision impact LGBTQ families in Michigan, and what legal resources will be available to the community?"

The event will run from 6 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15 at the University of Michigan Law School, South Hall Room 1225, 625 S. State St., Ann Arbor.

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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, March 26

Bizarre/Bazaar Eclectic silent auction, food samples from local vendors, cash bar, and more. Tickets: \$10. Michigan AIDS Coalition, 141 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-545-1435. michiganaidcoalition.org

Summer Osborne at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Flint 7 p.m. Lansing Lesbians-L2L, 2474 S. Ballenger Highway, Flint. Meetup.com/Lansing-Lesbians-L2L

Saturday, March 28

A Conversation with Garth Fagan Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 248-661-1900. Theberman.org

LGBTQ-Friendly Yoga Class Just B Yoga, 106 Island Ave., Lansing. Justbyyoga.com

TransCend TransCend provides support and resources to the Southwest Michigan transgender community, their significant others, family, friends, and allies. Meetings occur twice per month on the 2nd Wednesday and 4th Sunday. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource

Wednesday, April 1

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

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

The Homestretch 6:30 p.m. Ozone House, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-662-2265. Ozonehouse.org

Thursday, April 2

Free HIV Testing 2:30 p.m. Free



Editor's Pick

Ann Arbor's Ozone House presents "The Homestretch," a film from Kartemquim Films & Spargel Productions. The movie serves as a depiction of the fact that 2.5 million young people in America are homeless, living in shelters, unsupervised on the streets, in abandoned buildings or crashing with friends or strangers.

The film follows three homeless teens as they brave the Chicago winters, the pressures of high school and life alone on the streets. Against all odds, the adolescents defy stereotypes as they create new, surprising definitions of home.

"The Homestretch" will be screened at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1 at Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Event sponsors and invited guests are welcome to a VIP reception at 5 p.m.; a panel discussion follows the film at 8 p.m. The actual movie presentation is free and open to the public.

AA Film Fest "Out Night" at Mich Theater, Afterparty at Aut Bar 9 p.m. Queer Young Professionals of Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. Michtheater.org

Out Night: Films in Competition 9:30 p.m. Part of AAF. Ann Arbor Film Festival, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. Aafilmfest.org

Friday, March 27

Novi Home & Garden Show 12 a.m. Tickets: \$9-10. Home Builders Association of South East Michigan, 6100 Grand River Avenue, Novi. Novihomeshow.com

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

HIV/STI Community Dialogue 4 p.m. Join our community discussion about the biggest HIV/STI issues facing young gay and bisexual men and transgender women in Southeast Michigan. Food will be provided. MFierce, 290 W. Nine Mile Rd, Ferndale. 855-764-6653. mfierce@mail@umich.edu mfierce.org

S.C.O.T.U.S. or BUST 5 p.m. Variety show/fundraising event for the National Marriage Challenge. 18+. Tickets: \$10-20. National Marriage Challenge, 516 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Necto.com

Fundraiser for Jayne Rowse and April DeBoer 7 p.m. Includes a showing of "Mommie Dearest." Tickets: \$15-20. Hobos for a Cause, Detroit.

Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

Own Your Gender 7 p.m. The Network, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. 616-458-3511. Grigbt.org

Monroe Martin and Matteo Lane 8 p.m. Tickets: \$20. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

Panthers/MDFFL Fundraiser 8 p.m. Menjos, 928 McNichols Road W, Detroit. 313-863-3934. Facebook.com/events/441695299318668

Sunday, March 29

Ann Arbor Film Festival Includes many LGBT works. Tickets: \$7-9. Ann Arbor Film Festival, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. Mocadoetroit.org

The Royal Road 1:15 p.m. Part of AAF. A primer on the Spanish colonization of California and the Mexican American War alongside intimate reflections on nostalgia, butch identity, the quest for unattainable women and Alfred Hitchcock's 'Vertigo.' Ann Arbor Film Festival, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. Aafilmfest.org

Mock Seder 4 p.m. LGBT Group of JGN, RSVP For Details. 248-432-5661. jgnmi@jccdet.org Jgnmi.org

Tuesday, March 31

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

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

Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber Michigan Membership Mixer 5:30 p.m. Meet the board, meet partners, meet new businesses, make deals, find more revenue streams, and explore benefits of joining. Free. Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce, Detroit. Eventbrite.com/e/detroit-regional-lgbt-chamber-michigan-membership-mixer-comerica-tickets-15834046058?fb_action_ids=1015522422615234&fb_action_types=og.shares

Comedy Extravaganza 2015 6:30 p.m. Headlining is Lansing Comic Kathie Dunbar with opening act Lila. Tickets: \$10-15. Gesesee County PFLAG Chapter, Flint, MI, 2474 S. Ballenger Highway, Flint. 810-496-9302. pflagflint@yahoo.com Pflagflint.com

Red Wings Pride Night 7:30 p.m. The Wings play the Boston Bruins in Second LGBT Pride Night in NHL history. Olympia Entertainment and Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce, 19 Steve Yzerman Dr., Detroit. 313-396-7000. Olympiaentertainment.com

World Dance Party 7:30 p.m. Cover: \$15. Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison Ave.,

Detroit. 313-887-8500. Jazzcafedetroit.com

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

Friday, April 3

First Friday Potluck 7 p.m. Lansing Lesbians-L2L, 1710 E. Michigan Ave. #1712, Lansing. Meetup.com/Lansing-Lesbians-L2L

MUSIC & MORE

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Mark Sweeney". Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. March 26-March 28. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

Ann Arbor Film Festival "Ann Arbor Film Festival" Includes many LGBT works. Tickets: \$7-9. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. March 26-March 29. 734-668-8397. Mocadoetroit.org

Blind Pig "Pity Sex wsg Cloakroom" 18+. Tickets: \$12-14. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9:30 p.m. April 2. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Blind Pig "Horse Feathers" 18+. Tickets: \$15. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. April 1. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Blind Pig "The Slackers" 18+. Tickets: \$15. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. March 25. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Cabaret 313 "Valarie Pettiford" Cabaret 313 presents intimate evenings of song in evocative Detroit spaces. Tony-nominee Valarie Pettiford appears in her cabaret act, All That Jazz at the Chrysler Black Box at the Detroit Opera House. Ms. Pettiford, a film and theatre actress (HBO's True Blood, Jumping The Broom Chicago Fosse) and protege of legendary Bob Fosse, will brighten the evening with her powerful vocals, sultry movement and high octane energy. Tickets: \$25-50. Chrysler Black Box Theatre, Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. March 28-March 28. 313-405-5061. Cabaret313.org

Cabaret 313 "All That Jazz" Tony-nominee Valarie Pettiford. Tickets: \$25-125. Chrysler Black Box Theatre, Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway Street, Detroit. March 28-March 28. 313-405-5061. Cabaret313.org

Chamber Music Society of Detroit "Pianist Inon Barnatan" Tickets: \$15-60. Seligman Performing Arts Center, 22305 W. 13 Mile Road, Beverly Hills. 3 p.m. March 29. 248-855-6070. Chambermusicdetroit.org

DIA "The Fabric of Frida". Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 28. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

Friends of the Detroit River "Riverkeeper Dinner". Wyandotte Boat Club, 1 Pine St., Wyandotte. 6 p.m. March 28. Detroitriver.org

Jazz Cafe "Led Kaapana & Mike Kaawa: Hawaiian Masters" Tickets: \$25. Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. March 25. 313-887-8500. Musichall.org

Italian Film Festival "Italian Film Festival" All films are free and open to the public. Various, Various. April 2-April 26. Italianfilmfests.org

Michigan Theater "Noir Film Series". Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 12-April 27. 734-668-8397. Michtheater.org

Michigan Opera Theatre "Frida". Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. March 28. 313-

The OutField: The Fight For Rights For Female Coaches

BY DAN WOOG

The story is current, but you can be forgiven for thinking it's from 10 years ago. Or 50.

Shannon Miller was one of the most successful coaches in college athletics – any sport, both genders. She won five women's ice hockey NCAA national championships at the University of Minnesota Duluth (and a medal with the Canadian Olympic team).

Just before New Year's, though, she was fired. The reason? Her salary was too high.

Facing budget problems, the athletic director and chancellor let her go. They axed her entire staff too. They did not, however, fire the men's hockey coach – a man who was less successful than Miller, but earned more.

Interestingly, Miller – and all her assistant coaches – are lesbian or bisexual.

This is not the first curious dismissal of a female college coach in recent years. Last year, veteran University of Iowa field hockey coach Tracey Griesbaum was fired, despite being cleared of charges that she had been verbally abusive. Griesbaum's partner – a woman who was an athletic administrator at Iowa – was reassigned to other duties, soon after Griesbaum's dismissal.

The year before, University of Texas woman's track and field coach Bev Kearney was offered a choice – resign or be fired – for having a consensual sexual relationship with an athlete on her team.

These are just three of nearly a dozen gender-related incidents reported by Pat

Griffin in a Huffington Post story called "College Athletics' War on Women Coaches." All occurred within the past decade. And all cause LGBT activists like Helen Carroll to wonder why male and female coaches are treated so differently, in so many ways.

UMD's retention of the less successful, more costly men's hockey staff is not an isolated incident. Carroll – the sports project director at the National Center for Lesbian Rights – notes that Iowa's Griesbaum was held to a different standard than male coaches. "Guys say aggressive things all the time, without being fired," Carroll says. "The consequences here were really severe. Can you imagine Jim Harbaugh being fired for something like that?"

At Texas, according to Griffin, Kearney's sex and race discrimination lawsuit says that "male coaches who had sexual relationships with female students were either not disciplined or received lighter punishments and retained their jobs."

"Sexism and homophobia are intertwined," Carroll claims. "You can't separate the two."

And the twin forces of discrimination affect all women, regardless of their sexual orientation. "Every woman in sports faces stereotypes," Carroll says. "There's a certain standard of appearance that the people in charge want to put forth."

Almost always, of course, the people in charge are males. Carroll points with chagrin to the University of Tennessee. For decades, she says, that school had a superb women's

athletics program. Run by Joan Cronan – and separate from the men's department – it achieved renown in a number of sports. Cronan battled for equality in pay, sponsorships and facilities with men's athletics.

But when she retired in 2012, the men's and women's departments were merged. The combined athletic director – a male – dismissed a number of very experienced, successful women from positions in athletic training, sports information and health and wellness. He replaced them with men. Lawsuits are ongoing.

Taken together, Carroll says, the effects are devastating. Women are being eliminated from positions of leadership, and leadership tracks. Further, the consequences of being let go are different than for men. Males, Carroll says, are quickly hired for new jobs. The stigma against fired women – some of it related to perceptions (real or imagined) about sexual orientation – prevents them from finding new jobs in their profession.

"These are experienced, strong coaches," Carroll says. "They're not novices. But once they're gone, they never coach or work in athletics again."

It happens, she reiterates, because of "sexism in sports. Look at the leaders. It's the guy athletic directors making decisions, lots of times backed by their college presidents. It's all because men's athletics bring in the big money. I'd like to think this doesn't happen in 2015. But it does."

There are signs of progress. The Women's

Basketball Coaches Association has set up strong support systems. Nevin Caple just launched Coaches Corner (www.mycoachescorner.org), an online networking platform and comprehensive resource center for coaches and athletic administrators – male and female – at all levels of women's and girls' sports.

Will men find the site, and utilize it? They should. Right now they hold positions of power – and thus seem to hold the key to women's sports. But Carroll is not pinning all her hopes on men.

"I'm optimistic, because there's a group of strong young women coming up," she says. "They're interested in athletics. They're coaches, and members of the LGBT Sports Coalition. They're willing to fight."

And – so long as they're all not fired – they'll fight for women in sports for decades to come.

Dan Woog is a journalist, educator, soccer coach and gay activist. His latest book is "We Kick Balls: True Stories from the Youth Soccer Wars." He can be reached care of this publication or at OutField@qsyndicate.com.



Photo: Helen Carroll

833-7900. Dia.org

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Zappa Plays Zappa" "One Size Fits All" 40th Anniversary. Royal Oak Farmers Market, 316 E. 11 Mile Road, Royal Oak. April 3. 248-246-3276. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "The Decemblers with Alvvays". Royal Oak Farmers Market, 316 E. 11 Mile Road, Royal Oak. March 28. 248-246-3276. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Belle & Sebastian". Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. April 2. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Ruhala Performing Arts Center "Reiki for Teens" Fee: \$120. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. Jan. 28-March 25. 517-337-0464. Ruhalacenter.com

Ruhala Performing Arts Center "Reiki for Kids" Ages 6-12. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. Jan. 29-March 26. 517-337-0464. Ruhalacenter.com

The Acorn Theater "Brittany Lee Moffitt and Bailey Williams". The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 8 p.m. April 3. 269-756-3879. Acorntheater.com

The Ark "Heywood Banks" Tickets:

\$25. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 27. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Andrea Gibson" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. March 29. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Laith Al-Saadi" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 28. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Shakey Graves with special guest Nikki Lane". The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. April 2. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Seth Walker" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. April 3. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Darlingside & Tall Heights" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. March 30. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Majestic "Benjamin Booker". The Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. March 30. 313-833-9700. Majesticdetroit.com

The Palace of Auburn Hills "Heart with Joan Jett & The Blackhearts". The Palace of Auburn Hills, 5 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills. 8 p.m. March 27. 248-377-0100. Palacenet.com

Trinity Divine Healing "Health & Wellness Classes" Cost: \$5-10. Grace

is Sufficient Ministries Neighborhood Center, 13345 Joy Road, Detroit. Jan. 12-May 30. 313-451-2472.

Unlimited Sky Production "Wednesday Night Jazz & Soul Music Series" Every Wednesday Night Jazz & Soul Music Series featuring some of the best live music in Michigan. Cover: \$5. Harbor House, 440 Clinton, Detroit. Jan. 21-June 24. 3139679900. Harborhousemi.com

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

Dear Edwina Jr. Tickets: \$5-10. Grosse Pointe Theatre, Grosse Pointe War Memorial Fries Auditorium, 32 Lakeshore Road, Grosse Pointe Farms. March 28-March 29. 313-881-4004. Gpt.org

Dogfight Tickets: \$15-20. Peppermint Creek Theatre, Miller Performing Arts Center, 6025 Curry Lane, Lansing. Through March 29. Peppermintcreek.org

Jesus Christ Superstar The Michigan Theatre of Jackson, 124 N. Mechanic, Jackson. March 26-April 5. Michigantheatre.org

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike Tickets: \$10-15. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Through March 29. 517-482-5700. Riverwalk.com

College/University Theater

Chess-A Staged Concert Tickets: \$15. Wharton Center, Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan State University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. March 27-March 28. 800-WHARTON. Whartoncenter.com

She Loves Me Tickets: \$10-18. Oakland University, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Through March 29. 248-370-2030. Oakland.edu

They're Playing Our Song Tickets: \$5-10. Lansing Community College (LCC) Performing Arts, LCC Black Box Theatre, 168 Gannon Building, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. Through March 28. Lcc.edu/showinfo

Professional

A Doll's House Tickets: \$10. Slipstream Theatre Initiative, Michigan Actor's Studio, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. Through April 2. Slipstreamti.com

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day A delightful musical of the popular children's book, which follows a feisty Alexander and a series of unfortunate events that occur throughout his day. CLICK HERE for complete show information. Tickets: \$10-20. UDM Theatre Company, UDM Grounds Coffeehaus, 4001 W. McNichols Road, Detroit. Through March 29. 313-

993-3270. Udmarts.com

And the Winner Is... Tickets: \$20. The Snug Theatre, 160 S. Water St., Marine City. Through April 4. 810-278-1749. Thesnugtheatre.com

Buddy-The Buddy Holly Story The true story of Buddy Holly, following the musical icon's rise to fame from 1957 when "That'll Be the Day" hit the airwaves until his tragic death less than two years later. Tickets: \$22.50-42.50. Van Singel Fine Arts Center, 8500 Burlingame SW, Byron Center. 7:30 p.m. March 31. 616-878-6800. vsfac.com

Buyer & Cellar An unemployed actor finds work manning the mall in Barbara Streisand's basement (yes, that really is a thing). Sebastian Gerstner plays an entire cast of characters-including the actor, his boyfriend, and Babs herself-in an outrageous one-man comic tour-de-force. This witty and cutting look at celebrity excess has been a hit on tour from coast to coast, and now Theatre Nova is proud to present one of the very first original productions in the country!. Theatre Nova, The Yellow Barn, 416 W. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through March 29. 734-635-8450. Theatrenova.org/#/c11fr

Dog Loves Books Tickets: \$15. Meadow Brook Theatre, Oakland University, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. 1 p.m. April 4. 248-377-3300. Mbtheatre.com

Dreamtigers PuppetART Theater, Detroit Puppet Theater, 25 E. Grand River Ave., Detroit. Through March 29. 313-961-7777. Puppetart.org

Enemy of the People Tickets: \$10-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through March 28. 313-577-2972. Hilberry.com

Frida Michigan Opera Theatre, Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. March 28. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

God of Carnage An exploration of what happens when two couples meet to resolve a playground fight that occurred between their children. An adult comedy with adult language and situations. Tickets: \$8-15. Thunder Bay Theatre, 400 N. Second Ave., Alpena. Through April 4. 989-354-2267. thunderbaytheatre.com

Good Men and True Tickets: \$10-20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Through March 28. 313-365-4948. Planetant.com

Guys and Dolls Tickets: \$54-59. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. March 27-March 28. 586-286-2222. Macombcenter.com

Jumpin jazz Kids-A Swinging Jungle Tale An interactive mix of classic

See Happenings, page 28

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Editor's Pick



The Detroit Red Wings and the Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce have teamed up to throw a special hockey Pride Night. On Thursday, April 2 the Detroit Red Wings will face off against the Boston Bruins; tickets purchased through www.DetroitRedWing.com/DRLGBTCC using the code "Hockey" will go to a great cause.

Proceeds from each ticket purchased will benefit Chrysler GALA, Ford Motor Company GLOBE, Affirmations, Metro Detroit Softball League, Detroit MIST and the Ruth Ellis Center. Tickets

are \$40 and are for the upper level, rows 13-21.

Pride Night begins at 7:30 p.m. on April 2. This night also features the "April in the D Mini Bobblehead Giveaway." For more information, visit www.detroitlgbtchamber.com.

▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 27

storytelling and swinging jazz/pop songs that begins when 7-year-old Claire goes out in her Grandpa's mysterious backyard searching for the missing pages to his "lost story." Tickets: \$12. Wharton Center's Pasant Theatre, 750 E. Shaw Ln., East Lansing. March 29-March 29. 800-WHARTON. whartoncenter.com

Lucy Tickets: \$26-41. Meadow Brook Theatre, Oakland University, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Through April 12. 248-370-2030. Ticketmaster.com

Peter and the Starcatcher The swashbuckling prequel to "Peter Pan" takes a hilarious romp through the Neverland you never knew. Tickets: \$35-58. Miller Auditorium, 2200 Auditorium Dr., Kalamazoo. 3 p.m. March 29. 269-387-2300. millerauditorium.com

Peter and the Starcatcher The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint. March 28-March 28. 810-237-8689. Thewhiting.com

Rumors Tickets: \$18-20. Stagecrafters, Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Through March 29. 248-541-6430. Stagecrafters.org

Sirens Tickets: \$10-35. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. March 26-April 26. 517-655-SHOW. Williamstontheatre.com

Stones in His Pockets Tickets: \$25-41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through April 5. 734-663-0681. Performancenetwork.org

Talley's Folly Tickets: \$12-42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, Purple Rose Theatre, 137 Park St., Chelsea. April 2-April 15. 734-433-7673. Purplerosetheatre.org

The Glass Menagerie Tickets: \$20. Puzzle Piece, Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Through March 29. 313-454-1542. Puzzlestage.org

The Great Gatsby Witness the sweep, poetry and grandeur of America's most celebrated novel as the Montana Repertory Theatre continues to tell America's great stories. Tickets: \$5-25. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 7 p.m. March 26. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

The Kiss of the Sun For Pardon Tickets: \$17-20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. March 26-May 17. 313-868-1347. Detroitreptheatre.com

The Phantom of the Opera Wharton Center, Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan State University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. April 1-April 12. 800-WHARTON. Whartoncenter.com

The Ugly Duckling Tickets: \$8-12. Wild Swan Theater, Wild Swan Theater, 6175 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor. March 25-March 28. 734-995-0530. Wildswantheater.org

ART 'N' AROUND

Ann Arbor Film Festival "Jane Cassidy: Fits of an Easy Reflexion". Work Gallery, 306 S. State St., Ann Arbor. March 14-April 4. Aaafilmfest.org

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

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) "2015 DAM Annual Scholarship Awards & Exhibition-College for Creative Studies". Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 1-April 11. 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

DIA "Make a Joyful Noise: Renaissance Art and Music at Florence Cathedral" A rare opportunity to see three exquisite marble carvings and other Italian Renaissance masterpieces by sculptor Luca della Robbia. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 6-May 17. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

DIA "Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in Detroit" Tickets: \$24. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 15-May 31. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

Downriver Council for the Arts "Artycycled" Reuse! Recycle! Rethink!. Downriver Council for the Arts, 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. March 21-March 27. 734-720-0671. Downriverarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Fourth Annual FIA Art School Lego Competition" Free and open to the public. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 1 p.m. March 28. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Common Ground: African American Art Exhibition". Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Feb. 8-April 26. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.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 of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 25-May 24. 313-832-6622. Mocadetroit.org

Oakland University "The Fortress". Oakland University, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. March 1-April 5. 248-370-2030. Oakland.edu

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 "Molten Magic". Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. March 1-March 27. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

The Scarab Club "2015 Silver Medal Exhibition". The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Feb. 18-March 28. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

UMMA "Hana Hamplova: Meditations on Paper". University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 21-Aug. 9. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

UMMA "HE: The Hergott Shepard Photography Collection". University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 14-June 14. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

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 "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-July 19. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

University of Michigan, Inst. for Research on Women and Gender "Re-imagining 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. Lane Hall, 204 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 15-June 26. 734-764-9537. Irwg.research.umich.edu/events/exhibitions.html

Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

HBO to host a 'Battle of The Sexes'

If you were around and paying attention in 1973, you may remember that plenty of otherwise reasonable adults were still skeptical about the talent of female athletes. In fact, it was such a strange time in history – “Women’s Lib,” as it was called then, was a hot-button issue – that there came to be a tennis match known as “The Battle of the Sexes” that would transfix the entire country. Bobby Riggs, the 55-year-old Wimbledon champ, would play against the Number 2-ranked, 29-year-old star Billie Jean King. And he would lose. And it was a sensation, sparking debate and heated misogynistic weirdness as far as the eye could see. Now, thanks to producers Elizabeth Banks and Tom Hanks, an untitled HBO film starring Banks as King, will recreate that pop-culture storm. David Auburn (“Proof”) will write the script, and Paul Giamatti has been cast as Riggs. Can’t wait.

Meryl, Carey and Helena go to 'Suffragette' City

Coming for the end of the year and awards-movie season is a film seemingly designed to be nominated for a whole variety of statuettes: “Suffragette,” a fictionalized account of the struggle involved in getting women the vote. The period drama, from director Sarah Gavron with a script from Abi Morgan (“Shame,” “The Iron Lady”), stars Carey Mulligan as a working mother who realizes she must become an activist and fight for the vote to make her life better. Helena Bonham Carter co-stars, along with Ben Whishaw and Brendan Gleeson. Also, Meryl Streep will star as historical figure Emmeline Pankhurst, the women’s rights activist. It will be that rare thing at the movies: a historical film about the early heroines of feminism, especially interesting since it will be the first major theatrical film to include this subject matter since 1964’s “Mary Poppins.” That’s right, “Mary Poppins.” Other than that, there are very few representations outside of HBO’s 2004 film “Iron-Jawed Angels.” Clearly, it’s well past high time.

Chuck Palahniuk’s sinister little 'Lullaby'

Writer Chuck Palahniuk, author of “Fight Club,” has a new novel coming, his fifth one – the sweetly titled “Lullaby” – and it’s already been optioned for a film adaptation. Of course, knowing Palahniuk’s preferred dark tone, this lullaby will offer nothing even approaching sweet dreams. The book, picked up by filmmakers Andy Mingo and Josh Leake,



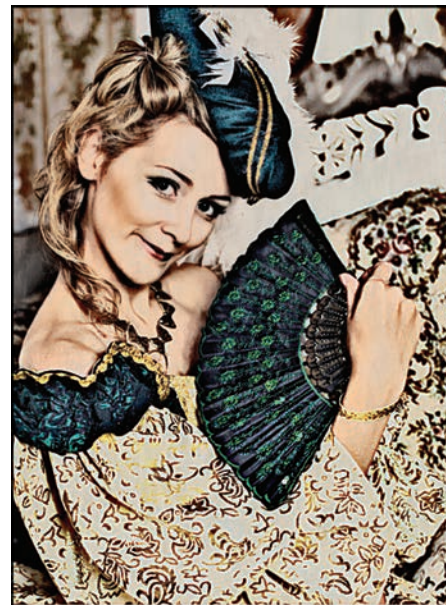
Daniel Franzese. Photo: KathClick

involves a reporter investigating a series of sudden infant deaths, including that of his own child. He suspects that a regional African chant known as a “culling song” may, in fact, be the supernatural source of the deaths. Then he learns that the song has the power to kill just about anyone. In other words, fun all around from a gay author who’s never felt the need to make anyone feel good about, well, anything. Now, when is that movie going to happen?

'Looking' for more Daniel Franzese

As of this writing, the future of HBO’s “Looking” is uncertain. Having finished two seasons now, and in a ratings trough, there might not be a third season to explore the low-key lives of this San Francisco crew. Gay audiences, it seems, are unhappy with fictional gay lives that don’t precisely mirror their own, and with narratives that meander a bit (OK, fine, whatever, a “lot”). Anyway, a cancellation would be a shame, especially since this season introduced a jolt of energy with big, joyful Daniel Franzese (“Mean Girls”). We’ll be annoyed if the show goes away, and with it one of TV’s only bears. But if this is, indeed, the last of “Looking,” Franzese’s got a couple indie films in production where fans can eventually find him again. One of them is called “Vows and Rites,” from filmmaker Matthew Ehlers, co-starring Rose McGowan, about a wedding that collides with a funeral. The other one, about which there’s even less information, is called “Mind Puppets,” co-starring Vinnie Jones, from first-time filmmaker Juan Curi. Start checking your local film festival line-ups. That’s where the independent film world warms up its talent.

Romeo San Vicente is looking for any TV show with gay lead characters. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.



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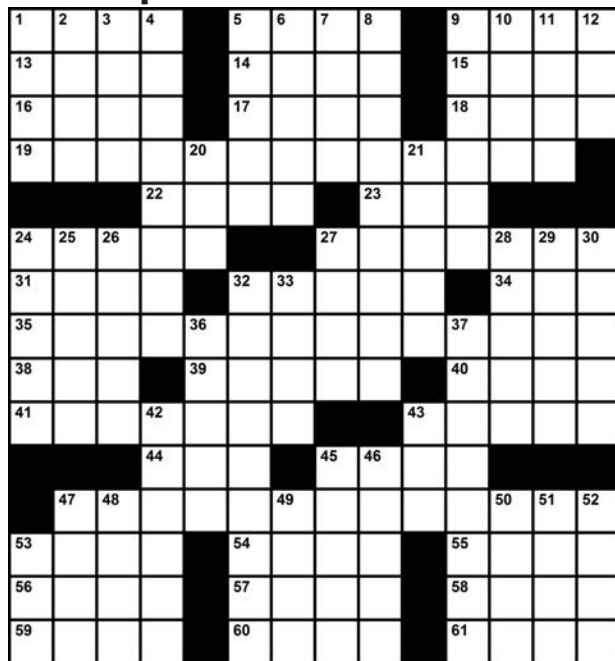


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Across

- 1 Erotic opening
- 5 Ids' counterparts
- 9 160 square rods
- 13 It pokes you in prison
- 14 Kind of IRA
- 15 Tune type
- 16 Actress Skye
- 17 "No" voter
- 18 Vidal's "___ from Golgotha"
- 19 Start of an ironic comment by Jon Stewart
- 22 De Matteo of "Desperate Housewives"

- 23 State rep.
- 24 Macbeth's taunt to Macduff
- 27 "Now I'm pissed!"
- 31 "It's showtime!"
- 32 Time spent with Frida
- 34 Park of NYC
- 35 End of the comment
- 38 Improve wine or cheese
- 39 Bill T. Jones' partner Zane
- 40 "Why should ___ you?"
- 41 Statues with big packages
- 43 Sharon of "Queer as Folk"
- 44 Feel sorrow about
- 45 Shakespeare's Puck, et al.
- 47 Argument that gay marriage will lead to other problems
- 53 Fruit flavor for gin
- 54 Blades of grass, collectively
- 55 "Suuure!"
- 56 Draw some interest
- 57 Bangkok continent
- 58 "See you later"
- 59 Boob, to a Brit
- 60 Itches
- 61 Broadway composer Jerome

Down

- 1 "Be that ___ may..."
- 2 Ejaculation of concern
- 3 Part of Daly's fork?
- 4 Like a flaming Queen routine
- 5 Tape over
- 6 "I'm ___ wash that man right outta my hair"
- 7 Guy that goes either way?
- 8 Like a tidy first mate

- 9 Not straight
- 10 In vogue
- 11 Go from one gay bar to another, e.g.
- 12 Mama of Mary's little lamb
- 20 It may follow directions
- 21 Rover's restraint
- 24 One of Whitman's dooryard bloomers
- 25 Lorca's friend
- 26 Rural stereotype
- 27 "Star Trek" counselor Deanna
- 28 Liberace's choice of fur
- 29 High-tuition schools
- 30 You really suck if you use these
- 32 Shenanigans with stallions?
- 33 One-time Atlanta arena
- 36 Invites to one's penthouse
- 37 Lubricant leak?
- 42 Set straight
- 43 Navigation aid (abbr.)
- 45 Novelist Shaw
- 46 Birds with gifted tongues
- 47 Side dish with fish
- 48 Petty of "A League of Their Own"
- 49 "___ On Down the Road"
- 50 Nathan Lane's award for "Love! Valour! Compassion!"
- 51 Fruit shaped like a lute
- 52 Alfred Douglas' school
- 53 Group of games, for Mauresmo

Solution on pg. 26



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- **Greater Comfort**
- **Increased Property value**

The Best for Last

With one of our great finance plans, you may save more than you're spending?

We hear that a lot. Many customer's wish they'd replace their old heating and cooling systems sooner!

You may think a new system is "too much" until you realize your old system's real cost.

Just like an old car may be cheap, but after adding repairs, unreliability, and poor mileage, is it worth it? The same is true for a heating and cooling system's real cost.

Now you see how this can be your best investment too! Invest a moment now and call **248-541-7007** for your **FREE ENERGY ANALYSIS**. The call and survey are free, but your returns may be great!

Can pay for itself, plus more!

A new system from Hinson Home Comfort can save you money, time, and trouble.

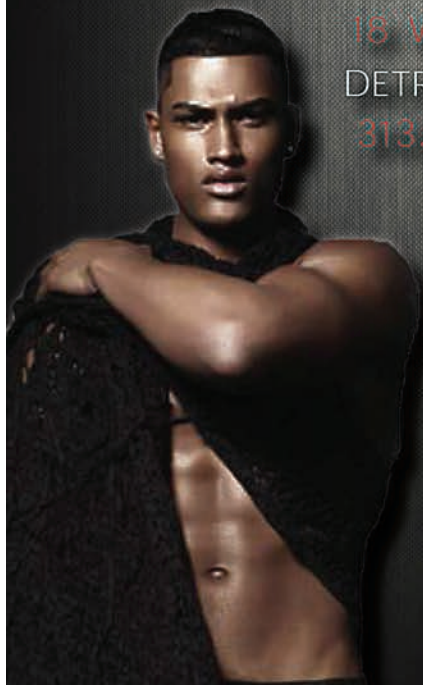


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Three Locations to Serve You:

- MAC Offices, Ferndale
- Affirmations, Ferndale
- MAC Offices, New Center



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Time: 1pm-6pm (By Appointment Only)	Time: 2pm-10pm (Walk-in or Appointment)	Time: 6pm-9pm (Walk-in or Appointment)	Time: 9am-noon 2pm-5pm (Walk-in or Appointment)	No Testing Available
Where: Ferndale MAC Office Only	Where: Detroit MAC New Center Office	Where: Ferndale Affirmations Location	Where: Ferndale MAC Office Only	

To make appointments or get more information, call:

1-888- A CONDOM (226-6366)



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