

MICHIGAN'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993

# **BTL** **Between THE Lines**

**Amending Michigan's Civil Rights Law: Is A Ballot Initiative On The Horizon?**

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**EEOC Advances On Employment Protections**

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**Hotter Than July Kicks Off**



# **THE LONG DUFF ROAD**

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18 The Long, Duff Road

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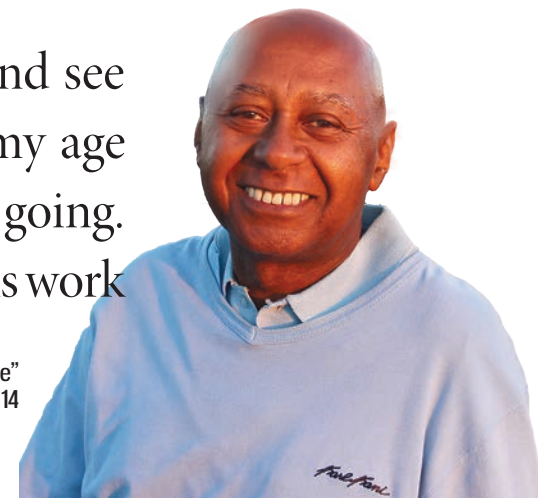
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“ Being able to see the community grow and see young people working with folks from my age group for the movement is what keeps me going. **Hotter Than July** is a space where a lot of this work happens. ”

– Robert Tate, “Party With A Purpose”  
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## Join The Conversation @ PrideSource.com



A great Sunday gathering in Flint celebrated victories and talked challenges ahead for Michigan's LGBTQ community.

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**Learn More About This Week's Cool City: Ferndale**

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## State Now Recognizing Married Same-Sex Parents On Birth Certificates

BY AJ TRAGER

LANSING – The State of Michigan Vital Records Department has decided to allow the spouse of a biological parent to be placed on a child's birth certificate for female married couples.

Confirmed by Jennifer Smith, public information officer with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, if a female couple was legally married in any state prior to the child's birth, the non-biological parent will not have to file for second-parent adoption and will be listed as the second parent on the child's birth certificate.

Any lesbian couples that were unmarried at the time of the child's birth will still be required to apply for second-parent adoption.

"My understanding is yes, if two women are married and one of them gives birth, that both parents will be listed on the certificate," Smith told BTL. "If they were legally married at the time of the child's birth, then we would amend the birth certificate without an adoption."

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is going through significant changes as the Department of Community Health and the Department of Human Services continue to merge. Smith reports that the state is looking for a consistent system that is uniform nationwide and is looking at what other states are doing to verify that there are no complicating factors.

"Hospitals will still issue temporary mother/father certificates, but they are welcome to change that — they can cross it out. Then we are made aware and we will file a replacement and issue a birth certificate that says 'parent and parent,'" Smith said.

Unfortunately, for gay male same-sex couples with children, a second-parent adoption is still necessary if both parents want legal recognition of the child.

Extended briefs are available online at:  
>> [www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com)

## Hoadley, Moss Introduce Proposals To End Gerrymandering

BY AJ TRAGER

LANSING – State Rep. Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo, and State Rep. Jeremy Moss, D-Southfield, are introducing proposals to help end gerrymandering by creating a nonpartisan commission that would oversee the drawing of political boundaries. Gerrymandering is the practice of drawing district lines to favor one political party, individual or constituency.

The proposals come in the wake of a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that found similar nonpartisan commissions in other states constitutionally valid.

"Our democracy needs to be more responsive to voters. Voters sense the process is broken. Let's fix it," Hoadley said. "Voters should select their politicians rather than politicians picking which voters they want in their district. In setting up a nonpartisan commission, we would be taking the politics out of redistricting."

The bills call for the creation of a nonpartisan redistricting commission comprised of regular citizens who would be tasked with creating district maps that are constitutional, compliant with the Voting Rights Act, contiguous, geographically relevant, compact, nested and not drawn to protect incumbents.

"In a healthy democracy, voters pick their elected representatives. Gerrymandering turns that on its head by allowing politicians to pick their voters," Moss said. "That's not right, no matter which party is in charge. I urge my colleagues to back our plan to make Michigan politics more responsive to people. This is government by the people, for the people and of the people."

Michigan is comprised of 38 state Senate districts and 110 state House districts. State legislative and congressional maps are redrawn every 10 years and are meant to keep



State Rep. Jeremy Moss, D-Southfield and State Rep. Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo want to see an end to gerrymandering. BTL file photo

up with changing populations. Michigan has lost five congressional seats since the 1980 U.S. Census. Federal law stipulates that all districts, state or congressional, must have approximately the same population and must not dilute the voter power of racial or ethnic minority groups.

However, there are conflicting opinions. According to [ballotpedia.org](http://ballotpedia.org) – a nonprofit, nonpartisan collaborative encyclopedia designed to connect people to politics and elections at the local, state and federal level – redistricting is a fiercely contested issue due to gerrymandering.

Political parties or incumbents are said to draw district lines for their benefit at

In setting up a nonpartisan commission, we would be taking the politics out of redistricting.

–Jon Hoadley

the expense of proportionality and fair representation, ballotpedia reports, and are sometimes drawn to minimize the influence of minority voters.

In the 2014 election, roughly 51 percent of all votes cast for state House Democratic candidates resulted in only 43 percent of elected House seats. Republican candidates received roughly 48 percent of the votes, which resulted in 63 Republican House seats, or 57 percent of elected seats, according to [macombpolitics.blogspot.com](http://macombpolitics.blogspot.com), a blog run by Macomb Daily journalist, Chad Selweski.

Respectively in the state Senate, Democratic candidates received 11 seats with 49 percent of the vote and Senate Republican candidates resulted in 27 seats with 50 percent of the vote. Republicans control the state House, 63-47, with the current way districts are drawn and hold a supermajority in the state Senate at 27-11.

The U.S. Constitution does not determine state legislative redistricting. SCOTUS issued a series of rulings in the mid-1960s to clarify standards for state legislative redistricting, in which it found that "the Equal Protection Clause (of the U.S. Constitution) demands no less than substantially equal state legislative representation for all citizens, of all places as well as of all races."

Michigan's maps were redrawn in 2011. Both parties, Democrats and Republicans, have been accused of gerrymandering state and congressional seats.

## Equality Michigan Announces New Senior Staff

BY BTL STAFF

Equality Michigan, the statewide LGBT political advocacy organization, has announced the appointment of new senior staff.

Advocate and political strategist Jennifer Judd joins Equality Michigan as the newest addition to the team, serving as director of field operations.

"I am honored to be part of the largest LGBTQ Anti-Violence and Advocacy Organization in the great state of Michigan," Judd said in a recent EQMI Newsletter.

Judd was born and raised in Saginaw County and has extensive background working on issue campaigns such as the Detroit Council by District Initiative and other political candidate campaigns. She has worked in fundraising for a national political party, worked for former governor of Illinois Pat Quinn, lobbied for the Affordable Health Care Act on Capitol Hill in D.C. and has worked on numerous political

campaigns in Michigan, Illinois and Missouri.

Over the course of the summer, Judd attended Motor City Pride, Kalamazoo Pride and Up North Pride in Traverse City and has spoken with hundreds of new EQMI supporters and volunteers in the state.

LGBT advocates and supporters in the state still have much work to do before the LGBT community has full equality. Efforts will include working with both Democratic and Republican politicians so that state laws reflect the majority opinion of strong LGBT support in Michigan. According to EQMI, Michiganders support an amendment to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, the state's civil rights act, to reflect protections for sexual orientation and gender identity by a three-to-one-margin.

"I have been touring the state on an Equality Michigan 'Listening Tour.' I have been to Marquette, Traverse City, Alpena, Grand Rapids, Saginaw and Kalamazoo,"

Judd said. "I have been meeting with regional leaders listening to the needs of these communities and discussing how Equality Michigan can be effective and relevant in these regions."

Judd believes it is time to mobilize and begin educating Michiganders by having tough conversations with neighbors and family and by engaging members of the legislature to let them know it is time to modernize ELCRA to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

Contact Judd for more information on her upcoming work at Equality Michigan at [jjudd@equalitymi.org](mailto:jjudd@equalitymi.org).



Jennifer Judd joins Equality Michigan as the director of field operations.



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# Is A Ballot Battle On LGBT Equality Coming In 2016?

BY TODD HEYWOOD

State Rep. Brandon Dillon, D-Grand Rapids, had barely starting warming the chairmanship seat of the Michigan Democratic Party last week when he started a very public conversation among advocates and politicians. That discussion had been occurring for months, to be certain, whispered about in corners of the Capitol.

The question: With a recalcitrant GOP dominated legislature which refuses to move on LGBT equality, and with a positive ruling from the Supreme Court of the United States, is it time to ask Michigan voters to amend the state civil rights act, Elliott-Larsen, to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes?

“I think that this is probably the moment,” Dillon said in an interview Sunday in Flint. “I don’t think the conversation is done, but we will have to make the decision very, very soon.”

Making that decision however is going to require the players at the table taking into account a lot of moving parts, political leaders interviewed for this story said.

How much money will it take? Conservative estimates come in at least \$7 million, whereas most put the cost at \$18 to \$25 million. That’s serious money in a tight political year which is expected to see multiple questions and a contentious presidential battle.

And the more ballot questions put before the voters, the more likely they are to reject all of them out of hand, said leaders. Petitions are currently circulating to legalize marijuana, and there are discussions about an initiative to

address redistricting issues in the state.

“This is part of the conversation,” said Sommer Foster, policy director at Equality Michigan. “I don’t think we can put Elliott-Larsen on the ballot if it’s going to be on there with seven other things.”

“You don’t go into a ballot initiative unless you know you can come out on top,” said Lonnie Scott, executive director at Progress Michigan, a liberal advocacy group in Lansing. “You want to know that this is the best strategy and that you have exhausted all the other legislative options.”

Scott said the legislature “has not done its job to protect the LGBT community.”

For nearly a decade, the LGBT community has argued that the ballot box is not the place to address the rights of any group of people in America, so that plays into the political calculus as well, said Kary Moss, executive director of the ACLU of Michigan.

“There’s a concern about subjecting rights to a popular vote,” Moss said. “The legislature should have gotten this done.”

Foster agreed with Moss.

“It is wrong to vote on minority rights; but that being said, if putting it on the ballot is the only way to protect people, then we need to do it,” she said.

## Post-Marriage Exuberance

While there is an exuberance related to LGBT equality, post-marriage decision, that excitement may not translate to the ballot box. Writer, activist and radio host Michelangelo Signorile calls “victory blindness” a significant stumbling block to full LGBT equality in his new book, “It’s Not Over.”

National polling still shows that in spite of recent high profile gains in the courts, a majority of Americans still have a fundamental discomfort with homosexuality and gender identity. That discomfort, Signorile points out, is fueling a new movement among right-wing, anti-gay advocates he likened to the battle to reverse Roe v. Wade. He said activists will use that discomfort to find wedge issues with voters, to separate the community and watch initiatives for equality fail.

Joe Munem, a Michigan based GOP political consultant, said there is such a separation in Michigan already. He pointed to the very public battle over an inclusive Elliott-Larsen amendment in last year’s lame duck session of the legislature. The GOP was ready to move forward with sexual orientation, but refused to push for inclusion of gender identity. The LGBT and progressive communities pushed



State Rep. Brandon Dillon, D-Grand Rapids, is the new chairman of the Michigan Democratic Party. He is addressing a gathering of LGBT and allies in Flint Sunday, emphasizing the commitment the state Democratic Party has to helping amend Elliott-Larsen. BTL Photo: Todd Heywood

back, refusing to endorse a noninclusive amendment, and the legislative process died.

“I think if you were to look at amending it for gays and lesbians in Elliott-Larsen, many Republicans would go for it,” Munem said. “I don’t think they are all the way there yet on gender identity.”

## Strategy

Also at play are questions of long term and short term strategy. There are several variables playing out there. What happens if the voters reject an initiative? Leaders said it could delay protecting LGBT people with laws by a decade or more.

Another strategy that could play out is allowing a redistricting proposal to take front and center. Michigan’s legislative districts have been tightly drawn to create very Republican districts and drive an ongoing GOP domination of the legislature. Right now, the legislature redraws legislative districts – with the party in control directing the process. Legislative districts are drawn every decade following the census.

If that proposal were to pass, it could set the legislature on a path towards loosening control of the body from the grasp of right-wing extremists by creating more moderate districts which provide more potentiality for

See Ballot Battle, next page

**With a recalcitrant GOP dominated legislature which refuses to move on LGBT equality, and with a positive ruling from the Supreme Court of the United States, is it time to ask Michigan voters to amend the state civil rights act, Elliott-Larsen, to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes?**



From left to right in back: Michael Freeman (an elected Trustee for Mott Community College), Mark LaChey (MDP LGBT&A Caucus Chair), U.S. Congressman Dan Kildee, State Senate Minority Leader Jim Ananich, State Rep. Sheldon Neeley, Flint Mayor Dayne Walling, State Rep. Jon Hoadley. Front: Dale Weighill (former Flint City Council VP) and Stevi Atkins (CEO of Wellness AIDS Services in Flint). Photo courtesy: Drew Marsh

## Lawmakers Voice Support For LGBT Community

BY JAN STEVENSON

**FLINT** – Over 200 Genesee County residents and political leaders came out on a sunny afternoon to discuss how to move forward on LGBT issues July 19. A hot topic was how to move forward to amend Michigan’s civil right’s legislation, the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, to include LGBT people and gender identity.

“There’s a lot of friends and allies out there that support equality, and we want to make sure that they know that there’s people standing with them. Until we get full equality in this country, we’re going to keep fighting,” said state Sen. Jim Ananich.

“What we need here in Michigan first and foremost, and it can come from Washington or it can come from Lansing, is (a) nondiscrimination statute that protects for employment, housing

and public accommodation,” said Mark LaChey, the chair of the Michigan Democratic Party LGBT and Allies Caucus.

“It also reminds us that there’s a lot further we have to travel when it comes to housing, credit or employment,” said U.S. Rep. Dan Kildee. “It’s still possible that people can be discriminated against just because they happen to be a LGBT member of our community, and that’s wrong.”

The new MDP chair, state Rep. Brandon Dillon, attended the summer mixer. He said he is excited about his new leadership position and the chance to work closely with the Party’s LGBT Caucus.

The event was hosted by Ananich, former Flint City Council Vice President Dale Weighill, and the LGBT & Allies Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party. The mixer was on the terrace of the Flint Farmers’ Market.

### ► Ballot Battle

Continued from p. 6

progressives to win elections.

The flaw in this plan? It would take until 2024 at the earliest to start reaping the harvest of the initiative.

Also playing a role, said Dillon, is who exactly will be the opposition to such an initiative. Munem identified the Michigan Catholic Conference as well as some of the smaller small business advocacy groups as likely opponents.

The Michigan Catholic Conference, which

was heavily involved in the 2004 initiative to amend the state constitution to forbid same-sex marriage, did not respond to inquiries from BTL on where the agency stood on a ballot initiative to amend Elliott-Larsen.

Community leaders will continue to discuss the political options in the coming weeks. Something Dillon said the Michigan Democratic Party will be a part of, but does not seek to “lead.”

“There are serious concerns on this,” said Foster. “But nothing has been ruled out yet. We’re all committed to coming to the table and having these conversations.”

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## Obituary: Sharon Hope Gittleman

Sept. 16, 1958 – July 7, 2015

BY JAN STEVENSON

Sharon Hope Gittleman, 56, had been a writer for *Between The Lines* until she became disabled eight years ago due to kidney disease. After two failed kidney transplants and an extended illness, she ultimately succumbed to complications of dialysis July 7.



Sharon Gittleman

Gittleman grew up in Detroit and graduated from Roeper High School in Birmingham in 1976. She went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree in 1980 from the University of Michigan and later graduated from law school at the University of Detroit. After passing her bar exams, Gittleman worked at several law firms and insurance companies in the greater Detroit area until she discovered her true passion – journalism.

In 1987, Gittleman left her legal career to become the editor at the *Royal Oak Mirror* where she remained for 11 years until the paper was sold in 1998. "She loved being a journalist," said her brother, attorney Steven Gittleman, who described his sister as both intelligent and stubborn. "While at *The Mirror*, Sharon always insisted that the paper have at least one 'feel-good' story."

After the 1998 sale of *The Mirror* to *Hometown Newspapers* she continued her journalism career as a successful freelance writer for many publications including the *Detroit Free Press*, the *Macomb Daily*, the *Oakland Press* and *BTL*. Her editors appreciated her clear writing style, attention to detail and her ability to understand and communicate complex stories, particularly if they involved legal issues.

Steven described Sharon being fearless as a reporter. He recounted when he and Sharon attended the 2001 North American Auto Show at Cobo Hall in Detroit during the height of the domestic partner debate. "Sharon marched right up to all the CEOs of Toyota, Daimler, Ford and GM and demanded to know what they were doing for their LGBT employees, specifically on DP benefits. The Toyota CEO was left open-mouthed," said Steven.

Steven, who was a devoted caregiver to Sharon throughout her illness, said they had a close yet fiery relationship. "We would fight all the time," he said. "One story I love to tell about Sharon was when we went on a family trip to Israel in 1979. We were in Beersheba near the Negev desert at a huge Arab market. Everything was for sale. This Bedouin guy came up to me and kept asking 'how much' in Hebrew. It took me a while to realize he was asking about Sharon and that he wanted to trade his camel for her because he was drawn to her red hair – a rarity in the Middle East. As I continued the negotiations, Sharon came up, and when she figured out what was going on, she started screaming. It was hysterical. I still think about that camel," said Steven with a laugh.

Sharon loved needlepoint and knitting. She was an avid animal enthusiast and active member of the *Detroit Zoological Society*. She is survived by her brother, Steven Mark Gittleman. The funeral was at the Hebrew Memorial in Oak Park July 9.

# EEOC Rules Sexual Orientation Is Protected By Federal Civil Rights Law

BY AJ TRAGER

WASHINGTON D.C. – The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission July 15 issued a decision that employment discrimination based on sexual orientation is a form of sex discrimination that is outlawed by existing federal law.

The EEOC is responsible for enforcing anti-discrimination laws in the workplace and has held in a 3-2 decision following a complaint brought by a Florida-based air traffic control specialist against Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx that discrimination against LGB employees is sex discrimination, specifically banned by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

"Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is premised on sex-based preferences, assumptions, expectations, stereotypes or norms. 'Sexual orientation' as a concept cannot be defined or understood without reference to sex," the EEOC explains. "It follows, then, that sexual orientation is inseparable from and inescapably linked to sex and, therefore, that allegations of sexual orientation discrimination involves sex-based considerations."

In 2012, the EEOC issued a similar ruling that discrimination based on gender identity or expression is also a form of sex discrimination that violates federal law, which set an important precedent for protecting transgender

employees.

"The fight for basic civil rights protections for lesbian, gay and bisexual people just took a big step forward," said James Esseks, American Civil Liberties Union's LGBT Project Director. "Lesbian, gay and bisexual people all across the country now have a place to turn if an employer fires them because of their sexual orientation. This is a significant development because protections for gay and transgender people are almost nonexistent in federal law, and 28 states also lack state-level protections."

Both rulings are landmark advances for civil rights. Now anyone who works for an employer with 15 or more employees can file a charge of sex discrimination with the EEOC if they can prove they were discriminated against because of their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

Despite the EEOC ruling, neither Congress nor state legislatures have passed explicit civil rights protections for LGBT employees. The ACLU argues that these protections should not be left to the courts because they may not all interpret this ruling with an even hand, and rulings like this one cannot provide comprehensive protections against sexual orientation discrimination in contexts such as public accommodations and federal funding, where there are no bans on sex discrimination to piggy back on.

## Pilot LGBT Youth Workforce Development Program Launches At Affirmations Community Center

BY BTL STAFF

FERNDALÉ – XTL Youth Workforce Development Program is a 24-week pilot program designed to empower LGBT youth in Metro Detroit with primary and secondary skills necessary to be successful in workforce navigation.

Youth will be exposed to theoretical and practical applications of a plethora of skills used everyday by the Michigan workforce. The program will provide 12 weeks of interactive training and 12 weeks of on-the-job training.

The pilot period will begin in August 2015 and run through January 2016,

with 15 Metro Detroit youth, ages 16-24, in participation.

Key program components will include soft skills development or "Skills To Pay The Bills," which has been adapted from the Department of Disability Employment Policy, utilizing interactive skill building activities based on up to date, researched job skills. Areas of focus will include communication, problem solving and critical thinking, professionalism, enthusiasm and attitude, networking and teamwork. Youth will learn how to write a resume and cover letter and improve interview skills.

Hard Skills Development, or on-the-

### RELATED OP-ED

**Landmark Advances In Nondiscrimination Employment, With Limitations**

by ACLU Staff Attorney Jay Kaplan

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"Employers as well as employees deserve the clarity that comes with express federal and state protections that everyone understands," added Esseks. "That's why we'll continue to work for express and comprehensive protections. The EEOC ruling is a monumental step forward and provides important protections for millions of Americans, and that's something to celebrate."

"This historic ruling by the EEOC makes clear they agree workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, much like gender identity, is illegal," said HRC President Chad Griffin in a statement. "While an important step, it also highlights the need for a comprehensive federal law permanently and clearly banning LGBT discrimination beyond employment to all areas of American life. Such a law would send a clear and permanent signal that discrimination against LGBT people will not be tolerated under any circumstances in this country, and we remain fully committed to making that happen."

job training, will complete the second 12 weeks of course work, where youth will participate in working together as a team to successfully launch and manage a business housed in the Affirmations Marketplace. In addition to serving as mentors, a member of the Business Advisory Council will provide youth with ongoing guidance and counsel.

Those interested in the opportunity should contact Affirmations' Youth Program Manager, Lilianna Reyes, as soon as possible. Reyes can be reached at 248-398-7105 and by email at [LReyes@goaffirmations.org](mailto:LReyes@goaffirmations.org).

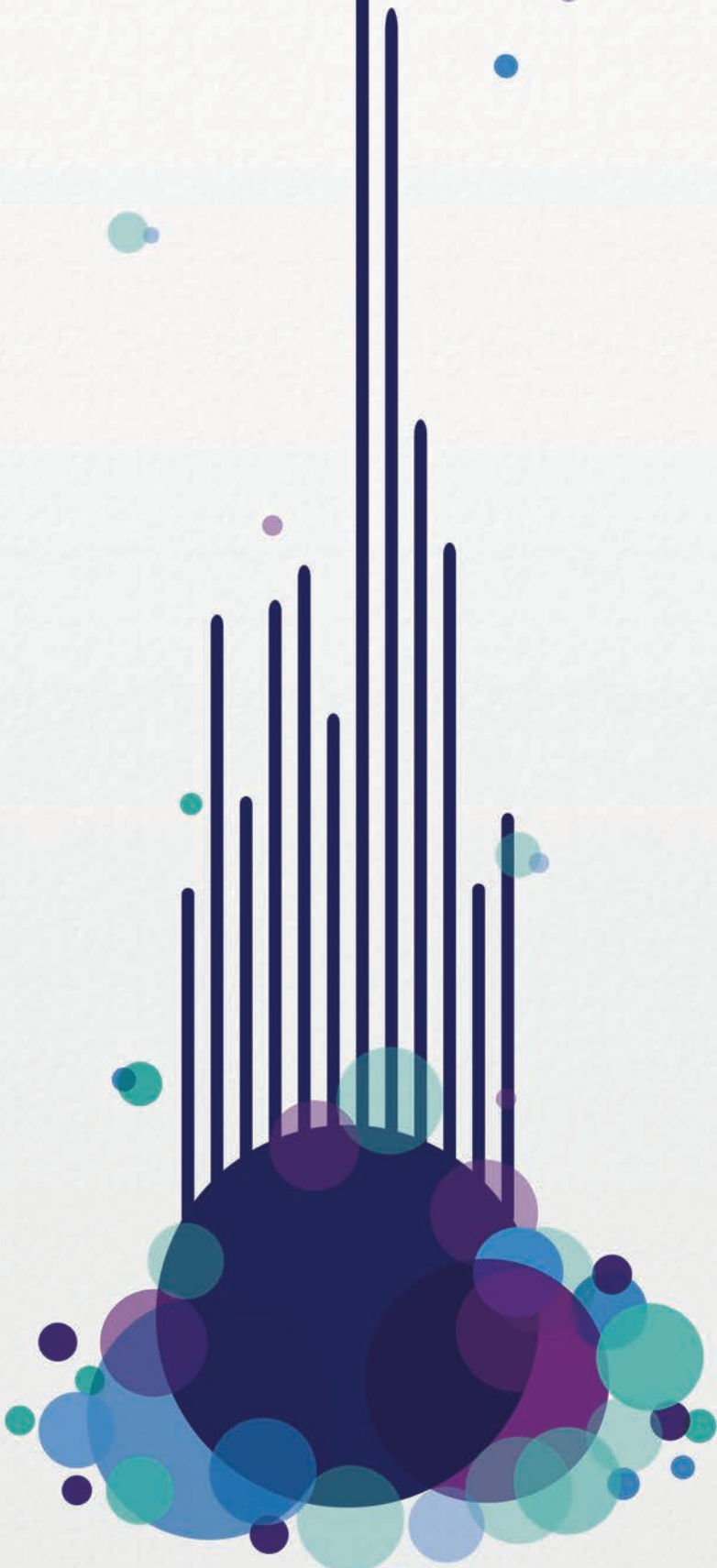




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## Other Voices, Other Back Rooms

# Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

For over 50 years Life magazine informed Americans about what was happening here and abroad. Photos and content were dramatic. Mostly conservative. Occasionally controversial. Once in awhile downright shocking.

Life folded in 1973; circulation 13 million. Readership, 10 times that amount. Its sister publication, Time, continues to this day.

Five years before the Stonewall Riots of 1969, Life tackled a scary taboo: "Homosexuality in America." An expose focusing on the gay underworld of New York, Chicago and San Francisco. America's collective Sodom and Gomorrah.

Middle Class Americans woke up to the realization that homosexuals were growing in number. Becoming alarmingly visible. A social threat to be somehow remedied.

In 1964, San Francisco was not the dynamic gay center of Castro/Market Street, clone-look militancy. It hadn't the high-density population complex of the 1970s and pre-AIDS 1980s, but Life's wide-audience article – unintentionally, to be sure – served as a catalyst for early gay migration there.

Life opened its expose head on: "Homosexuality shears across the spectrum of American life: the professional, the arts, business and labor. It always has. But today, especially in big cities, homosexuals are discarding their furtive ways and openly admitting, even flaunting, their deviation.

"Homosexuals have their own drinking places, their special assignation streets, even their own organizations. And for every obvious homosexual, there are probably nine nearly impossible to detect. This social disorder, which society tries to suppress, has forced itself into the public eye because it does present a problem – and parents especially are concerned.

"The myth and misconception with which homosexuality has so long been clothed must be cleared away, not to condone it but to cope with it."

Accompanying the 14-page belly shock are a dozen photos. Nameless gay men clustered in dark bars or milling about on dimly lighted streets: "These brawny young men in their leather caps, shirts, jackets and pants are practicing homosexuals, men who turn to other men for affection and sexual satisfaction. They are part of what they call the 'gay world,' which is actually a sad and often sordid world."

Gay bars are exposed: "As each new customer walks into the dimly lit room, he will lock eyes with a half dozen young men before reaching his place at the bar. Throughout the evening there is a constant turnover of customers as contacts are made and two men slip out together, or individuals move on to other bars in search of better luck.

"As 2 a.m. closing time approaches, the atmosphere grows perceptibly more tense. It is the 'frantic hour,' the now-or-never time for making a contact." Sound familiar?

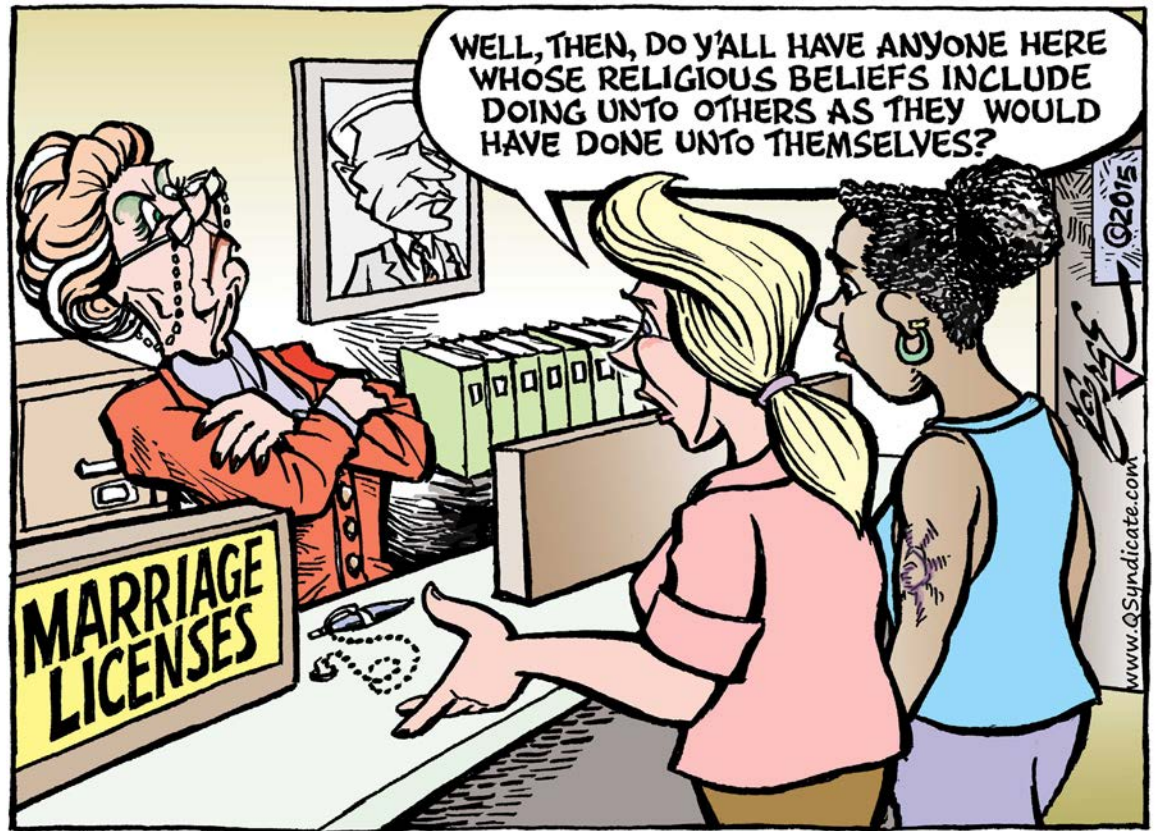
Here's the early version of the gay agenda: "As part of its anti-homosexual drive the Los Angeles police force has compiled an 'educational' pamphlet for law enforcement officers entitled, 'Some Characteristics of the Homosexual.' The strongly opinionated pamphlet includes the warning that what the homosexuals really want is a 'fruit world.'" (Not a cocktail.)

Gays in the military, 1964: "If we didn't throw them out, we'd be condoning homosexuality. The services' position has to be that homosexual practices prejudice morale and discipline."

Life warns, "For the first time the Supreme Court has agreed to hear the homosexual case, but no legal procedures are likely to change society's basic repugnance to homosexuality as an immoral and disruptive force that should somehow be removed."

Life and Times have changed for the better. We've come a long way. What's next?

Charles@pridesource.com



## Viewpoint

# Landmark Advances In Nondiscrimination Employment, With Limitations

OPINION BY JAY KAPLAN

These rulings are landmark advances for LGBT civil rights. That is because protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity are almost nonexistent in federal law and lacking in 28 out of 50 states, including Michigan.

Last week was a very important step forward for nondiscrimination protections for LGBT people. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the federal agency assigned to investigate complaints of employment discrimination in violation of federal law, issued a decision that employment discrimination based on sexual orientation discrimination is a form of sex discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act. Back in 2012 the EEOC issued a similar ruling that transgender employment discrimination, based on gender identity or expression, is also a form of sex discrimination in violation of federal law. The basis for both of these decisions is that in each of these cases the discrimination was motivated by gender stereotyping, in other words the employer's perspective that the gay or transgender employee failed to conform to the employer's notions of gender conventions. In *Complainant v. Department of Transportation Safety*, a gay male alleged that he was not selected for a permanent position as Front Line Manager because he is gay. He also alleged that his supervisor

made several negative comments to him about his sexual orientation, which included admonishing him for mentioning his partner with, "We don't need to hear about that gay stuff."

Both these rulings are landmark advances for LGBT civil rights. That is because protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity are almost nonexistent in federal law and lacking in 28 out of 50 states, including Michigan. Now anyone, in any part of the country, who works for an employer with 15 or more employees, can file a charge of sex discrimination with the EEOC if they are discriminated against because of their sexual orientation and gender identity, where the facts indicate gender stereotyping occurred.

A huge step forward, but there are limitations. First of all, while the EEOC's interpretation of sex discrimination is now clear, not all federal courts agree that this theory applies to LGBT people. Second,

See Employment, next page

► **Employment**

Continued from p. 10

the ruling doesn't address all incidents of discrimination that LGBT people face in every day in Michigan. The rule is not binding on businesses with fewer than 15 employees (which make up the majority of Michigan employers) and it doesn't change the fact that under current Michigan law, LGBT people can be discriminated against in housing and public accommodations (including a hotel or a restaurant or accessing medical services). We need to continue our efforts to amend Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to specifically include the categories of sexual orientation and gender identity. We also need support efforts to pass federal laws that specifically prohibit LGBT discrimination in employment, credit, housing and public accommodation so that we have clarity within all our federal courts. We believe that everyone should be provided with one set of clear rules that everyone knows and everyone can follow.

The public support is there. Seventy percent of all Americans, including 65 percent of Republicans, support comprehensive nondiscrimination protections for LGBT people. With such strong support, we need to both encourage and persuade our elected leaders to pass legislation that accomplishes this. Make no mistake, the EEOC ruling is definitely something to celebrate and it is definitely progress. But it's not the

The ruling doesn't address all incidents of discrimination that LGBT people face in every day in Michigan. The rule is not binding on businesses with fewer than 15 employees (which make up the majority of Michigan employers) and it doesn't change the fact that under current Michigan law, LGBT people can be discriminated against in housing and public accommodations (including a hotel or a restaurant or accessing medical services).

whole enchilada. Let's keep working for comprehensive LGBT civil rights protections so that there can be no disagreement that LGBT people are entitled to fairness and dignity in all aspects of life.

*Jay Kaplan is the staff attorney at the ACLU of Michigan's LGBT Project. For more information about ACLU of Michigan's LGBT Project, go to [www.aclumich.org/courts/lgbt-project](http://www.aclumich.org/courts/lgbt-project).*

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# Creep of the Week

Ryan Anderson

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Now that the rainbow dust is starting to settle after all the big gay parades celebrating the Supreme Court decision, we can finally get down to the real business of marriage equality: aborting babies.



Ryan Anderson

The two things social conservatives detest most in the world are abortion and same-sex couples getting married. On the surface, the two are not linked in any clear way. It takes a special kind of twisted logic to connect the two.

Thankfully Ryan T. Anderson, a senior research fellow at The Heritage Foundation, has the kind of skills one needs to blame the gays for abortion.

In a July 20 column on TownHall.com, your source for right-wing quackery, Anderson claims that “the breakdown of the family” is what drives abortion, and since the Supreme Court redefined parenthood by legalizing same-sex marriages,

children are now at greater risk than ever before.

“The best protectors of unborn children are a strong marriage culture and people who take the virtue of chastity seriously,” writes Anderson. But with marriage now reduced “to a mere contract,” America is essentially flipping chastity the bird. And, Anderson warns, “Without a culture of chastity, we will never have a pro-life culture.”

In a “culture of chastity” people would only have sex after they were married and that sex-having would only go on in order to make babies. Anderson argues that since same-sex couples can’t make babies, they not only shouldn’t be allowed to get married, but they obviously should not have sex and should not be allowed to pursue reproductive technology in order to have kids.

“The more children that are conceived for same-sex couples through assisted reproductive technology, the more children that will be conceived explicitly and intentionally outside of a relationship with both their mother and father,” Anderson laments.

Never mind the fact that all credible research has found that two dads or two moms are just as good, if not in some cases better, than a mom and a dad. And that children conceived via assisted reproduction to these couples are never an “oops.” These are wanted, carefully planned for children.

“A just society makes sacrifices to ensure that children are known and loved by their own mother and father, while doing what it can to help children denied that blessing by misfortune,” Anderson writes, apparently unaware of or unconcerned by how unjust our society is when it comes to children who experience “misfortune.” Our foster care system, for example, is a mess. Read “To the End of June: The Intimate Life of American Foster Care” by Cris Beam and you’ll see how misguided Anderson is in claiming that the best way to help children is to keep them away from gays.

Of course, then Anderson reveals why he really hates reproductive technology: unused embryos, which each count as an abortion in his book. No surprise, he is against stem-cell research or using these embryos for anything other than makin’ babies. He’s against birth control, too, by the way. A “culture of chastity” has no need for it, obviously.

So there you have it. Since gays can get married now, straights are going to just start extra-maritally humping up a storm, creating a bunch of babies to abort while the gays “manufacture” (Anderson’s word, because the children of gays aren’t human apparently) kids and de-facto embryo abortions: hence marriage equality “puts unborn children at risk.”

Airtight logic. Everybody can go home now. Ryan Anderson has won this round of Insane Arguments. Stay tuned for Anderson’s next column about how the global warming “hoax” is perpetuated by hipster beard length.

# Coming: Local Film Documentary For Trans Youth

BY AJ TRAGER

**YPSILANTI** – Local trans masculine youth, Alia Ismail, spent his youth discovering who he was, moving to multiple cities around the state and attending Crestwood High School in Dearborn Heights, all while growing up in a bi-cultural family. Now living on his own and attending college, he has begun filming and sharing his transition in a documentary titled “Crossing The Divide,” set to launch in October 2016.

When he first came out as trans in his freshman year of college at Eastern Michigan University, Ismail had a hard time seeing how he fit into the trans community. The only trans people he had heard about were rich white people with supportive families. Ismail is a 20-year-old Arab-American with an estranged father and a little brother who looks up to him. He didn’t feel mis-gendered as a child and didn’t identify with the “born-in-the-wrong-body” narrative that is so often told.

“What do Caitlyn Jenner and Chaz Bono have to do with me? I’m just a queer kid with student debt who works at a coffee shop,” Ismail said. He looked for other trans stories that he could relate to, but couldn’t find any.

“Most things I watched just made me feel like an outsider, or it was explaining what transgender is. So I was like, ‘Why don’t I tell my own story?’ I want to be the little Laverne Cox for young trans guys.”

Ismail had a different presentation in high school and recounts his time there to be very segregated, bouncing between the white and Arab communities in the school. He grew up not knowing how to discuss his gender identity, but was naturally drawn to boys clothing and aggressive sports while reluctantly wearing girls clothes, per his mother’s request. Around the age of 9, things began to solidify.

“I always viewed myself as one of the boys. When I imagined myself in my head ... I imagined myself at a young age with short hair,” Ismail said. “I always wore my hair in a ponytail. It wasn’t until I hit puberty where I felt a little uncomfortable.”

Ismail came out as lesbian his senior year, lost a lot of friends and started dating his first LGBT partner. “There wasn’t anyone trans around



Alia Ismail has begun filming and sharing his transition in a documentary titled “Crossing The Divide,” set to launch in October 2016.

me until I had my first girlfriend,” Ismail recounts. “They are now using male pronouns. He first told me when we were dating. I didn’t know anything about being trans.”

A year later he came out.

After Ismail told his therapist that he wanted to make a documentary about his transition, he put Ismail in touch with Lorne Clarkson, a trans man and documentary filmmaker.

“We were on the same page right from the start,” Clarkson said about his first meeting with Ismail. “We both just want to tell a story that other young trans\* people can relate

to, something raw and unguarded. We want to talk about things like the feeling that you’re not ‘trans-enough,’ and how confusing it is when society starts treating you like a different gender.”

Production on the documentary has already begun. It will follow Ismail through his first year of transition as he begins hormone replacement therapy and navigates his new social identity. He’s excited to have started hormone therapy but is also nervous.

“I have no idea what my life is

See Film, next page



# Largest Trans Survey Calls For Participants

BY AJ TRAGER

Beginning Aug. 19, transgender and non-binary identifying people will be able to log onto [www.ustranssurvey.org](http://www.ustranssurvey.org) and take the 2015 U.S. Trans Survey.

The U.S. Trans Survey is a followup to the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, a resource for helping researchers, policymakers and advocates see the experiences of trans people over time, how things are changing and what can be done to improve the lives of trans people.

The NTDS was developed and conducted by the National LGBTQ Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality in 2008-2009 and has provided key information regarding the number of trans people who have faced discrimination or harassment in employment, housing, school, health care and other areas of life. The results were released in the 2011 report, "Injustice At Every Turn."

The U.S. Trans Survey will be the largest, most comprehensive survey in the history of U.S. trans history, seeking a goal of 20,000 completed surveys by trans, gender queer or non-binary identified people from around the country.

"Over the years, transgender people have bravely told their stories in a monumental community wide effort to make the case for trans health care, program funding and equal protection of our civil rights. If we reach our goal of 20,000 completed surveys, we will have the kind of data we need to make our case to elected leaders, the media and funding sources even more compelling," said Char Davenport, chair of the Michigan tri-cities chapter of Transgender Michigan.

The USTS will cover a wide range of topics that reflect the lives and experiences of trans people and is designed to more fully examine specific issue areas that disparately impact trans people, such as unemployment and underemployment, housing, health care,

If we reach our goal of 20,000 completed surveys, we will have the kind of data we need to make our case to elected leaders, the media and funding sources even more compelling.

- Char Davenport, chair of the Michigan tri-cities chapter of Transgender Michigan.

HIV/AIDS, disabilities, immigration, sex work and police interactions. Many of the questions included in the USTS have never been asked of trans people before. Like last time, the data set will be shared with advocates, organizations and academics for years to come.

In anticipation of the release of the survey, the National LGBTQ Task Force has designated July 28-30 as "2015 U.S. Trans Survey Awareness Week," and is requesting that the trans community and allies of the trans community help find as many people who will pledge to take the survey as possible.

Tuesday, July 28 will be social media day and all advocates for the survey can take to the internet and spread the word through graphics and statements provided by NLGBTQTF. July 29 will be "email day," and supporters can use the email template on the Task Force website to send around to members of the trans and non-binary community. Blog Day will take place on July 30, where people are encouraged to share their first-hand experiences online.

Check out the website [www.ustranssurvey.org](http://www.ustranssurvey.org) for more information, sign up to the email list and plan out Awareness Week activities.

less isolated," Clarkson said. "I feel I have a responsibility to make this film. I know how lonely transitioning can be and how easily feelings of shame and self doubt can develop. I'm passionate about this film because it's a story I know would have helped me when I was transitioning."

Clarkson will attend Ismail's therapy and hormone appointments, with aspirations of adding in a trip to the Ivory Coast, where Ismail's father lives, to capture the multi-cultural world Ismail has lived in his whole life.

"I wanted to show that you can transition at any stage of your life — it doesn't have to be through puberty. I am going to take this journey by myself and do it, and if you want

## ► Film

Continued from p. 12

going to be like a year from now, but I'm really hopeful. I feel like I'm getting a fresh start in life," Ismail said.

Crossing the Divide has launched a Kickstarter campaign at [www.kickstarter.com/projects/1373141071/crossing-the-divide](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1373141071/crossing-the-divide) to raise \$10,000 that will be used to buy film equipment and continue filming through spring 2016 to capture Ismail's first full year of transition.

"This film is a passion project of good will; I don't expect to make money from it. I really believe the project will help trans youth feel

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# Party With A Purpose

BY ROBERT TATE

As the LGBT community celebrates 20 years of Hotter Than July, I can't help but reminisce about what the community looked like when I was younger. I can't help but smile at how we got here, and how far we've come. I also can't help but to feel a sense of pride in having been involved with Hotter Than July, initially. I am filled with so much joy that our community still has this magnificent event 20 years later!

Being able to see the community grow and see young people working with folks from my age group for the movement is what keeps me going. Hotter Than July is a space where a lot of this work happens. We didn't have this type of organization when I first started event planning. I can remember that all of my life; I wanted my own space to entertain. When I turned 21, I moved into my own home and one of my friends asked me to go to a bar with him. He took me to this bar called Gagan's, which

was down the street from Menjo's on Six Mile Road. I had a blast that night, and I danced and partied and have not missed a beat ever since! I have been entertaining people for 40 years. Most folks know me through entertainment, and it seems like that's the way that I have been able to keep people engaged. I told my friends a long time ago that anywhere I go, come with me. I still have most of my friends here with me today entertaining the community.

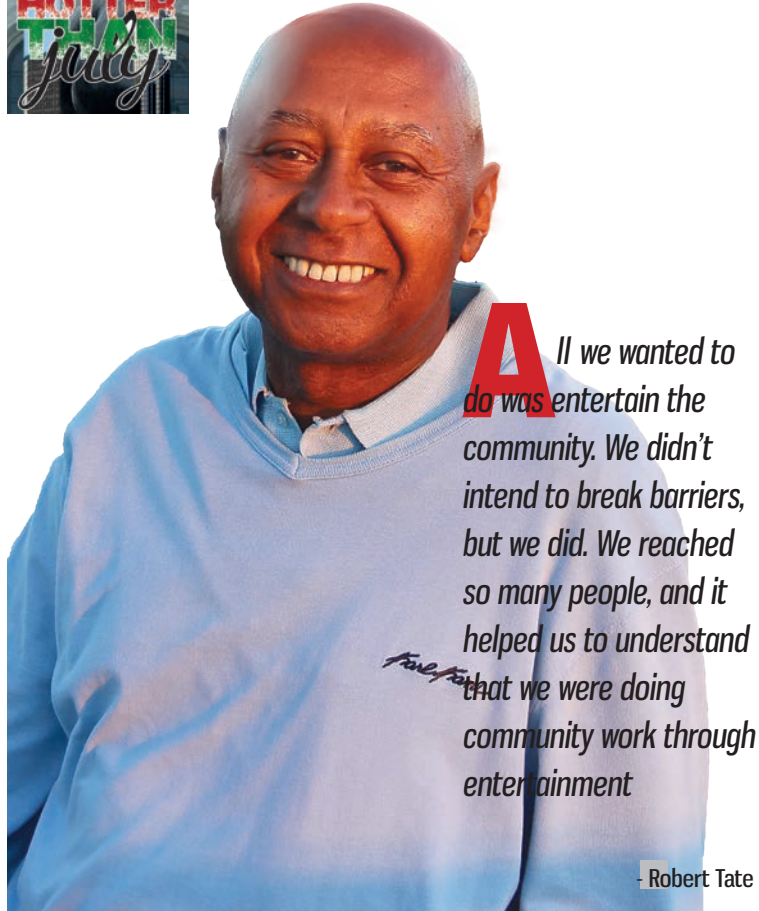
Twenty-eight years ago, we started a black, LGBT social club called the Billionaire Boys Club (BBC). We had our events at places that most of our attendees had never been and ultimately enjoyed talking about the experience for days afterwards. We made sure that everyone had a good time and met new people who walked away from the event with a smile on their face. We never knew that we were doing anything special. All we wanted to do was entertain the community. We didn't intend to break barriers, but we did. We reached so many people,

and it helped us to understand that we were doing community work through entertainment.

About 20 years ago, BBC was an annual weekend event. Soon after that, we merged that occasion with Men of Color Motivational Group (MOC), another social organization. MOC was already active in the movement and I liked their vision. I thought that joining them would be a good idea. At the time, being partnered with a successful entity like Men of Color helped us to really bridge community and entertainment. We began to partner with additional organizations to support them in their events. Working with community based organizations led us to start Imagine This Productions about 15 years ago to help those organizations improve in their efforts.

I now realize that I am an activist in a different kind of way. My way is to bring people together and network with community organizations. Entertainment and community are

See next page



**A**ll we wanted to do was entertain the community. We didn't intend to break barriers, but we did. We reached so many people, and it helped us to understand that we were doing community work through entertainment

Robert Tate

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## ► Party With A Purpose

Continued from previous page

different now, but they can be brought back together with the same flavor but for a different era. We did it 20 years ago and it can be done again.

Twenty years is a long time to be doing this work, but it's also something that needs to be celebrated. People that were a part of this historic development need to be out celebrating something they were at in the beginning. Things have changed from back then, but I like what I see. It's not perfect, but it's still moving. At the end of the day it's all about the community and the space that we make for ourselves. It's all well and good to party, but let's party with a purpose and continue building our community!

*Robert Tate has been entertaining in Detroit for over 30 years. He is a founding and longstanding member of Billionaire Boys Club (BBC). The BBC has been entertaining the LGBT and allied community for over 20 years. They broke barriers for the LGBT community by having regal events at establishments that have not had African-American gays and lesbians attend. They sponsored and partnered with various organizations, such as Men of Color, KICK Magazine and Hotter Than July. In 2000 Robert started an event planning and social company called Imagine This Productions (ITP). ITP held a fundraiser for Doorstep, a homeless shelter, and had partnered with Ladies with A Current Affair, Picnap Productions and Pink Ice. ITP had various educational and promotional events tied to the community, such as the HTJ fundraiser, "An Evening of Art at The Charlevoix Gallery."*



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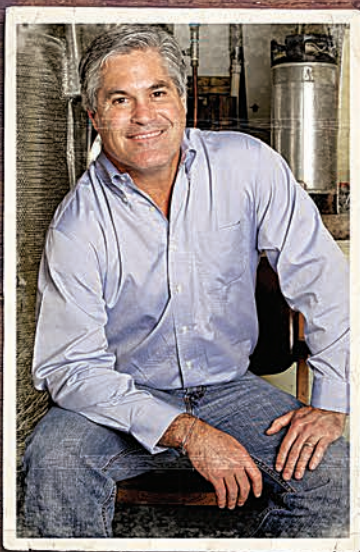


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## HTJ Events

This year's HTJ starts as always with the candlelight vigil in Palmer Park on Tuesday. Speaking at this year's vigil will be controversial Detroit City Council President Brenda

Jones. A highlight of this event will be the installation of a memorial plaque in the park made of stone and bronze. The plaque will be installed at the blue spruce memorial tree in recognition of community members who are no longer living.

For the first time in a few years, an official HTJ opening party took place Wednesday, July 22. The theme of the party held at The Woodward, was "Wet & Wild."

**Thursday (July 23) is the annual HTJ Film Festival.** This event will feature the Detroit premiere of the documentary "Collective Voices: Wisdom of our African American Lesbian Elders." The film is directed by Debraha Watson, who will attend the screening and take questions afterward. Also showing will be the musical classic "The Wiz" starring Diana Ross. The location for the festival is the Cass City Cinema, located at 3420 Cass Ave. in Detroit.

The **Annual Gathering on LGBT Issues**, which was for many years known at the Genesis Summit, will take place on **Friday (July 24)** at the Michigan State University Detroit Center, which is located at 3408 Woodward Ave. in Midtown. Presenters include Noel Gordon, foundation project manager at the Human Rights Campaign; Marvell Terry, II, also of HRC; Lisa Whitmore Davis of AARP Michigan; and Phillip A. Simmons of Phillip A. Simmons & Associates. Rev. Roland Stringfellow of Metropolitan Community Church Detroit will present a keynote address. The four former presidents of Detroit Black Gay, Inc. and the Black Pride Society will be honored. They are Johnny Jenkins, Hank Millbourne, Kim Jones and Robert Clark, who will be honored posthumously.

The biggest event of the week will undoubtedly be **Saturday's (July 25) picnic in Palmer Park.** DJ Tone, DJ Darryl G and DJ Matt Holidaye will play for the crowd and there will be an HTJ showcase featuring Fantaysa Dior, Raven Devine, Samantha Brazil, Davana Couture-Malone, Cierra Dior Malone, Innocence Rodeo, Jasmine Dior, Romeo Milliown and Rajhn Star-Studded King. There will also be performances by Charlie B. Keys, Tia Taylor, J-Leeb and Chalice B. Keys as well as a fashion show presented by Austin Christopher featuring the work of designers DL Perrett and LCM Glam Boutique.

Things wrap up on **Sunday (July 26)** with two events. The first is a worship service organized by Whosoever Ministries. It will be begin at 11 a.m. and take place at Ecumenical Theological Seminary at 2930 Woodward Ave., Detroit. The second is the annual brunch. Produced by Imagine This Productions, the brunch will take place at 1917 American Bistro, located at 19416 Livernois Ave., Detroit. This event is likely to sell out, so tickets should be purchased in advance.

For more information on Hotter Than July, visit [www.hotterthanjuly.org](http://www.hotterthanjuly.org).

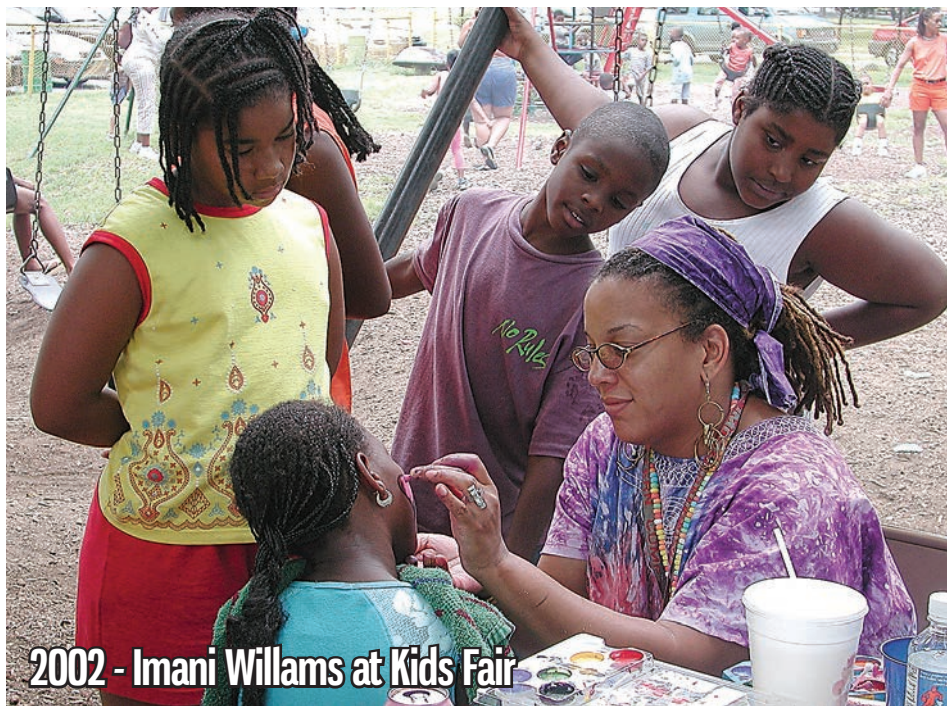


*"I'm looking forward to the memories. To those who were here in 1996 sharing, and I'm looking forward to having people who were not here in '96 listen and share their thoughts. I'm also looking forward to hearing the memories of loved ones who are gone. A lot of people who were a part of Hotter Than July are no longer here."*

LGBT Detroit's Executive Director Curtis Lipscomb discussing the 20th anniversary of HTJ, saying it is all about memories – both reliving old ones and making new ones.







2002 - Imani Willams at Kids Fair



1999 - Ashanti



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# The Long, Duff Road

## Hilary Duff On Marriage Equality, Grindr & Why She Took A Break From Showbiz

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

“I’m like the dorky kid on the bus who’s like, ‘Hiiii.’”  
Wait a minute. Is that you, Lizzie McGuire? Maybe? No.

It’s Hilary Duff, razzing on her cold-ridden, congested-sounding self as she does a nasally nerd impression. And though Duff is known to millennials (and their moms) for originating the dorky Disney icon in 2001 – which, she admits during our interview, has been “torturous” – the 27-year-old is ready to move on. Actually, she’s been ready. It’s the rest of the world that just can’t seem to let Lizzie go.

During an insightful and surprisingly candid conversation, Duff spoke about her career as a whole just hours following June 26’s landmark Supreme Court ruling, which granted full marriage rights to LGBT Americans. The child star-turned-music maker also talked about her latest album, “Breathe In. Breathe Out.,” eight years in the making; the long break she took to find her true self; and not knowing how to be a “totally normal girl who doesn’t give a fuck.”

**You’re a longtime ally of the LGBT community, and you also have many gay friends, so you must have been thrilled about the Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality. What does that momentous moment mean to you?**

Oh my gosh. I’m so excited. What a big day. It’s a huge step toward equality. Everyone should be able to be who they are, love who they want and marry who they want. It’s 2015; for us to still have judgment about people being gay is ridiculous, so I can’t believe it’s taken this long. It’s definitely a big day in history, and I’m just so excited.

**Considering you’re not feeling well, you probably won’t be celebrating just yet.**

Actually, I do have a party happening at my

house tonight for my assistant / best friend. We just worked through her birthday during album release week, and I feel so bad, so we’re finally celebrating at my house tonight. But we’ll be celebrating (marriage equality) as well, I’m sure. It definitely deserves a big toast. Do you have a partner?

**I don’t have a partner, no. Is being on Tinder key to finding “the one”? Perhaps you can give me some dating advice. What are Hilary Duff’s tips for finding a husband?**

(Laughs) Obviously, I haven’t been so lucky. No – I don’t know. I would not, uh – I would not go with me on Tinder. I don’t know! God. Geez. Maybe the right thing will be in the air tonight.

**Lately you’ve been a Tinder enthusiast; have you experienced Grindr?**

Well, I haven’t physically actually experienced it, like I don’t have it on my phone or anything, but it’s basically the same thing as Tinder, right? I know because my makeup artist, who’s one of my best friends, has used Grindr a lot and he’s told me all about it. I get to hear all the stories.

**And what are those stories?**

(Laughs) I mean, I don’t wanna put him on blast. You know what’s crazy is, I feel like you guys hook up a lot more freely. I don’t know if that’s just me because I’m a little more cautious, I guess. I don’t know what it’s like to be a totally normal girl who doesn’t give a fuck about anything.

**Because of your celebrity status?**

I think so, yeah. And also, I’m a mom and I’ve always been a relationship girl. I’m always surprised when he’s like, “Yeah, I was just in France and I met a dude on Grindr and went over to his house,” and like, they got it done. I’m so fascinated by it.

**Are you still on Tinder?**

I’m not still using it. It was really fun for me for a minute; I wanted to experience something totally normal and also shock people. No one thought I was really on it – and I *was* really on it! So I integrated that into my video (for “Sparks”) and showed a side of me that’s really real, really normal. I strive for normalcy in my life every day.

**Do your gay friends ever set you up?**

Not so much. We go out a lot together, but honestly, when I go out I’m not on the prowl. I just wanna go out and have a good time, and a lot of times I feel like having someone I don’t know around would interfere with that. I only have a certain amount of time to enjoy myself.

**What’s a good night for you?**

Being with four or five really good friends that all know each other, so we all have a lot in common. Laughing a lot, having a few drinks and maybe dancing a little bit. Having a good meal. A lot of times we go to the Hollywood Bowl – that’s always a good time for me. There’s something about that place that’s magic.

**Speaking of venues, will you be touring for this record? It’s been too long.**

Yes, I will tour. It took me so long to make my record because it wasn’t where it needed to be. When I started making the record, I wasn’t like, “I have to get it out at this time”; I was like, “It’s gotta be right – after seven years, why be in a rush now?”

Halfway through the process of making my record I signed onto the show “Younger” (on TV Land) and that was really good for me because I think it helped get me out of – you know when you just need to shake it up? I was



Photo: Ben Cope

terrified. My son had just started school and obviously I was going through a separation and I was like, "I can't just up and continue work," and then I was like, "Actually, I can and I'm going to." This is a great project, and I love New York and it was really good for me. I put a pause on the record and then came back to it after Christmas; it was a great thing for me. It helped turn the record into a proper direction. So, now, "Younger" got picked up for a second season. I'll shoot from September until December and then I'll tour after Christmas.

#### A world tour?

I think it'll be a world tour. I don't know if I can set it up like how I used to for five months at a time. Obviously my child is my number one priority, but I think I can do a month at a time and then come back and then go back out for a month. And it'll have to be a world tour because some of my biggest markets are in South America and Australia and Asia, so we'll see. No promises, but that's what I want to happen.

#### Your 3-year-old son, Luca, is so cute, by the way.

He's naked right now and covered in tattoos.

#### If he were to come out to you one day, what would you tell him?

Oh my gosh. I would be so accepting. I just had a long conversation with one of my adult friends who has grown children who are about to go off to college, and he's like, "I haven't really had this conversation yet," and I'm like, "You better do it now because if a kid doesn't feel accepted by his family, and they're getting ready to move into a new town, it will just create a divide. He'll go find his life and you won't be a part of that. He'll go find where he is accepted."

Ah, it could almost make me cry. I feel like... that must be such a lonely place if you don't feel accepted by your family. I can't imagine. So, 100 percent, I feel like I would notice all the signs and be the first one to bring it up if I had to, and I would want him to wholeheartedly be himself and know that that was accepted by me.

#### What advice do you have for youth who want to pursue showbiz?

Honestly, I don't know. It's a really hard road, to be honest. To make a transition from that is... I feel like even more so now than it was, your youth is totally taken away. You see these girls dressing like they're 20 when they're 14. With Instagram and all this – it's a youth-sucker. Being 14 in 2015 is intense. I don't know what I would've been like

if I had all those outlets to pay attention to and all that babble shit. It's kind of scary. It scares me raising my kid.

The industry is very fickle, and you just do what you can and know that all this stuff doesn't mean anything. I mean, obviously, appreciate the opportunities and work hard, but there's so much more to life. This industry is a tough one to crack, but then I look at someone like Miley, and as crazy as people might think the whole thing is, I commend her. She's so wholeheartedly being herself and is unapologetic about that and she's doing a great job.

#### By just being herself, she's become an idol for the queer community. She loves who she loves unapologetically, and that's a huge statement, don't you think?

Yeah, I do. And she's wickedly talented, so there's that. As much as people wanna hate on her for wearing this or doing that or whatever it is people hate on her for, I think she gets the last laugh. At the end of the day, her talent backs it all up. I don't always relate to everything that she's doing, but I love that she's unapologetically herself.

#### Your show, "Younger," revolves around a single mom who realizes the effect age has on starting a new career. But how about maintaining a career, because you started young. You've been in this business for more than half your life. From your own experience, what is it like to maintain relevancy in an ever-changing business like show business?

Yeah, gosh. There is no secret code that works, as lovely as that would be. I think I have a few things working in my favor. As torturous as it has been at some points in my life to be Lizzie McGuire, I think that when that show came out, it was such a part of who I was, I didn't feel like I was playing a part. The writers all knew me so well and were writing things that were happening in my life and things that I would say, and I was dressing exactly like I wanted. It was so me.

For whatever reason, that show grabbed people at a time in their life when they really needed her or related to her, so obviously I think I got a lot of fans from that who followed me into my music career. I've always been a very open and reachable person for them to relate to, but that's one thing that has really tied us together and why I've kept fans for such a long time who have really followed my career and stuck by me and grown up with me.

#### In what regard was being Lizzie McGuire "torturous"?

I don't think during the filming it was torturous. I loved it during the filming. I just didn't know what a success the show was gonna be, and after that – four years, five years after that – and I

was *still* Lizzie McGuire to people and that was super annoying. Now it's not. I don't care now. I'm grateful for it.

#### What would Lizzie be like now as an adult?

She'd be pretty rad. She would have stayed in school a little bit longer, and I feel like she'd be a sous chef or working at an architectural firm trying to make her way up but still fucking up at all times. (Laughs) I feel like she'd be cool – she wasn't always a nerd! She was just, like, a nice girl. I feel like she'd still be that same way, but I think she would be getting drunk and doing normal things that everybody does.

#### Is getting drunk a normal thing you do?

Yeah, on occasion, of course. You gotta let your hair down every once in a while.

#### After "Lizzie McGuire," was it hard to make the next move? Is it still hard to make the next move?

It is hard. Instead of me trying to calculate how to do it and how to be successful at it – a lot of people chose different ways than I did, like Lindsay Lohan and the Olsen twins and even Miley Cyrus – I just chose to bow out for a minute.

#### Why bow out?

I really needed it personally. I grew up in the spotlight and on tour and with everyone just knowing me and knowing me a certain way. At some point I was like, "I don't even know if I'm that person anymore, and I don't even have the time to figure that out." I was just making records and touring and making movies, and then doing it all over again. I basically did a cycle of that four times, and by the end of it, I was like, "I'm done. I don't enjoy this anymore. I'm not who I wanna be."

So, I just took a break. Everyone thought I was just absolutely nuts because I was really successful and making a lot of money. And it was scary, because there was no guarantee that my career was still gonna be there. I think, personally, it was very healthy, and I'm proud of where I am now. My new record being top 5 on Billboard after working on it for eight years – I'm proud of that. I don't need to be No. 1. I need to just do things that fulfill me and make me happy and hopefully connect with people at a certain level.

#### Desperation is a dangerous road, isn't it?

Yeah. And having a child, too, puts a lot into perspective. I'm definitely grateful to still have a spot, and I wanna be an actress too and do a show. I can't be where I used to be. I just have to be who I am now and be grateful for that. It's good. I'm happy.

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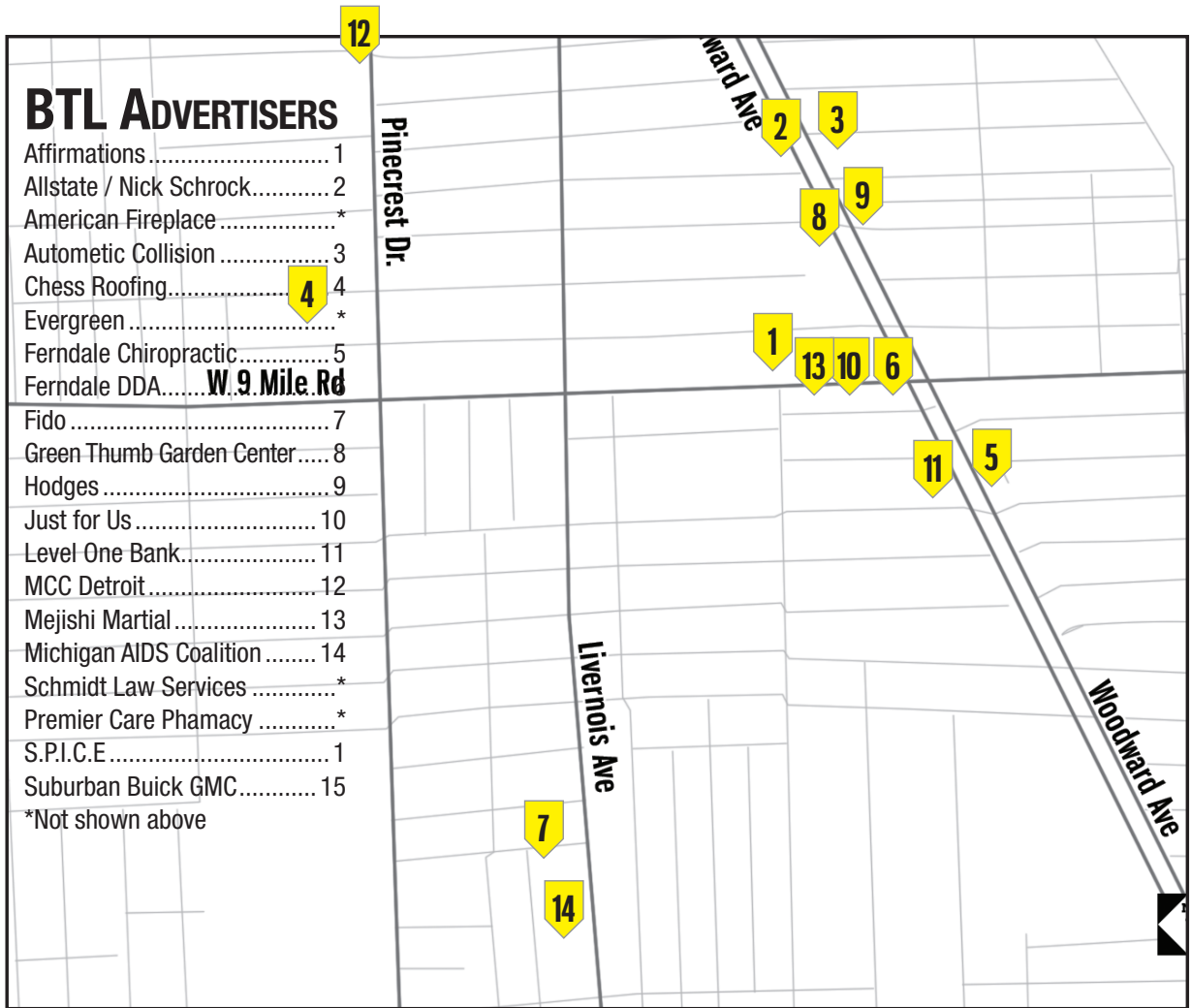
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# Ferndale's Grasshopper Underground Celebrates 5 Years Of Championed Sounds And Diverse Music Programming

If you've ever been to downtown Ferndale, you've noticed the little spot on the Nine Mile strip full of lights dripping Woodward avenue in a swirl of colors and heavy dance music carrying through the streets. Grasshopper Underground has become an essential part of metro Detroit's music scene and has contributed significantly to its growth. The boutique-sized venue provides patrons with an intimate party experience but brings in talent comparable to a multi-million dollar nightclub.

Celebrating five years of business, Grasshopper Underground is offering diverse music programming this summer, culminating in a massive Five Year Anniversary Party at the end of August. Unlike most entertainment venues, Grasshopper Underground is open seven days a week. While many venues are defined by the big acts they bring in, this is only one facet of Grasshopper's operation. The newly renovated upstairs lounge gives patrons a perfect happy hour spot, full of people watching right on Woodward and Nine Mile.

Besides being open for a daily happy hour, the venue is keeping it fresh with a new vibe every night. Sundays are Reggae/Hip-hop night; Mondays patrons are encouraged to come with

their favorite records for open vinyl night; Tuesday is industrial night; Wednesday begins with a yoga class from 7-8 p.m. in partnership with a x e t i c's "Sound & Yoga" series and sets the scene for hometown heroes to assume the decks; Thursday nights

**C**elebrating five years of business, Grasshopper Underground is offering diverse music programming this summer, culminating in a massive Five Year Anniversary Party at the end of August.

98.7 FM AMP Radio takes over with Top 40; and, finally, it all culminates with Fridays and Saturdays, which are reserved for world-class house and techno music.

No matter what kind of music you're into, there's something for everyone at Grasshopper this summer.

With the rise and fall of many venues over the past five years, Grasshopper has sustained because of management's passion for the music and their sterling professional reputation. "The talent we bring in love the club as much as those patrons that come to see

them," says owner Troy Ramroop in a recent conversation with Metro Times reporter Alysa Offman.

When asked about the five-year run, Ramroop says, "It's been amazing. Tough at times. An absolute roller coaster. The situation has gone from people laughing at the name Grasshopper when we first started to being recognized around the world."

He continues, "Personally, for me, I don't know how to describe it. Others say I am too personally attached to this business but this is my dream and spending the past five years realizing this dream just makes me want another five years."

Celebrating five years of championed sounds, the Grasshopper Underground is the premier destination in metro Detroit for fans of electronic dance music. From chart-topping international artists to Detroit's hometown heroes, this boutique nightclub hosts the most in-demand DJ talent seven nights a week.

Located at 22757 Woodward Ave., the Grasshopper Underground hours of operation is Monday-Saturday from 7 p.m. to 2 a.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, including a list of upcoming events, visit them at [thegrasshopperunderground.com](http://thegrasshopperunderground.com) or [facebook.com/thegrasshopperunderground.com](http://facebook.com/thegrasshopperunderground.com).

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## The OutField

# Extreme Sports Seek LGBT Acceptance

BY DAN WOOG

Five-year-old Tedi Bowler was “totally into” sports. But in Duluth, Minn. in the 1980s, she says, “girls were not allowed to do that.” So she grew wary of following her passion.

Two years later, she rode her first BMX bike. That too was a bit odd for a girl. But she loved everything about it – the tough terrain, the danger, the adrenaline rush – and she kept riding.

In seventh grade, Bowler came out as a lesbian. “It was a mess,” she recalls. “I was a loner. Plus, I had anger issues.” Being biracial, and born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, added to her stress.

Yet she kept riding. On a BMX bike – also called “bicycle motocross” – she felt free. She performed tricks. And Bowler was getting much-needed exercise.

Bowler gained the confidence to join team sports. She played ice hockey, flag football, softball and basketball, but extreme sports were the best.

At 35, after watching the X Games, Bowler began skateboarding.

For more than a decade, Bowler says, “I’ve been able to fully enjoy extreme sports.”

She’s worked two or three jobs at a time, since she was 19. Her Fetal Alcohol Syndrome made it hard to keep any one job, she says, so she has done mostly temp work. The variety appeals to her. “Otherwise, she says, “I’d be bored and agitated.”

“Boredom” is not something that BMX riders, skateboarders and other extreme sport athletes suffer from. They constantly seek the next challenge.

For Bowler, that challenge means getting extreme sports into the Twin Cities Pride celebration. And not just for the traditional participants: men.

About 10 years ago, Bowler says, women’s skateboarding was added to the X Games. However, BMX racing still has not made it into ESPN’s annual homage to extreme sports.

Bowler says that, very quietly, women have become a presence in the extreme sports world. But she knows of very few who self-identify as lesbian, or are open about it.

“We’re already being judged as women by the extreme sports

community,” Bowler explains. “Most lesbians probably keep quiet. They don’t want one more issue to contend with.”

She assumes there are “tons” of lesbians – and “probably plenty of gay guys too.” But, she says, extreme sports is one place where homosexuality is still not discussed.

She recalls one “aggressive” inline skater who came out in the 1990s. Bowler says his disclosure did not go over well.

Google searches for “gay or lesbian BMX riders” come up empty. There are a few online discussions about whether anyone is out in the sport. The level of discourse is not high. “It’s too manly a sport,” is one comment. Speculation about a rider with a pink bike is another.

After Tim Von Werne’s career was cut short under what one magazine called “a cloud of controversy,” gay skateboarders seem to have remained in the closet too.

Bowler has vowed to increase visibility of extreme sports, and of the lesbians and gay men who love it.

She envisions BMX racing, skateboarding and more as part of the 2016 Twin Cities Pride festival. “I’m

tired of walking around every year at Pride, feeling like I’m ignored,” she says. “This is a real sport.”

The celebration at Loring Park already includes several sports, Bowler notes. Minneapolis and St. Paul are filled with gyms; cross-training is very popular. Why not add extreme sports into the mix?

She also hopes her work will bring visibility to the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome community. If others can see that she’s gotten involved in something athletic, daring and fun, they might be tempted to ride a bike or skateboard too.

Dot Belstler is in charge of Twin Cities Pride. Her title is executive director, but it’s not as if she runs a huge staff. Virtually everyone else is a volunteer.

She points with – well, pride – to the day-long men’s volleyball tournament held on Saturday every year. On Sunday there are tournaments for soccer, rugby, touch football, softball and men’s and women’s basketball. The “Studs vs. Femmes” women’s basketball event creates particular energy; bleachers are brought in to handle the crowds that watch.

In addition, many sports organizations march in the Pride parade. “The rugby boys are favorites,” Belstler says. WHAM – the Women’s Hockey Association of Minnesota – “marches” on rollerblades.

Professional and amateur teams staff booths in Loring Park, including the Minnesota Lynx of the Women’s National Basketball Association, and two women’s full-tackle football teams: the Minnesota Vixen and Minnesota Machine. Minnesota United FC – a professional team in the North American Soccer League – offers demonstrations.

But, Belstler says, adding extreme sports may be easier said than done. Ramps and other equipment must be trucked in, and Loring Park is already filled to capacity.

Still, Teri Bowler is undeterred. She has a year to “ride” to the rescue of extreme sports.

*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](mailto:OutField@qsyndicate.com).*



## Editor's Pick

The Starr Commonwealth presents the Second Annual Starr Summer Youth Festival. The festival showcases the talents of Detroit's youngest artists in a daylong celebration of the arts. Featuring hundreds of artists and performers ages 6-20 in music, dance, theater, visual art, film and a Young Artists' Market, the event also includes a tribute to Detroit artist Tyree Guyton who will receive the Starr Art of Resilience Award for his work in supporting Detroit's communities and mentoring young artists.

The free, family-friendly event also includes hands-on art activities and free lunches on a first-come basis for young people up to age 18. Starr Commonwealth is a social services agency serving Detroit youth and families for more than 100 years.

The festival will run from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, July 25. Paradise Valley Park (formerly Harmonie Park) is located at 311 Grand River Ave., Detroit. Find more information at [artofresilience.org/festival](http://artofresilience.org/festival).

# Happenings

## OUTINGS

### Thursday, July 23

**Pearl, Katya, Trixie and Violet** 8 p.m. Murray & Peter, 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren. 586-268-3200. [neptix.com](http://neptix.com)

**Season 7 Contestants from RuPaul's Drag Race** 8 p.m. Tickets: \$25+. Murray

& Peter, 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren. 586-268-3200. [neptix.com](http://neptix.com)

### Friday, July 24

**A Night to Remember: Disco Divas** Chene Park, Detroit. 313-393-7128. [Cheneparkdetroit.com](http://Cheneparkdetroit.com)

**Divas Night Out: The King & Queens**

**Ball** Chene Park, 2600 Atwater, Detroit. [Cheneparkdetroit.com](http://Cheneparkdetroit.com)

**Second Annual HIR Golf Outing/Fundraiser** 7 p.m. Holland is Ready, 4600 Macatawa Legends Blvd., Holland. [Hollandisready.org](http://Hollandisready.org)

**Blinddog Smokin'** 8 p.m. Tickets: \$25. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations

Dr., **Three Oaks**. 269-756-3879. [Acorntheater.com](http://Acorntheater.com)

### Saturday, July 25

**MAC Yard Sale** 11 a.m. \$1 T-shirts, dance CDs, GLBTQ DVDs, 25 cent jewelry, plus male posters; 12 packs of assorted greeting cards, art work from our past events, plus other miscellaneous items. Cash or check sales only, Michigan AIDS Coalition, 429 Livernois, **Ferndale**. [MichiganAIDScoalition.org](http://MichiganAIDScoalition.org)

**Great Lakes Bay Pride** 12 p.m. Great Lakes Bay Pride, **Saginaw**. [GreatLakesBayPride.org/home2.html](http://GreatLakesBayPride.org/home2.html)

**Gay Straight Alliance in Berrien County** 2 p.m. LGBTQ youth, friends and allies, ages 14-18. OutCenter, 124 Water St., **Benton Harbor**. 269-925-8330. [Outcenter.org](http://Outcenter.org)

**Pride Mini Ball** 6 p.m. StatusSexy.com, Detroit. [Statussexy.com](http://Statussexy.com)

**Ids of March** 8 p.m. Tickets: \$30-40. The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., **Three Oaks**. 269-756-3879. [Acorntheater.com](http://Acorntheater.com)

### Monday, July 27

**Operation Kidsafe Safety Week** Operation Kidsafe, 37720 Amrhein Road, **Livonia**. 734-237-1052. [operationkidsafe22@gmail.com](mailto:operationkidsafe22@gmail.com)

**Tony Bennett & Lady Gaga** Meadow Brook Music Festival, 3554 Walton Blvd., **Rochester Hills**. 248-377-0100. [Palacenet.com](http://Palacenet.com)

**Lansing Capital Roller Derby Summer Boot Camp** 6 p.m. Six week, 12 session Roller Derby basic skills training boot camp. \$60 due day 1 of camp, accepting cash or check. Open to both men and women. Lansing Capital Roller Derby, 7868 Old M-78, **East Lansing**

. [lcrdbootcamp@mittenmavens.net](mailto:lcrdbootcamp@mittenmavens.net) [Mittenmavens.net/join/bootcamp](http://Mittenmavens.net/join/bootcamp)

### Tuesday, July 28

**Karaoke and Half Off Wine** \aut\BAR, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677. [Autbar.com](http://Autbar.com)

**MAC Health** 2 p.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), Detroit. [MichiganAIDScoalition.org](http://MichiganAIDScoalition.org)

### Wednesday, July 29

**Free Pool and \$1 Off Beer** \aut\BAR, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677. [Autbar.com](http://Autbar.com)

**MAC Health** 6 p.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. [MichiganAIDScoalition.org](http://MichiganAIDScoalition.org)

### Thursday, July 30

**A Prairie Home Companion with Garrison Keillor and special guest Sarah Jarosz** Tickets: \$38+. Wharton Center, 750 E. Shaw Lane, **East Lansing**. 800-WHARTON. [Whartoncenter.com](http://Whartoncenter.com)

**Trivia with Terry and Thirsty Thursday**

Half off beer and well drinks with student ID. \aut\BAR, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677. [Autbar.com](http://Autbar.com)

**MAC Health** 2 p.m. Mondays by appointment only. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), **Ferndale**. [MichiganAIDScoalition.org](http://MichiganAIDScoalition.org)

### Friday, July 31

**Bistro Fridays** Special menu. \aut\BAR, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677. [Autbar.com](http://Autbar.com)

**Ferndale Pub Crawl** Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), **Ferndale**. [MichiganAIDScoalition.org](http://MichiganAIDScoalition.org)

**Lake Effect Pride** 6 p.m. Pride in July. DJ Dance party with wedding bells. OutCenter, 201 Graham Ave., **Benton Harbor**. 269-925-8330. [Outcenter.org](http://Outcenter.org)

### Saturday, Aug. 1

**Take It From The Top** Musical theater workshop. Wharton Center, 750 E. Shaw Lane, **East Lansing**. 800-WHARTON. [Whartoncenter.com](http://Whartoncenter.com)

**turnIT aut** \aut\BAR, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677. [Autbar.com](http://Autbar.com)

**Washtenaw Pride Picnic** 12 p.m. Jim Toy Community Center, Pauline and Fifth, **Ann Arbor**. [Jimtoycenter.org](http://Jimtoycenter.org)

## MUSIC & MORE

**Mo Pop Festival** "Mo Pop Festival" Tickets: \$99.50-199. West Riverfront Park, Detroit. July 25 - July 26. [Mopopfestivaldetroit.com](http://Mopopfestivaldetroit.com)

**POPULUX** "Sunday Matinee" Soulful & classic house on the patio with DJs Al Ester & John "Jammin'" Collins. No cover. 21+ welcome. POPULUX, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. June 28 - July 26. [Populuxdetroit.com](http://Populuxdetroit.com)

**Quicken Loans** "Free Summer in the Parks" Running through Sept. 2, will be held in: Campus Martius/Cadillac Square, Capitol Park, Grand Circus and Paradise Valley. Four historic parks, Detroit. June 4 - Sep. 2.

**Sound Board** "Tower of Power with Average White Band". Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. July 23. 800-745-3000. [Motorcitycasino.com](http://Motorcitycasino.com)

**The Ark** "The Ark: 50 Year Fling" Five-night celebration. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. July 22 - July 26.

See Happenings, page 26

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**Saturday**  
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# Bawdy 'Beaches' Dispels Movie Version's Sentimentality

BY TANYA IRWIN

If you are expecting many similarities between the PG-13-rated movie "Beaches" and the over-the-top raunchy parody "Beaches Be Trippin'," you might be disappointed. The emphasis is definitely on the raunchy, and it's definitely a show to hire a babysitter for. And don't bring grandma, either, unless she can handle a plethora of F-bombs, blowjob jokes and a champagne glass that doubles as a dildo.

However, if you're a fan of drag, quick wit and even a little improv, you'll be right at home at The Ringwald Theatre's annual "Summer Camp" production: director and writer Brandy Joe Plambeck's take on the sappily sentimental "Beaches."

Even the 10-year-old characters at the beginning of the performance are over the top. CC Bloom (Joe Bailey) smokes a cigarette and quizzes the lost-on-the-beach Hillary Whitney (Richard Payton) about the size of her father's penis and whether his pubic hairs are bushy or neat (in a questionable exercise of trying to determine which hotel the hapless Hillary might be staying at based on such characteristics of her father.) This is bread-and-butter, of course, for the Ringwald, so regulars of the theater surely won't plotz at all over the bawdy material.

Interspersed amidst the acting are videos of the two main characters' penpal correspondence over the years (with CC's laden with R-rated language.) The correspondence is read aloud by the characters, which is the voiceover to videos. CC's letters are riddled with profanities and vulgarities while Hillary's are more earnest – yet both elicit chuckles. (Hillary talks about Jew camp and the wonders of her first crush while CC talks about having to sleep with people in order to get acting parts.)

The actors are the highlight of the play, which has very few props and one constant backdrop: a painted wall of palm trees in a blue sky with a few white clouds. Bailey and Payton reunite after last year's turns as Jane and Blanche Hudson in "Whatever, Baby Jane!" Bailey is hysterical as the bawdy, breast-shaking, wise-beyond-her-years CC Bloom. Payton has a sassy side of his own, often displayed in his expressions of exasperation in dealing with the ever narcissistic CC.

Brenton Herwat and Scott Jason Alexander Cook do a terrific job of playing every remaining character, including CC's mom Leona, love interest John Pierce, Hillary's husband Michael Essex and Hillary's daughter Victoria. Their ability to quickly change costumes and personas is sometimes put to the

## INFO

### Beaches Be Trippin'

The Ringwald Theatre

22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale

July 11-Aug. 3, 2016; Saturday and Monday evenings at 8 p.m., Sunday matinees at 3 p.m.

\$10-20

248-545-5545

TheRingwald.com

test, as when Hillary and CC sit in the waiting room waiting for the doctor to appear. Hillary confides to the audience that the doctor has missed his cue to enter, as he has done in every single rehearsal in the previous week. It all works to the delight of the audience.

The off-script banter with the audience and the obvious improv deviations from the script are some of the most entertaining elements of the play. Early in the performance, Hillary's spike heel goes through the floorboard on set. She gracefully recovers as CC harps on character John Pierce for not keeping the fictional set in better condition.

In another on-the-fly crack, CC ribs Hillary about being too permissive in allowing 7-year-old Victoria to get so many tattoos (which aren't hidden by the child's dress Herwat has donned.) Hewat's body art had been on full display in a previous scene where the lean and attractive actor is wearing nothing more than Daisy Duke shorts, cowboy boots and a smile.

Musical numbers are lip-synced for the most part, with the exception of Hillary's mini-rendition of "Free At Last." Payton has a lovely voice which is underutilized in the production – but hey, she's not the one who is supposed to be a singer/actress; that's CC's shtick.

There is no intermission and the scenes quickly flow between live acting and the video-projected letters as the characters quickly age. Anyone who is even vaguely familiar with the movie knows Hillary dies at the end, and the play makes no attempt to keep the inevitable ending a secret. Once she births the baby that CC will end up taking custody of at the end of the performance, Hillary coughs into a hanky and then reveals a bloodstain to the audience.

It's hard to believe impending death could be a comedic device, but somehow in this production it is, with the bloody handkerchief prompting a chuckle whenever Hillary shows it to the audience.

Even after Hillary's matter-of-fact death, the jokes continue to fly until the very last word of the very last scene. Nothing is sacred, and that's OK, because laughter is contagious.

See more theater reviews at [Encoremichigan.com](http://Encoremichigan.com).

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## Editor's Pick

Noted Detroit painter Tom Parish brings a collection of paintings that abound with the essence of Venice to Robert Kidd Gallery in Birmingham. Inspired by the shimmering canals and architectural beauty of Italy's "Serenissima" (the old serene one), Parish's stylized realist paintings are constructed from blocks of sturdy modernist color. The shimmer of roiling water, depths of captivating linear vistas and the classicism of craft are elements moored to the heart of Parish's timeless imagery.

In addition to a career of full-time studio work, professor Emeritus Tom Parish taught painting at Wayne State University's school of art for over 30 years. Parish's works are represented in many important public, private and corporate collections both in the U.S. and abroad.

Tom Parish's "Venezia!" will be displayed in the gallery until Aug. 15. Robert Kidd Gallery is located at 107 Townsent St., Birmingham. Call 248-642-3909 or visit robertkiddgallery.com for more information.

## ▶ Happenings

Continued from page 24

734-761-1800. Theark.org

**The Magic Bag** "Bob Schneider: The King King Tour" Tickets: \$18+. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 8 p.m. July 26. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

**The Palace of Auburn Hills** "The Eagles" Tickets: \$63.60-208.05. Joe Louis Arena, 19 Steve Yzerman Dr., Detroit. Sep. 21 - July 24. 313-396-7000. Olympiantertainment.com

**The Wharton** "Garrison Keillor" Tickets: \$38. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan State University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. July 30. 800-WHARTON. Whartoncenter.com

**Warped Tour** "Warped Tour". The Palace of Auburn Hills, 5 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills. July 24. 248-377-0100. Palacenet.com

## THEATER

**2AZ** The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through July 26. 734-433-7673. purplerosetheatre.org

**American Idiot** Tickets: \$37. Barn Theatre, 13351 West M-96, Augusta. Through July 26. 269-731-4121. barntheatreschool.com

**Banana for Turtle** Tickets: \$5-10. PuppetART, 25 E. Grand River Ave., Detroit. Through Aug. 15. 313-961-7777. puppetart.org

**Beaches Be Trippin'** Tickets: \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Aug. 3. 248-545-5545. theeringwald.com

**Buyer & Cellar** Tickets: \$36-43. Mason Street Warehouse, Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. July 24 - Aug. 9. 269-857-2399. sc4a.org

**Cymbeline** Tickets: Free; suggested donation of \$15. Lakeside Shakespeare Theatre, Tank Hill, 188 Park Ave., Frankfort. Through July 23. lakesideshakespeare.org

**Ernie** Tickets: \$20-25. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Through Aug. 2. 313-471-6611. olympiantertainment.com

**Groesome Playground Injuries** Tickets: \$10. The Underground Theatre, The Studio Theatre in the lower level of the Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. July 23 - July 25. 313-577-

2972. wsushows.com

**Hay Fever** Tickets: \$15-24. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, DeWitt Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. July 24 - Aug. 6. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

**Invasive Species** Tickets: \$27-32. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. July 23 - Aug. 23. 248-347-0003. tippingpointtheatre.com

**Jeff Daniels' Onstage & Unplugged** Tickets: \$75-125. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, Purple Rose Theatre, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Aug. 1. 734-433-7673. Purplerosetheatre.org

**Jihad Jones and the Kalashnikov Babes, by Yussef El Giundi - Michigan Premiere!** Tickets: Pay-what-you-can; suggested donation \$20. Theatre Nova, The Yellow Barn, 416 W. Huron St., Ann Arbor. July 24 - Aug. 16. 734-635-8450. https://artful.ly/theatre-nova/store/events/6413

**Junie B. Jones: The Musical** Tickets: \$15. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, DeWitt Studio Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Through Aug. 7. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

**Old Love** Tickets: \$20. The Snug Theatre, 160 S. Water St., Marine City. Through July 26. 810-278-1749. riverbanktheatre.com

**Opera Outdoors** Tickets: Free. Michigan Opera Theatre, Grand Circus Park, Woodward Ave. at Adams St., Detroit. 7 p.m. July 23. campusmartiuspark.org

**Pippin** Tickets: \$12-33. Tibbits Summer Theatre, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. July 23 - Aug. 1. 517-278-6029. tibbits.org

**Rumplestiltskin** Tickets: \$8. Tibbits Summer Theatre, Tibbits Summer Theatre, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. Through July 25. 517-278-6029. tibbits.org

**Smokey Joe's Cafe** Tickets: \$15-30. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, DeWitt Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Through Aug. 7. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

**The Art of Murder** Tickets: \$15-35. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Through Aug. 23. 517-655-SHOW. williamstontheatre.org

**The Great American Trailer Park Musical** Tickets: \$34-36. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Through Aug. 9. 269-343-2727. farmersalleytheatre.com

**The Taming of the Shrew** Tickets: Free; suggested donation of \$15. Lakeside Shakespeare Theatre, Tank Hill,

188 Park Ave., Frankfort. Through July 24. lakesideshakespeare.org

**The Taming of the Shrew** Tickets: \$10 by reservation only. Slipstream Theatre Initiative, 20937 John R., Hazel Park. July 19 - Aug. 4. slipstreamti.com

**The Tempest** Tickets: \$8-15. Upper Peninsula Shakespeare Festival, Presque Isle Bandshell, Peter White Drive, Marquette. July 18 - July 26. upshakes.org

**The Winter's Tale** Tickets: \$8-15. Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company, Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph. 7:30 p.m. July 25. 269-983-3688. boxfactoryforthearts.org

**To Kill a Mockingbird** Tickets: \$15-24. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, DeWitt Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Through Aug. 8. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

## ART 'N' AROUND

**N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art** "Susan Aaron-Taylor: Journeying". N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art, 52 E. Forest, Detroit. June 12 - Aug. 22.

**Flint Institute of Arts** "Beauty, Passion and Bliss: 19th Century Masterworks". Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. May 17 - Aug. 16. 810-234-1695. flintarts.org

**Hotworks** "Orchard Lake Fine Art Show" Tickets: \$5. Children 12 and under are free. West Bloomfield, 6900 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. July 25 - July 26. 248381-0079. Hotworks.org

**MOCAD** "The Obama Paintings and the Lincoln Monument". Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. May 15 - Aug. 2. 313-832-6622. mocadetroit.org

**N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art** "Sam Gilliam: Prints". N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art, 52 E. Forest, Detroit. June 12 - Aug. 22.

**robert kidd gallery** "Tom Parish: Venezia". robert kidd gallery, 107 Townsend St., Birmingham. July 17 - Aug. 15. 248-642-3909. Robertkiddgallery.com

**The Scarab Club** "Cool & Warm: Scott Dolan & Jeanne Ruzzin". The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. July 1 - Aug. 29. 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.u


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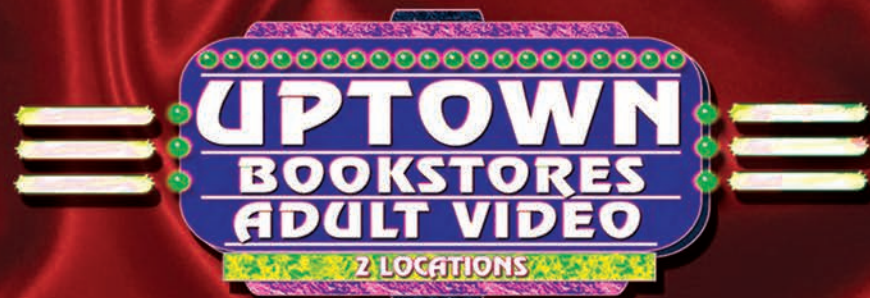
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# Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## Ellen Page: 'Lioness'

Ellen Page's next project is called "Lioness," and it sounds like the kind of film we need a lot more of. She'll play US Marine Corps Lance Corporal Leslie Martz, a real-life American soldier in Afghanistan, and leader of a Female Engagement Team. Her job was to work with Afghan women, provide them with skills that would allow them to become more independent, and to gain secret information about their husbands, most of whom were Taliban. Martz's story took place during the time of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," however, so her second battle, as a lesbian, was with the very military she was serving. It also makes the story something of a period piece, even if the hairstyles don't have to change. The film was written by Rosalind Wiseman (the El Rey Network's action series "Matador") with more casting and director to come. Until then, at ease.



Ellen Page.

## Tig Notaro is 'Punching The Clown'

Still don't know who Tig Notaro is? You will, and very soon. "Tig," the documentary about the lesbian stand-up comic's year of cancer and heartbreak, a brutal rough patch that galvanized her career, brought her immense amount of media attention. The film made her, ironically enough, funnier and more successful than ever, and is already up and streaming on Netflix after premiering at Los Angeles's Outfest. Building on this buzz, she'll co-star in the indie feature "Still Punching The Clown," from comic Henry Philips and co-writer/director Gregori Viens. Philips, whom you may know from "Jimmy Kimmel Live," stars as a – what else? – stand-up comic struggling to make it. The film co-stars Sarah Silverman, Academy Award-winner J.K. Simmons, Mike Judge, Michaela Watkins and Clifton Collins Jr. Look for it to punch its way into arthouse theaters later this year.

## 'Babadook' director takes on lesbian tragedy

For her next project, Jennifer Kent, the filmmaker behind last year's critically acclaimed horror indie "The Babadook," is taking on a different sort of horror: the destruction of 19th-century lesbians in "Alice + Freda Forever." Based on the non-fiction book by Alexis Coe, "Alice + Freda Forever" concerns 19-year-old Alice Mitchell, a Tennessean who pretended to be a man in order to marry her 17-year-old girlfriend, Freda Ward. Separated by force after their love letters were discovered, Alice slashed Freda's throat with a razor, and was

then committed to a mental hospital (for both the attack and for the "insanity" of lesbianism) where she died a few years later. The case became one of the tabloid tragedies of the era, and was responsible for cementing the idea of lesbians as violent, frustrated men in the culture. So... not exactly reflective of the current love-fest surrounding same-sex marriage, but in Kent's capable hands, it's going to make a fascinating film.

## Somebody is still watching 'Project Runway.' Is it you?

We have never given up on loving "Project Runway." Sure, it hasn't produced a viable fashion professional since Christian Siriano – and that was so long ago people were still throwing the word "tranny" around on broadcast television and somehow getting away with it – but no matter, we love all the stitching and bitching and the way Tim Gunn has gone from most-valuable-sideman to Boss of Everybody. Heidi Klum, Zac Posen and Nina Garcia are back, of course, and the list of guest judges is, as usual, a mix of people whose opinions matter and those who have something to promote, even if it's only the urgent message that they still exist. They include Kiernan Shipka – who apparently transformed into an adult when we turned our head for a second – as well as Paula Patton, Bella Thorne, Tracee Ellis Ross, Ashley Tisdale, Coco Rocha, Ciara, designer Lisa Perry and Spice Girl Mel B, among others. The new season begins Aug. 6, and remember: don't bore Nina.

Romeo San Vicente's next challenge involves you making him a very stylish sandwich. He can be reached care of this publication or at [DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com](mailto:DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com).

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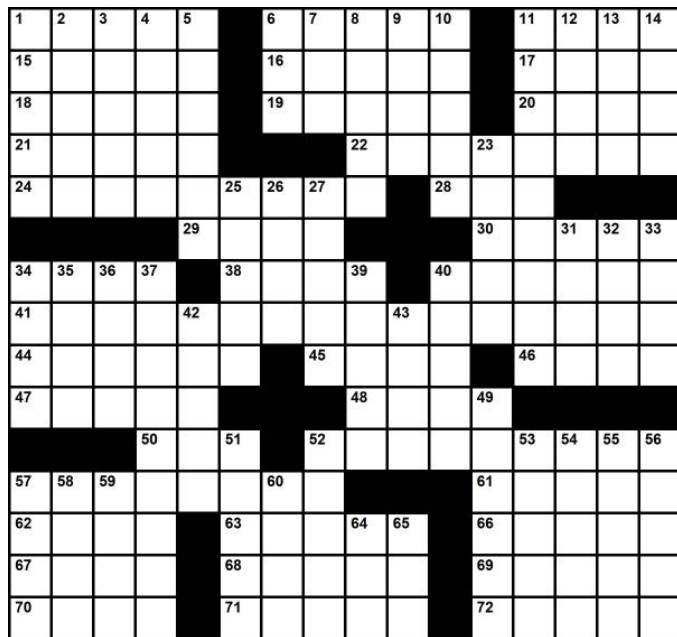


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# Q Puzzle



## You Can't Tie the Knot? NOT!

### Across

- 1 Protection for one's head
- 6 Sweet dream spoiler
- 11 Prepare for phone sex
- 15 "I am \_\_\_ than grass..." (Sappho)
- 16 Hub-to-rim lines
- 17 Event for Geert Blanchart

18 Cara of "Fame"

- 19 Right on the button
- 20 What Dorian Gray never does
- 21 Porno film "\_\_\_ 69"
- 22 "I Do" singer
- 24 "Chapel of Love" singer
- 28 You betcha
- 29 Like sex for one

### Down

- 1 Cathedral of Hope topper
- 2 Claire McNab's inspector Ashton
- 3 Alaskan tongue
- 4 Slow, to Saint-Saens
- 5 Emulates a peacock
- 6 "We \_\_\_ Family"
- 7 Overly permissive

- 8 Butler's last words
- 9 Affluent, to Lorca
- 10 Walter portrayed by Danny Kaye
- 11 Where cross-dressers race
- 12 He did Moor good, then harm
- 13 Perfect serves from Mauresmo
- 14 It's sometimes more
- 23 "Coffee, \_\_\_ Me?"
- 25 Floorboard supporter
- 26 Earthen pot
- 27 Biblical prophet married to Gomer
- 31 "If I Only \_\_\_ Brain"
- 32 Poet Broumas
- 33 One available for future reference?
- 34 In the center of
- 35 Butch Janet
- 36 "The Spell" author Hollinghurst
- 37 Gay honeymoons won't contribute to this
- 39 Cruising, maybe
- 40 Had in mind
- 42 Kind of bar
- 43 AI who blew it
- 49 Pete of folk
- 51 Hell for the Greeks?
- 52 Head-oriented group
- 53 Left page, in a manuscript
- 54 Muse for Millay
- 55 Removal of the foreskin and more
- 56 It helps a baker get it up
- 57 "South Park" composer Shaiman
- 58 Vehicle for the high C's?
- 59 New York Liberty game officials
- 60 Moola
- 64 Caesar's three
- 65 Queens on a chessboard, ironically

- 30 Threesome member for Dumas
- 34 Gaza Stripper, e.g.
- 38 Rick's old flame
- 40 Frame of mind
- 41 "Wedding Serenade" singer
- 44 Bound by routine
- 45 Mishima's continent
- 46 '50s talk-show pioneer
- 47 Homosexuality and more, in Leviticus
- 48 Sea eagles
- 50 LBJis veep
- 52 "Beautiful Day" singer
- 57 What the four songs in this puzzle celebrate for LGBTs
- 61 Frightfully strange
- 62 Architecture, to Julia Morgan
- 63 Blue material, but not porn
- 66 Persona non \_\_\_
- 67 Diplomacy breakdown
- 68 De Wolfe of design
- 69 Rob on the screen
- 70 Lambda Legal Defense suit, e.g.
- 71 Shirt spoiler
- 72 What a chicken hawk may raid

Solution below



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### Puzzle on this page

S	C	A	L	P	A	L	A	R	M	D	I	A	L		
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