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## Breakout Singer Allie X To Hit Detroit

Singer Talks LGBT Community, Genre-Bending  
& Resisitng The Thrall of LA

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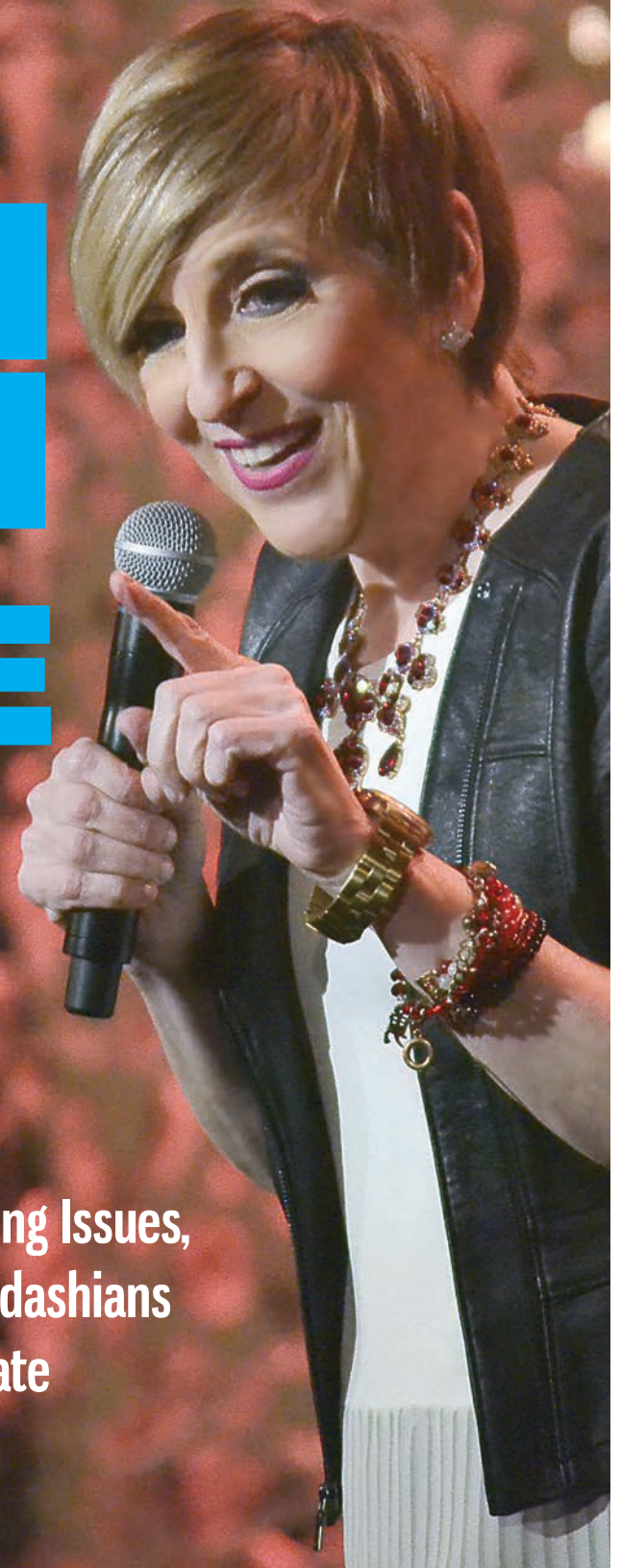
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# The QUEEN of MEAN Goes SERENE



Lisa Lampanelli Talks Eating Issues,  
Feeling Sorry For The Kardashians  
And Ridding Herself Of Hate

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**“No one’s rights should be subject to a popular vote. It is insulting, it is demeaning and it is just wrong.”**

– Houston Mayor Annise Parker said opponents of the ordinance ran a “calculated campaign of lies designed to demonize a little understood minority.”

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## BRIEFS

### Committee Votes State Will Pay For Same-Sex Marriage Fight, Not Schuette

LANSING – The state House Appropriations Committee voted directly on party lines Nov. 5 in favor of Attorney General Bill Schuette's Legislative Transfer Request 2015-8, which will transfer reimbursement funds to Schuette's office to pay for his failure in the marriage equality case. Schuette's fight against marriage equality cost state taxpayers \$2 million in legal fees.

State Rep. Adam Zemke, D-Ann Arbor, served on the committee and offered a motion that would have blocked the transfer of funds, a move that would have forced Schuette's hand to take the money from his own funds.

"I'm disappointed members of the Appropriations Committee gave their tacit support today for this waste of taxpayer money," Zemke said in a statement. "There are dozens of more significant and necessary areas to which this money could be applied. We owe it to our constituents to use a funding allotment of this magnitude appropriately. It is not the responsibility of Michiganders to reimburse the Attorney General for this wasted use of funds. It should not be on the backs of Michigan taxpayers that he chose to be on the wrong side of equality."

The state agreed to pay out a total of \$1.9 million in legal fees to the near 5,420-plus labor hours the legal team put into the case, billed at \$350 per hour. The legal team took on the case pro-bono with none of the initial attorneys expecting the case to climb through the courts to reach SCOTUS.

"Despite calling himself a fiscal conservative, Bill Schuette went to the Legislature to ask for a bailout for his own failure before the U.S. Supreme Court," said Lonnie Scott, executive director of Progress Michigan. "Today's vote is further proof that Attorney General Bill Schuette expects Michigan taxpayers to foot the bill for his quixotic crusades against the people of Michigan. Rather than stand on the side of equality with Michigan families, Schuette chose the path of discrimination and intolerance and now everyone has to pay for his political gamesmanship."

Carole Stanyar, who spent a grand total of 2,182 total hours on the case, received a payout of \$763,875; Dana Nessel will receive a payout of \$407,785 for 1,165 hours; Kenneth Mogill, 1,011 hours for \$353,920; Robert Sedlar, 237 hours for \$83,160; Mary Bonauto, 796 hours for \$278,845; and Vickie Henry, with less than a week, for \$11,235.

### Possible Hate Crime, Homicide In Madison Heights

MADISON HEIGHTS – Sometime on Halloween night, police say a killer entered the home of Fernando Gonzales, strangled him and then set the house on fire.

Madison Heights Deputy Police Chief Corey Haines told the Daily Tribune Nov. 2 that Gonzales "led an alternative lifestyle" and that "the possibility exists this could have been motivated by a hate crime, that's one of the possibilities we're looking at."

Gonzales, 59, worked as a hair stylist out of his home and had lived in Madison Heights for 15 years. Gonzales was seen by strangers passing out candy earlier in the evening.

Police and firefighters arrived on the scene and considered the blaze suspicious. Police say the killer stole Gonzales' black Accura and the garage door was left open. The vehicle was later recovered Nov. 2 about a mile away in a shopping center parking lot.

Police have identified no suspect at this time but Haines believes Gonzales knew his killer fairly well, since there appeared to be no signs of forced entry.

Madison Heights police are seeking tips as they continue their investigation. Anyone with information is asked to call police at 248-585-2100.

### Indiana Chamber Backs Statewide Gay Rights Protections

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) – The Indiana Chamber of Commerce is calling on lawmakers and Republican Gov. Mike Pence to expand state civil rights laws to include sexual orientation and gender identity during the coming legislative session.

The statewide business group announced Nov. 5 that its board of directors voted "overwhelmingly" to endorse that step during its annual fall meeting.

Indiana Chamber President Kevin Brinegar says the expanded protections are needed to improve the state's future business competitiveness after the national backlash to the state's religious objections law that Pence signed in March.

The chamber board is comprised of more than 100 business executives and civic leaders. The group says Indiana will suffer if steps are not taken to secure the state's reputation as a hospitable and welcoming place.



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# Love v Johnson Judge Seems Sympathetic To ACLU Argument

BY AJ TRAGER

**DETROIT**— Lawyers from the ACLU and the ACLU of Michigan argued Nov. 4 before Federal Judge Nancy Edmunds against a state policy set in 2011 by Secretary of State Ruth Johnson that prevents many transgender men and women from correcting the gender on their driver's licenses and other forms of identification.

Edmunds appeared to be extremely sympathetic to the ACLU argument, recognizing that the gender identity and the legal gender marker of trans men and women should be consistent and that Michigan is the only state in the union to have such strict regulations on amending birth certificates.

Arguing for the six plaintiffs were the Director of the LGBT and AIDS Project of the ACLU of Illinois, John Knight, and Deputy Legal Director of the ACLU of Michigan, Dan Korobkin. Arguing on behalf of the state was Assistant Attorney General for the state of Michigan, Erik Grill.

The ACLU filed the lawsuit in May of this year on behalf of six Michigan residents. Current Michigan law states that an individual must have their birth certificate amended to reflect their gender in order for documents such as a driver's license to be changed as well.

While some states have laws that allow for individuals to amend their birth certificates with a court order, Michigan refuses to change the gender marker on a birth certificate until the individual has undergone sexual reassignment surgery and can provide a letter of completion signed by a medical physician.

The state was the first to address the court. Directly following Grill's opening arguments, which included the state's statute on requiring which information is on the driver's license and a description about the proposed change adding "subjective information to the license," Judge Edmunds responded sternly.

"You need to address substantive due process," she said to Grill and explained that focusing on the interest of the state is "not the least bit helpful to talk about."

The state brought up two cases: one referencing the outing of a rape victim and the second about



Back row: Jacki Anderson plaintiff's council from Proskauer Rose; Tina Seitz, plaintiff; Dan Korobkin; Mike Derksen, plaintiff's council from Proskauer Rose; Michael J. Steinberg, legal director ACLU of Michigan; and Rebecca Veal of the ACLU Trans Advocacy Project. Front row: Amy Hunter, ACLU Trans Advocacy Project; John Knight; Jay Kaplan, ACLU of Michigan special projects attorney; Nicole Tacey, ACLU Trans Advocacy Project; Crystal Hubbard, ACLU Trans Advocacy Project; and Phillip Hubbard, husband to Crystal Hubbard. BTL Photo: AJ Trager

individual privacy interest threats of bodily harm that centered on a generalized or perceived threat of harm. The state tied in the cases to argue that when discussing the inconsistency of gender expression and a gender marker on a license, it is in fact "third parties (that do the most harm) and how they interpret that status."

According to a study produced by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task force titled "Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey," 40 percent of those who presented ID that didn't match their gender identity or gender expression reported being harassed; 15 percent report being asked to leave an establishment with 3 percent reporting being assaulted or attacked.

The state then asked the court "at what point do we consider a sex change" and reflected on the spectrum that is gender expression and at what point Michigan residents are constitutionally entitled to a change in their gender marker based on what treatments they have undergone, if they have had

gender confirmation surgery, for example, or if they are on day one of hormones.

In that same study conducted by the NCTE and the NGLTF, only 33 percent of trans men and women report having undergone gender confirmation surgery. While 59 percent of respondents reported updating the gender marker on their driver's license or state ID, 41 percent live without an ID that matches their gender identity.

This presents some serious problems, as the ACLU of Michigan discussed in their arguments in court. By changing the legal gender marker, Knight argued, trans men and women would be granted consistency, which is currently being denied to them. Current Michigan policy also forces residents to out their status whenever they show their license which is a clear violation that puts people at risk, Knight argued.

"We had to show our IDs to get into this building, for example," Knight pointed out.

Edmunds found this particular argument compelling in that it violates people's constitutional right to privacy and does so by revealing information that could put them at

serious risk

Along with arguing that the reveal of personal information is a violation of constitutional rights, the ACLU also argued that being forced to disclose such personal information compels people to speak or communicate something that is private and thus is an equal protection violation and a violation of free speech rights.

Knight argued that the policy has an additional constitutional violation: since Michigan residents are forced to have a particular operation done that they may or may not want in order to get an accurate license, it violates their due process, as well. And finally, Knight argued that in respect to individuals who moved to Michigan from states that do not allow for amendments to birth certificates such as Ohio, it makes it impossible for these individuals to achieve consistency on their documents.

"This is a claim of a different dimension," Edmunds said to Grill during the state's follow up testimony discussing how and when a resident files a medical records affidavit. "This is more than male or female, this is about how they live

40 percent of those who presented ID that didn't match their gender identity or gender expression reported being harassed.

their lives."

Grill quickly fell under the court's critical eye again when he theorized that a trans man or woman could get an affidavit on the day they question their gender identity.

"You want to trivialize it by saying they could get an affidavit on day one," Edmunds said to Grill.

Edmunds is currently deciding if she will honor the state's request to dismiss the case. Her response is expected the second week of November.

"She seemed most sympathetic to the privacy argument," Knight told BTL after the hearing. "I think the case went well in the sense that the judge certainly was sympathetic to the issues. She knew the arguments and she understands how important it is. So there isn't much more we can hope for aside from that. I am very pleased."

The plaintiffs are represented by Jay Kaplan, LGBT special projects attorney for the ACLU of Michigan; Knight; Korobkin; Michael J. Steinberg, legal director of the ACLU of Michigan; and Steven Gilford, Michael Derksen and Jacki Anderson from the Chicago office of Proskauer Rose LLP.

Read the ACLU official complaint against the state at [www.aclumich.org/sites/default/files/Love\\_v\\_Johnson\\_IDpolicy\\_Complaint052115.pdf](http://www.aclumich.org/sites/default/files/Love_v_Johnson_IDpolicy_Complaint052115.pdf).

## CALL TO ACTION

The ACLU of Michigan has provided a letter template for any Michigan resident who wants to be actively involved in this matter. Visit <http://gaybe.am/idp> for more information and to send a letter to Secretary of State Ruth Johnson.

# 2015 Election Results: Some Losers, Some Winners For LGBT Community

BY AJ TRAGER

Michigan voters came out to the polls Nov. 3 to vote on a number of proposals and elected official positions. Based on the results of the vote, big change is set to stir up Lansing and Kalamazoo, and Southfield will welcome its first openly gay mayor.

Kenson Siver won the bid for Southfield Mayor with 57 percent of the votes over former city commissioner Sylvia Johnson. Siver's background includes 14 years as a city councilman and 45 years as a teacher and administrator at Southfield Public Schools. Campaign signs for Siver were littered with anti-gay graffiti late last month with phrases such as "fag," "rapist" and "racist." Southfield police say they nabbed the campaign sign vandal.

In very surprising news, Mayor of East Lansing Nathan Triplett lost his bid for a third term on the East Lansing City Council and thus his position as mayor. The council was seeking to fill three seats. Triplett, the only incumbent on the ballot, finished fourth and lost his council seat to former state Rep. Mark Meadows, Shanna Draheim and Erik Altmann. The mayor and mayor pro-tem positions are appointed by the elected council.

"Tonight's result wasn't what we had hoped for. I'd like to wish the Council members-elect the best of luck as they take office later this month," Triplett said on his Facebook after the results came in.

"While I won't be seated at the City Council table come Nov. 17, you can all rest assured that I'll do all I can to keep East Lansing moving forward," he continued.

Former executive director of Equality Michigan, Emily Dievendorf, lost her bid for a position on the Lansing City Council to incumbent Carol Wood followed by Patricia Spitzley.

"This was a community supported and driven campaign," Dievendorf said on her campaign page. "Together, we proposed a positive and lasting future for Lansing – and while I will not be able to advance it from the City Council – I know that all of us are in this for the long haul."

Michigan State Director for Enroll America, Erin Knott, won her bid for Kalamazoo City Commissioner and received 3,961 votes. Knott is a longtime progressive and LGBT activist.

Joining Knott on the Kalamazoo City Commission is Shannon Sykes who received 3,604 votes. Sykes, 33, served as the African-American constituency director for state Rep. Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo, in his 2014 campaign and currently serves as board member of CARES, an HIV/AIDS service organization in Southwest Michigan.

Bay City voters elected their first openly gay man to the Bay City Commission. David Terrasi is to replace Commissioner Elizabeth Peters to



Kenson Siver won the bid for Southfield Mayor



Shannon Sykes will serve on the Kalamazoo City Commission. Sykes, 33, served as the African-American constituency director for state Rep. Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo, in his 2014 campaign and currently serves as board member of CARES, an HIV/AIDS service organization in Southwest Michigan.



Bay City voters elected their first openly gay man to the Bay City Commission. David Terrasi

the 2nd Ward Bay City Commission. Terrasi, 46, married his partner of 12 years this year following the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. He has 20 years experience as a school psychologist with the Saginaw Intermediate School District and works as an adjunct instructor at Saginaw Valley State University.



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## Jayne And April DeBoer Officially Adopt Their Five Children

BY AJ TRAGER

**PONTIAC** – In an unforgettable and long-awaited day in their family history, Jayne and April DeBoer formally adopted all five of their children Nov. 12 in Oakland County Circuit Court.

“Today is a historic day in the life of the DeBoer-Rowse family, all five of our kids will finally have two legal, equal parents!!!!,” Jayne wrote on her Facebook page. “We are so happy and grateful to all of those who supported us and helped us get to this wonderful day!”

The hearing was before Judge Karen McDonald.

“I’m very honored,” she said just before finalizing the adoption documents.

Jayne and April have been together for over a decade and were the plaintiff couple in the DeBoer v. Snyder case, which challenged the same-sex marriage ban in the state. They sought to joint-adopt their children but were denied their due process under the law since Michigan law prevents any couple from jointly adopting a child if they are not married.

Their case went all the way through the federal court system to land a hearing before the U.S. Supreme Court earlier this year. Following a hearing in June, SCOTUS declared that states’ bans on same-sex marriages were unconstitutional and made marriage equality the law of the land.

The couple is raising five children at their Hazel Park home. For Jayne, an emergency room nurse, and April, a NICU nurse, the legal battle they fought for three years was always about their children and how Jayne and April could provide protections for them as listed legal guardians of all their kids.

The couple was officially married in August. Many companies in Michigan decided to volunteer their services and provided a wedding, entirely free of cost, for the plaintiff couple.

The road to equality was long and strenuous for Jayne and April who have been at the center of the media spotlight since late 2012. They are looking forward to a quieter life without the constant media attention.

## Kentucky Clerk Kim Davis Loses Latest Gay Marriage Appeal

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP)** – Kentucky County Clerk Kim Davis has lost another bid to delay issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

The Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals on Nov. 5 denied her latest request for a reprieve.

Davis stopped issuing marriage licenses after the U.S. Supreme Court effectively legalized gay marriage in June. Four couples sued her, and U.S. District Judge David Bunning then ordered her to issue the licenses. He later clarified his order to include all couples, not just the four who filed suit.

Davis’ attorneys have appealed that expanded order several times, arguing that the mandate to issue licenses should apply only to the four couples who filed suit. They received licenses during Davis’ five-day stint in jail for defying the court’s order.

The appeals court again rejected Davis’ request.

# Pugh Trial: A Recap In ‘Sexual Grooming’ Case

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

**DETROIT** – The long awaited Charles Pugh trial – for sexual grooming, as the mainstream media calls it – finally took place last week. Though Pugh, quite noticeably, was absent from the proceedings. Now living in New York, Pugh was not required to appear in person since he currently resides more than 100 miles away from the city.

Though his testimony was shown via video tape, it was a risky gamble on Pugh’s part not to return to Detroit and face his accuser directly. “He is wrong that his lack of attendance is irrelevant,” U.S. District Judge David Lawson wrote in an order excusing Pugh from appearing. “Pugh’s voluntary absence from trial – thereby depriving the jury of one of the tools it might have used to assess his credibility – is relevant to the issues in this case.”

Opening statements were made in the case on Nov. 3. The following day, an announcement was made that the Detroit Public Schools – Pugh’s co-defendant in the case – had settled with Pugh’s accuser, now 20-year-old Khody Sanford, for the sum of \$350,000. This news was met with disdain by at least one former Detroit Public Schools emergency manager named in the case.

“Anytime somebody needs some money, they sue the school system or the city,” said former Detroit Schools Emergency Manager Roy Roberts to the Detroit Free Press. “They can be about crazy kinds of issues that make no sense. And quite often if you do it, you can get paid, and that’s quite tragic.”

In his videotaped testimony, Pugh admitted he was wrong to have approached Sanford the way that he did, to have sent him the text messages and to have asked for a video of his former mentee masturbating. But he was adamant that Sanford knew exactly what he was doing and that he caused him no harm.

“He’s not a minor,” Pugh said. “He’s an adult. It’s not like he’s 9 years old. He’s grown.”

Pugh also adamantly denied ever touching the former student, who had previously claimed Pugh put his hand on his leg while he was sitting in Pugh’s city owned sedan.

“I’m positive I did not touch him,” Pugh said. “He’s wrong. If I touched him, why didn’t he say anything? To me? To his mom? It conveniently came up later ... I didn’t touch him and he knows I didn’t touch him.”

In addition to Pugh, others who testified in the trial included the Madison Heights police officer who took Sanford’s statement after his attorney convinced him to file a police report and a former colleague of Pugh’s from radio station WJLB who claimed Pugh had bragged to her that he could get poor guys to do anything for money.

On Friday, the jury heard from Sanford, as well as from his mother – the one who first alerted the media to the story in 2013 – Tamu Gaines. Sanford testified he was ostracized by friends after the scandal broke and that he was so distraught he wandered the streets for two months eating out of trash cans and washing his clothes

weekly in people’s swimming pools. “I just walked around, basically, where my feet led me,” Sanford said.

Closing arguments in the case took place Monday morning and by the afternoon the case had gone to the jury for deliberation. Sanford’s attorney, William Seikaly, asked the jury to award his client at least \$1.5 million.

“Anything less than \$750,000 and Mr. Pugh will go to some fancy restaurant in Manhattan and have a toast to victory,” Seikaly told the jury.

That claim is rather suspect, however. Pugh was last reported to be living in a modest Brooklyn apartment and working as a waiter. No matter the outcome, Pugh’s career has been ruined and his earning potential substantially diminished.

The jury in the Charles Pugh civil trial returned late Monday afternoon after just four and a half hours having decided to award Pugh’s accuser, Sanford, \$250,000 – a sum far less than the \$1.5 million Sanford’s attorney had asked for. The jury dismissed Sanford’s claim of sexual harassment, but having apparently decided to believe Sanford’s assertion that Pugh put his hand on his thigh, the jury decided the act constituted battery.

The jury also found Pugh responsible for intentional infliction of emotional distress. Obviously disappointed with the award amount, Seikaly told the Detroit Free Press he believed Pugh would consider the award amount a victory and that Pugh would likely “go out and celebrate.”

## Teacher Who Showed Controversial Film To Return To Work

**CONWAY SPRINGS, Kan. (AP)** – A Kansas teacher will return to work Monday after being on leave since mid-October for showing a controversial anti-bullying film to his students.

Conway Springs school officials said Nov. 6 that Tom Leahy, a social studies teacher at Conway Springs Middle School, will be allowed back in the classroom with some safeguards in place. The Wichita Eagle reported that Superintendent Clay Murphy would not discuss details of the safeguards.

Leahy was placed on leave after he showed students “Love Is All You Need,” a short film that depicts a fictional world in which heterosexual children are bullied by homosexual classmates.

Leahy, who had said he planned to resign but changed his mind on, told the Eagle he would no longer comment on the controversy.

“The school district and Mr. Leahy agreed that he would be on leave for 10 days from the classroom,” the statement said. “During this leave, both sides consulted legal counsel and facts were gathered and rumors were eliminated to make sure all information was available prior to making any decisions.”

Leahy has said he did not get his principal’s permission to show the film and did not notify parents before the film was shown.

“Mr. Leahy has stated that he knew the film might be controversial and has agreed that he should have checked with

the administration prior to showing the film,” Friday’s statement said. “He also agrees that some of his comments made in the classroom after the film added to the controversy.”

Neither Murphy nor Leahy would elaborate on those comments.

Leahy told the Eagle earlier this week that he showed the film after he was bothered by some students’ reaction to a history lesson last month. When students were told to create their own colonies, like early American settlers, several students decided that homosexuals would not be allowed in their colonies, Leahy said. Other students created colonies where everyone was welcome, which led to heated debates and hard feelings.



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## Colombia High Court Rules For Adoptions By Same-Sex Couples

**BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)** – In a historic decision, Colombia’s constitutional court opened the door Nov. 4 for same-sex couples to legally adopt children in the conservative South American nation.

In the 6-2 ruling, the court said adoption agencies can’t discriminate against gay, lesbian and transsexual couples during an adoption process.

Colombia’s Roman Catholic Church immediately denounced the decision as violating the rights of children and going against the wishes of the majority of Colombians who polls say overwhelmingly reject giving gays the same rights to marriage and adoption as heterosexual couples.

“Our protest is emphatic,” Monsignor Juan Vicente Cordoba, a church spokesman, told RCN TV, reiterating the church’s demand that the issue be decided by a plebiscite.

“We have the right so that the voice of the majority of Colombians is heard. The court is there to take care of the laws, not change them,” he said.

Supporters of the decision say it could help streamline the adoption of some 10,000 children in Colombia under the protection of welfare agencies.

President Juan Manuel Santos’ government argued in favor of the plaintiffs in the landmark case. The high court paved the way for Wednesday’s decision last year when it authorized adoption rights for gay couples in which one member is a biological parent.

With last Wednesday’s decision, Colombia joins only a handful of nations in Latin America, including Uruguay and Argentina, in allowing same-sex couples to adopt. It also comes on the heels of a number of gay-friendly rulings, including one reaffirming the rights of same-sex couples to form civil unions with the same inheritance and legal rights as married couples. Still pending is a proposal to allow same-sex couples the right to wed.

Extended briefs are available online at:  
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# Houston Delivers Tough Blow, Repeals Anti-Discrimination Ordinance

## Mayor Parker: ‘No One’s Rights Should Be Subject To Popular Vote’

BY LISA KEEN

In a tough blow to LGBT people everywhere, Houston voters on Nov. 3 repealed a year-old nondiscrimination ordinance – a repeal that appeared to be largely driven by fears that it would enable sexual predators to enter women’s restrooms to assault young girls.

The vote was 39 percent for and 61 percent against Proposition 1, asking whether voters wanted to retain the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO). The law, passed by City Council in May of last year, prohibited discrimination against a wide range of minorities in a city where more than 50 percent of the population is a racial minority.

But opponents of the measure, the Campaign for Houston, portrayed the ordinance as “The Bathroom Bill” and pounded the airwaves with an ad showing a man following a young girl into a public bathroom stall. The voiceover warned that a vote for HERO would mean “any man at any time could enter a woman’s bathroom by simply claiming to be a woman that day.”

“Even registered sex offenders could follow women or young girls into the bathroom and, if a business tried to stop them, they’d be fined,” said the ad.

Supporters of the ordinance tried to counter the message with their own ad, showing a retired Houston police officer and “father of four girls” saying, “It’s already illegal for men to go into women’s restrooms to harm someone.” They also warned that, if Houston repealed the ordinance, it would likely mean a loss of major employers for the city and the loss of such high profile events as the Super Bowl.

Houston’s three-term Mayor Annise Parker, the first openly gay mayor of any major city in the country, championed the ordinance from the beginning and blamed its rejection on “a campaign of fear-mongering and deliberate lies.” She also made clear during the campaign that she felt the effort to repeal the ordinance was an attack on her and Tuesday’s vote was a particularly stinging loss for Parker, who is finishing up her term-limited third term as mayor.

At a gathering of “Vote Yes on Prop 1” supporters last Tuesday night, Parker reiterated those feelings, noting that, during her 40 years as a political activist, she has watched the city vote four times to deny equal rights to lesbians and gays.



Houston Mayor Annise Parker, left, greets a supporter at a fund raiser for the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance in Houston on Thursday, Oct. 22, 2015. The ordinance is a broad measure that would have consolidated existing bans on discrimination tied to race, sex, religion and other categories in employment, housing and public accommodations, and extend such protections to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people. The measure failed Nov. 3 after an ugly campaign. AP Photo/Pat Sullivan

“No one’s rights should be subject to a popular vote,” said Parker. “It is insulting, it is demeaning and it is just wrong.” She said opponents of the ordinance ran a “calculated campaign of lies designed to demonize a little understood minority.”

Parker said opponents – whom she characterized as “right-wing ideologues and religious right” – “just kept spewing an ugly wad of lies from our TV screens and from pulpits.”

Texas Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick portrayed the repeal effort as a pushback by the church to “stand up” in “a Christian nation.” And he sought to extend the political implications of the vote. Speaking to opponents of the ordinance at their victory rally last Tuesday night, Patrick said the vote was a message to “those who supported this, including Hillary Clinton who wants to be the next president, that you’re out of touch with America, you’re out of touch with your own party, you’re out of touch with common sense, you’re out of touch with common decency.”

Echoing a buzz phrase often used by Republican presidential frontrunner Ben Carson, Patrick applauded Houston voters for leading the effort to “end this constant political correctness attack on what we know in our heart and our gut as Americans is not right.”

**Echoing a buzz phrase often used by Republican presidential frontrunner Ben Carson, Texas Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick applauded Houston voters for leading the effort to “end this constant political correctness attack on what we know in our heart and our gut as Americans is not right.”**

The Houston Chronicle reported that voter turnout Nov. 3 broke all records since 2003, drawing nearly 27 percent of voters to the polls.

As of the last filing deadline, Campaign for Houston, the group that wants to repeal the ordinance, reported raising only \$62,000 and spending \$88,000. Houston Unites Against Discrimination, the group supporting the ordinance, had received \$1.7 million in

See Houston Blow, next page

# Houston's Nondiscrimination Measure's Defeat Prompts Reflection

**HOUSTON (AP)** – Supporters of an ordinance that would have established nondiscrimination protections for gay and transgender people in Houston looked to regroup after the measure was soundly rejected by voters.

The Houston Equal Rights Ordinance lost Nov. 3 by a vote of 61 percent to 39 percent, despite supporters of the measure outpacing opponents by a 3-to-1 margin. Here are some answers to questions about the ordinance's defeat and what might happen in the aftermath of that loss.

## Why Was the Ordinance Rejected By Voters?

Bob Stein, a political scientist at Rice University in Houston, said local elections, which included the selection of a new mayor, prompted a large turnout by Republicans and African-Americans, who both ended up voting against the ordinance.

Stein said voters, particularly African-Americans, would have likely been persuaded to approve the ordinance if they had been presented with the argument that failing to pass the measure could mean potential economic losses, including companies deciding not to relocate to Houston and possible loss of the 2017 Super Bowl in Houston.

## Could There Be Any Fallout From The Ordinance's Defeat?

Supporters of the ordinance had warned that failure to pass it could lead to economic boycotts of the city or might endanger plans for Houston to host the Super Bowl in 2017 or the NCAA Final Four in 2016. The NFL said

Nov. 4 the ordinance's defeat will not affect the league's plans for the 2017 Super Bowl.

Mike Waterman, president of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau, said the NCAA has indicated the Final Four will remain in Houston in 2016. But the NCAA has indicated if Houston wants to host a Final Four after 2016, one of the factors that will be taken into consideration is whether the city has some sort of equal rights ordinance in place, he said.

Nov. 4, one customer who had booked the convention center for an event expressed concerns in the wake of the ordinance's defeat, but Waterman said officials were able to reassure that individual.

## What Does This Mean For The Gay Rights Movement Locally and Nationally

The ordinance's supporters, including outgoing Houston Mayor Annise Parker, vowed they would continue pushing for its approval. But with Parker ending her final two-year term, it's unclear if the new mayor and City Council will take up the issue.

Bob Harvey, president and CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership, an influential business group in the city, said the business community remains committed to an equal rights ordinance but local leaders need to help the public have a better understanding of the gender identity issues that are addressed in the ordinance before going forward.

Opponents of Houston's ordinance alleged it would allow male sexual predators to go into women's restrooms. LGBT rights activists say they are bracing for opponents across the country to make the same argument in their campaigns.

### ► Houston Blow

Continued from p. 10

contributions and \$1.3 million in expenditures.


According to city campaign finance records, the Human Rights Campaign contributed more than \$400,000 to pro-ordinance campaign Houston Unites Against Discrimination. HRC spokesman Stephen Peters said the group also contributed more than \$300,000 through in-kind resources, "like staff time working on the campaign, phone banks and mail and phones to mobilize Houston voters."

"HRC has deployed 34 staff members to Texas, the largest amount we've deployed for a single campaign," said Peters.

The pro-gay national conservative social welfare group American Unity Fund gave

\$250,000 to Yes on Prop 1. A political action committee called the Annise Parker Campaign gave \$95,000.

Houston is the fourth most populous city in the nation and the only one that lacks a comprehensive nondiscrimination ordinance. It is also an old, bloody battleground for gays. In 1985, 28 percent of registered voters rejected two laws – one to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in city employment and another to records about city hiring based on sexual orientation. Both were defeated with 82 percent of the vote. In 2001, 52 percent of Houston voters approved a change to the city charter to prohibit any "privilege" based on sexual orientation and to deny domestic partners of city employees the benefits provided to the spouses of married city employees.



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## Micro-Dotting Us And 'Them'

# Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

The human brain is often called “the three pound universe.” It contains a hundred billion neurons, allowing for more connections among these busy, busy, busy transmitters than there are twinkling stars in our Milky Way.

Take off a week or two of your next vacation time to align these neurons: the resulting line dance would be 621 miles long.

Poet Emily Dickinson – whose own graceful 19th century neurons danced to hymnal meters – wrote, “The brain is just the weight of God/ For, lift them, pound by pound/ And they will differ, if they do/ As syllable from sound.”

Obviously, brains do differ. How much – say, between the statistically “normal” brain and that of someone with schizophrenia, a bipolar person, a male and a female brain, a straight and gay brain – is rapidly and tantalizingly being mapped by scientists.

Neurologically curious, the National Institute of Health launched a \$3 million Human Connectome Project that combines a variety of MRI and CAT scanning/imaging technologies to systematically pinpoint wiring, micro-dot by micro-dot.

One outcome eagerly anticipated: how our inward galaxy of neurons gives rise to single, conscious minds. (“The brain is wider than the sky/ For, put them side by side/ The one the other will include/ With ease, and you beside.”)

There’s growing evidence of differences between gay and straight brain structuring, some subtle, some quite pronounced, according to “The Male Brain,” by Dr. Louann Brizendine (Broadway Books; \$24.99).

She comments in the appendix (“The Male Brain and Sexual Orientation”), “Are men gay because their brains are different? Studies have been conducted for two decades in order to answer this question. Some of them have found evidence of anatomical or functional differences between gay and straight brains.

“Others have established that genes play a part in determining gender orientation, which implies the existence of brain differences.” (Get out your “Gray’s Anatomy,” Mary. It’s going to be a phrenological bumpy night!)

Some recent findings are here summarized: “A part of the hypothalamus called the suprachiasmatic nucleus is twice as large in gay males as in straight males. A bundle of connections between the brain’s two hemispheres – called the anterior commissure – is also larger in gay males than in straight males. It’s also larger in straight females as well.

“The hypothalamus in gay male brains is stimulated by the scent of male sweat, but in the straight male brain it is not. This suggests that a difference in the brain’s hypothalamic circuits for response to pheromones may attract gay males to the scent produced by the sweat glands of men and plays a role in their sexual orientation.” (And LA Fitness workout mania.)

“Spatial tasks: gay men perform more like straight women. Identical twin pairs are more likely to share sexual orientation than fraternal twin pairs. Thirty-five percent of sexual orientation is attributable to genetic influences.

“The asymmetrical size of the two brain hemispheres that is characteristic of straight male brains is not observed in gay male brains. In this respect, gay male brains were more like female brains. Swedish research studies suggest that there are differences between gay and straight male brains that are not directly involved in sexual attraction.”

Bridge, brunch, ballet anyone? Football, golf, tight end, who?

Charles@pridesource.com



BY JAY MADDOCK

## Viewpoint: Ballot Initiative

# Maybe We’re Missing The Point

Before we wage a costly ballot campaign, it is crucial that we focus our efforts on educating people on trans lives.

“No Men In Women’s Bathrooms” was on T-shirts and posters and brochures that the opposition used during the campaign to keep Houston an inclusive city for all its residents. And these five words inflicted enough fear, based on lies and anti-trans rhetoric, to prevent an equal rights ordinance to pass. We once again have an opportunity to learn that civil rights should never be put to a vote. Historically, even when equal right ordinances have won in a vote, the most marginalized lives still suffer great harm from backlash and hate rhetoric from opposition.

I’m from Kalamazoo, where in 2009 our city also had to vote to keep our nondiscrimination ordinance that our city commission unanimously passed. In Kalamazoo, we won. But that didn’t mean trans people stopped getting harassed for trying to pee, or while walking to work, or while living their lives. That’s because regardless of win or lose in these campaigns for inclusion

and fairness, this country needs a lot of in-depth and intentional education around trans people.

As long as the opposition uses lies and fear-mongering to scare people out of doing the right thing, the solution has to be putting the humanity back into trans identities. As long as trans people, particularly transwomen, are associated with humanity-robbing slogans like “no men in women’s bathrooms,” not only will we continue to lose, but we will continue to watch transwomen be harassed, assaulted and murdered. In fact, if we don’t speak out against it, we will be culpable in this dehumanization. The opposition is relying on people’s fear and discomfort with trans bodies to justify not protecting trans lives. When the opposition uses this tactic, it’s not just an ordinance on the line: it is real, living and

breathing lives on the line.

When we focus on whether an ordinance wins or loses, maybe we’re missing the point. When we focus on getting out the vote, maybe we’re missing the point. When we focus on nationwide trends of acceptance of LGBT families, maybe we’re missing the point. When we leave out the presence of racism and sexism and how it plays out in transphobia, maybe we’re missing the point. When we forget to include trans people in the leadership and direction of these campaigns, maybe we’re missing the point.

We are missing the point. These transphobic narratives are intentionally written not only to keep us from winning, but to keep us from being seen as human. Because

See Maddock: Ballot, page 14

## Viewpoint: Ballot Initiative

### It's Better To Be Pissed Off Than Pissed On



BY HOWARD ISRAEL

I strongly oppose any sort of LGBT-related ballot initiative in Michigan! History shows we are the losers when gay rights are put to a popular vote. Civil rights protections should **never, ever** be put to a popular vote!

We need to take a synchronized, strategic long view to amending Michigan's nondiscrimination law, the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, by first electing gay and gay-friendly candidates to Michigan's governing bodies. We then need to work through the Legislature to amend Elliott-Larsen.

If Dana Nessel's committee succeeds in creating a ballot question for Michigan's voters to make the decision about the civil rights of LGBTQ people, we are very likely to lose. Across the years and the country, the history of ballot initiatives aimed at expanding the civil rights of LGBTQ people is heartbreaking. Generally, voters have decided against us. With acute pain, I remember our attempt in 2004 to stop the constitutional ban on marriage equality in Michigan. We lost not only the ballot initiative, but also we lost valuable spirit, energy, time and lots and lots of money. A proposed anti-discrimination ballot initiative in Michigan, as proposed by Nessel, is estimated to cost between \$12-16 million. Much of that money would be spent on defending ourselves from the falsehoods and propaganda promulgated by our horrible opponents. That money could be much better used

strengthening and building our LGBTQ community nonprofit service organizations.

I recognize that recent polls show increased levels of support by the general public in Michigan towards LGBTQ equality. But I am genuinely concerned that an ill-advised, irresponsible, badly-timed LGBTQ-issue ballot initiative in Michigan right now would bring forth the "hounds of hell" – the malicious and lying anti-gay, arch-conservative operatives/terrorists (political and religious) who exploit LGBT issues to increase their power and fill their wallets. If we are forced to defend the proposed ballot initiative in Michigan, massive amounts of money will need to be raised. Where will the funds come from? Michigan's LGBTQ community organizations – and the donors who support them – are already financially stretched.

See Israel: Ballot, page 14

## Viewpoint: Ballot Initiative



BY MICHAEL EINHEUSER

### The GLBT 11th Commandment

Who knew that the political wisdom of former President Ronald Reagan would be relevant to the LGBT political agenda in Michigan? Reagan popularized his 11th Commandment: "Thou shalt not speak ill of any fellow Republican." Those who claim political leadership in our community should give those words careful thought.

Who also knew that we would ever see the day that an all-star collection of LGBT advocacy organizations would jointly

issue a statement that both finds common cause with Gov. Rick Snyder and obliquely but soundly criticizes the work of Attorney Dana Nessel, a key legal advocate in *DeBoer v. Snyder*.

Reality check one: Snyder signed legislation prohibiting local communities from recognizing same-sex unions and allowing adoptions agencies to discriminate against us on religious grounds.

Reality check two: In representing the plaintiffs in

*DeBoer v. Snyder* (yes, that Snyder), Nessel was a key part of the nationwide recognition of constitutional protections for all same-sex unions. Ms. Nessel has arguably accomplished more for our community than any other single individual in the state.

Ms. Nessel has launched an effort to collect signatures to put the question of amending Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act on the 2016 ballot. The amendment would include sexual orientation and gender

See Einheuser: Ballot, page 14

## Transmissions

### The Tip



BY GWENDOLYN ANN SMITH

Last year, Time Magazine said we had reached the "Transgender tipping point." Since then, Olympic hero Caitlyn Jenner has joined other high-profile transgender celebrities such as Janet Mock, Laverne Cox, Laura Jane Grace and others. The visibility of transgender people in the mainstream media has never been higher.

In spite of all the visibility, however, one topic dominates transgender issues more than any celebrity: bathrooms. I've talked about bathrooms a lot, so much so that I'm really not sure I have much new to say.

In Houston, Texas, the referendum on their equal rights ordinance, HERO, failed. The bill covered a total of 15 protected classes against bias in several categories. It failed by a vote of 61 percent to 39 percent. Once again, the adage that you should never allow a vote on minority rights rings true. Such a struggle almost always fails.

Everyone is now busy trying to figure out why it lost, and laying blame all over the place. Even unfairly at the feet of the black community, or celebrities such as Beyoncé.

I don't think you can so easily claim that this or that group did not do enough. While I think a lot of LGBT groups could have done more – it failed because the "other side" dominated discussion. They did so by using the "bathroom meme," claiming that this bill would somehow allow predators to be allowed to go into changing rooms and restrooms and victimize your wife or children.

Televisions and radios played commercials making the above claim, and T-shirts on opponents to HERO declared, "No Men in Women's Bathrooms. Vote NO on Houston's Prop #1." Few seemed to know what the bill actually covered, only believing it was only about men in women's rooms. This is how well the opposition controlled the dialogue.

As I've already said, I don't want to

talk about bathrooms anymore. I feel like I've made it as clear as I can that rights for transgender people do not lead to predators in women's rooms. The facts back it up: there have been no cases of assault in any city where these rights have been given. These bills do not repeal any sexual assault laws. It's ludicrous.

You cannot, however, appeal to facts when it comes to arguments claiming people dear to you will be victimized, and you will have no recourse. As ridiculous as the argument is, for many it seems to trip a primal trigger. They go against logic, seeking only to defend what they find precious.

What the transgender community needs right now is an emotional argument that helps those so triggered to stand down, to feel their loved ones are safe and protected – and are safer with transgender protections in place.

With the loss of HERO we will see more of these fights against transgender rights crop up, especially in a presidential election year, when conservatives want to get out the vote. This too is akin to what went down with Proposition 8 and other anti-marriage bills. This is exactly why conservative groups seem to be heavily invested in culture wars: it gets people out to vote for their candidates as they pull the lever against us.

Speaking of the presidential race: presidential candidate Ben Carson also chimed in on HERO, for what it's worth. "It is not fair for (transgender people) to make everybody else uncomfortable," Carson said. "It's one of the things that I don't particularly like about the movement." This man is one of the top GOP picks at current, which should scare you.

I can't help but ask who else has "made everybody else uncomfortable" in the bathroom. As I've said before, every rights battle seems to have its bathroom moment. Heck, the same arguments were used with race segregated bathrooms as well as the Equal Rights Amendment battle of the 1970s.

I got talking about bathrooms again, didn't I? Enough about them: here's what I really want to talk about.

In this country, since Nov. 20, 2014, 22 transgender people have been reported killed due to anti-transgender violence. They – and the likely hundreds more killed worldwide – will be honored this Nov. 20, Transgender Day of Remembrance. This will be the 17th

See Smith: Transmissions, page 15

## ► Einheuser: 11th Commandment

Continued from p. 13

identity as protected classes. The signatories to the statement believe such an endeavor should not be undertaken. They say:

“Victory in Michigan requires thoughtful planning and, most importantly, sitting down with all of the many communities and groups whose support and engagement will be essential to successfully updating our laws. Any attempt to move forward without a clear path to victory is ultimately a disservice to the LGBT people who live in Michigan and risks dividing our community and others who deserve protection from discrimination.”

**Funding and conducting a ballot issue campaign is an even taller one. But the accusation that Ms. Nessel is divisive and that her work will hinder the protection of the community from discrimination is a needless public insult to one of our community's heroines.**

This is no doubt that getting the necessary signatures to put this matter on the ballot is a very tall order. Funding and conducting a ballot issue campaign is an even taller one. But the accusation that Ms. Nessel is divisive and that her work will hinder the protection of the community from discrimination is a needless public insult to one of our community's heroines.

The strategy urged by these advocacy groups is working to elect a more gay friendly Legislature. That's a pretty tall order too. It's been observed that the current legislative district maps are so badly gerrymandered toward conservative Republicans that meaningful change will never happen until the maps are redrawn in 2021.

The two strategies are not mutually exclusive. The work of one group takes nothing away from the other. Ms. Nessel's has a good start. Her co-chair is Lansing attorney Richard McLellan, one of the state's most effective Republican political operatives.

The LGBT community should observe its own 11th Commandment. Let's agree not to publicly speak ill of fellow LGBT groups or individuals that act with good faith and seek to accomplish our shared goals.

*Michael Einheuser is the principle in Einheuser Legal Group, P.C. specializing in Estate Planning and Elder Law located in Bingham Farms. He can be reached at 248-398-4665 or online at [www.einheuserlegal.com](http://www.einheuserlegal.com).*

## ► Maddock: The Point

Continued from p. 12

it is easier to kill, imprison, fire, evict and harm someone whom we do not see as human. We're missing the point that these narratives are not only transphobic, but they are also racist, sexist, misogynist and classist. Until we invest in a campaign rooted in education and led by trans people that focuses on taking control of this narrative to reclaim the humanity of trans identities, we will continue to miss the point.

Before we wage a costly ballot campaign, it is crucial that we focus our efforts on educating people on trans lives. We have to help people hear the truth over the lies they are

## ► Israel: Pissed Off

Continued from p. 13

Why should they be asked to raise money for a potentially-doomed ballot initiative instead of their own programs?

And who will pay the price beyond money? Who pays the emotional price of a long, ugly and vicious ballot campaign? We learned from the anti-gay, anti-trans onslaught in Houston, Texas and from past gay-related ballot initiatives that the individuals who are most harmed are already our most vulnerable: trans people, poor people, LGBTQ youth, and disproportionately, LGBT people of color – people who would be demonized by a political campaign of anti-gay lies. In fact, all LGBTQA people will incur an emotional toll by seeing our lives insulted and discredited in public by despicable fabrications in the media, on billboards and in mailings that come into our computers and homes. We know that anti-gay rhetoric during ballot initiative campaigns increases the likelihood of verbal abuse, harassment, overt discrimination and sometimes physical violence. If, as in Houston, trans women take the brunt of the political attacks, trans women of color may especially be in danger of violence and murder.

As you may know, Houston has recently been engaged in the battle for gay and transgender rights over the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO) – the first major initiative since the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationwide this spring. The ordinance prohibits “discrimination in city employment and city services, city contracts, public accommodations, private employment and housing” based on sexual preference or gender identity. To get the law repealed, the fanatical opposition worked diligently to distort the truth with wild scare tactics, spreading the accusations of male molesters/predators dressed as women, lurking in bathrooms, waiting to pounce on girls and women.

In Houston, the pro-HERO ordinance supporters out-spent the anti-gay/anti-ordinance campaign by 7-1. And – very, very

hearing from opposition. We have to connect people to the reality of living as a trans person and why legislation that protects trans lives is imperative to all of our livelihoods. We have to understand that transphobia has racist and sexist roots, and incorporate that understanding into our education campaigns. And most importantly we must maintain the unity of our community around the importance of adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and allow trans leaders to guide us forward. Because after all, it will be the trans community that takes the brunt of the backlash.

Trans folks are strong, and we overcome barriers on a daily basis to live as our authentic

sadly – the pro-HERO side lost. Pro-LGBT support struggled to maintain its support level. The anti-ordinance side won by telling lies, lies and more lies about LGBTQ people, especially targeting trans women and restrooms. The opposition established fear in voters and voters gave into their fears and stopped their support. When it comes down to it, in the privacy of the voting booth, people vote their fears, regardless of how much LGBTQ support pollsters report.

So... why am I connecting what happened in Houston with the proposed ballot initiative in Michigan? Because Nessel's proposed ballot initiative is an invitation to poisonous, wicked anti-gay activists/terrorists – inside and outside of Michigan – who are salivating to stop any progress made by a successful LGBTQA movement. Given the political nature of Michigan today, would anti-gay activists respond to a ballot initiative by launching religious freedom legislation that would allow biased religious business owners to openly discriminate? Who knows? But why offer an invitation that would open ourselves up to the risk?

Since losing their fight against marriage equality, anti-LGBT activists/terrorists have made the defeat of efforts to add sexual orientation and gender identity to nondiscrimination policies a central aim of their fight against LGBT equality. By characterizing nondiscrimination laws as a threat to religious freedom and personal safety, conservatives are hoping to hijack the conversation about even the most basic legal protections for LGBT people.

As the fourth largest city in the country, Houston is a test case for anti-LGBT conservatives in what works successfully in their efforts to dismantle nondiscrimination policies. We know that anti-gay operatives repeat successful misinformation and fear-mongering techniques in one city and state after another. Why would we think Dana Nessel's proposed ballot initiative would be immune to the fear-mongering techniques that are appearing around the country?

elves. We fight for every breath we inhale, every step we walk, every day we live. And we are having to fight to have our stories heard. We need to intentionally create spaces and avenues for trans voices, particularly transwomen of color, to be heard. The invisibility of trans lives from our narrative is not because trans people aren't telling their stories; it's because we aren't hearing their stories. Intentional and in-depth education by trans people about trans lives is the only way we will shift control of the narrative and begin securing protections for trans people.

*Jay Maddock is a Western Michigan University graduate and the executive director of the Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center. Email Maddock at [jay@kgllrc.org](mailto:jay@kgllrc.org).*

## Can Michigan Trust Popular Vote On LGBTQ Civil Rights?

Can Michigan's LGBTQA community afford to have our civil rights voted on by the general public? Can we naively trust that a popular vote would be favorable to us? Can we afford to lose precious spirit, energy, time and money that could otherwise be better-utilized to strengthen Michigan's LGBTQA community?

**My answer is “NO!”** I strongly oppose any sort of LGBT-related ballot initiative in Michigan!

I totally agree with Steph White, Equality Michigan's new executive director, whose multi-year plan to add sexual orientation and gender identity to Michigan Nondiscrimination Policy includes:

- 1) Winning over more and more friends in the Legislature who will stand with us;
- 2) Strengthening the skills and capacity of organizations all across the LGBT movement to work smarter and in coordination towards our common goal;
- 3) Educating and engaging our allies such as the labor movement, the business community and faith communities, among others;
- 4) Correcting the fears and misconceptions that the general public now has about what expanding our rights means, or doesn't mean, for them.

This is an excellent plan.

Let's keep LGBTQ issues out of the voting booth!

Let's focus on building more effective coalitions with our friends and allies.

Let's elect political candidates who are trustworthy and honest, on whom we can depend to represent LGBTQA issues truthfully and justly!

That's my view and I'm stickin' to it!

*Howard Israel is an activist and philanthropist living in Southeast Michigan. He has worked on many projects including the 2004 anti-gay marriage amendment.*

# Mormon Church Issues Rules Aimed At Gay Members, Their Kids

BY BRADY MCCOMBS

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) – Mormon church officials have issued a rule change that says members in same-sex marriages can be kicked out and their children must wait until they're 18 and disavow homosexual relationships to be baptized.

The revisions triggered a wave of anger, confusion and sadness for a growing faction of LGBT-supportive Mormons who were buoyed in recent years by church leaders' calls for more compassion and understanding for LGBT members.

"It feels like they are extending an olive branch and hitting you with it," said Wendy Montgomery, who is Mormon and has a 17-year-old gay son. "It's like this emotional whiplash."

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints disseminated the handbook changes this week to local church leaders around the world. The goal was to provide clarity to lay leaders who run congregations, church spokesman Eric Hawkins said. He noted the church has long been on record as opposing same-sex marriages.

"While it respects the law of the land, and acknowledges the right of others to think and

act differently, it does not perform or accept same-sex marriage within its membership," Hawkins said in a statement.

Montgomery said Friday the news left her son sobbing and forced her and her husband to consider leaving a religion they've belonged to for generations. The couple has been trying desperately to stay in the church despite a harsh reception to their son coming out.

Montgomery also echoed a response shared by many on social media: She can somewhat understand the hard stance on same-sex marriage, but she can't comprehend singling out gay couple's children.

"We just put a scarlet letter on these kids," Montgomery said. "This isn't my church. I don't see God in it. I don't see divinity in it. It just feels evil."

Nathan Kitchen, a gay Mormon with five children, said the news left him devastated and angry about the quandary his children now face. The 47-year-old dentist was married to a woman for 18 years before a recent divorce.

"I am stunned right now at how I'm being labeled and how my children are being marked," said Kitchen, of Gilbert, Arizona. "It's almost like they now have to choose between a gay father and a church that they love."

**Nathan Kitchen, a gay Mormon with five children, said the news left him devastated and angry about the quandary his children now face.**

The changes come as other religious groups that oppose gay marriage struggle with how to approach the issue of same-sex spouses' children.

The new rules stipulate that children of parents in gay or lesbian relationships – be it marriage or just living together – can no longer receive blessings as infants or be baptized around age 8. They can, however, be baptized and serve missions once they turn 18, but only if they disavow the practice of same-sex relationships; no longer live with gay parents; and get approval from their local leader and the highest leaders at church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

The church views these key milestones as acts that bind a person to the faith and as promises to follow its doctrine.

The changes align with the way the church addresses children in polygamous families, said Matthew Bowman, associate professor of history at Henderson State University.

That fact wasn't lost on Mormons interpreting the new rules.

"I am no better now than an illegal polygamist," Kitchen said.

Scott Gordon, president of FairMormon, a volunteer organization that supports the church, said: "It certainly makes a statement about how they feel about it."

Gordon said he understands why some find the changes jarring and consider them mean-spirited toward children. But, he believes they're intended to protect gay couples and their children by allowing the kids to mature and make the difficult decision at 18 about whether to become fully invested in a religion that holds as a root tenant that their parents' lifestyle is a sin.

"The idea of family is not just a peripheral issue in the Mormon church. It's core doctrine. It's a central idea that we can be sealed together as a family and live together eternally," Gordon said. "That only works with heterosexual couples."

The handbook revisions also for the first time list being in a same-sex relationship as an offense that can lead to being ousted from the religion. This is a category known as apostasy,

See Mormon Church, page 16

## ► Smith: Transmissions

Continued from p. 13

annual TDOR observance.

The number of deaths are higher than years past, though I can't tell you for sure if they're higher because we're paying more attention, or because there are more transpeople being killed. My gut tells me that it's a bit of both.

Many have claimed that visibility of Caitlyn Jenner and others that make up "The Transgender Tipping point" are indirectly responsible for the increase in murders. This, to me, feels a bit like claiming Beyoncé not speaking out in support led to the loss of HERO.

For me, though, I can't help but look at the people fighting bills in Houston and elsewhere. How can you expect to tell people about how giving rights to transgender people will allow sexual deviants to harm your family and not expect people to react? As I said above, that was the whole point of the bathroom meme.

Some may defend their loved ones by voting, but others do so by grabbing a weapon. Like Ben Carson, some people are uncomfortable – and with their religious and political leaders attacking transgender people, they might feel equally at ease doing so.

Transgender people are being cast as the enemy of decency, as something to fear, something to feel uncomfortable about. It's not that much a step from this sort of vilification to people seeking to kill us.

HERO, bathrooms and these attacks on transgender people are just the tip, and the stakes are higher than ever before.

Gwen Smith is so very much not a predator. You'll find her on Twitter at @gwenners.

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## Creep of the Week

### Kevin Swanson

There are those who are your run of the mill anti-LGBT folks, and then there are the foaming at the mouth, screamin' to the heavens, shoutin' at the devil anti-LGBT folks like



Kevin Swanson

Colorado pastor Kevin Swanson.

At the National Religious Liberties Conference earlier this month, homosexuality came up a lot. And Swanson, the conference's host, made his position graphically

clear when he warned the audience about "the sin of homosexuality."

"Paul affirms that this particular sin is worthy of death in Romans Chapter 1," he says. "So, granted there are varying levels of clarity/relevance relating to ethics, but still the Old Testament and New Testament, I believe, both speak with authority and we ought to receive it."

It's cute that he points out the "varying levels of clarity/relevance relating to ethics." In other words, "We can't just start executing gays because that would be logistically difficult and would upset some people." But he's basically saying we "ought to." Because the Bible says so.

So you can only imagine what he thinks of marriage equality.

"There are families, we're talking Christian families, pastors' families, elders' families from good, godly churches," he says, "(and) their sons are rebelling, hanging out with homosexuals and getting married and the parents are invited. What would you do if that was the case?"

Um, I'd go? And since I'm the parent in this hypothetical situation I'd support my child in his quest for love and happiness in his life.

Swanson has a different, grosser, idea. (Don't read on if you're eating.)

"Here is what I would do: sackcloth and ashes at the entrance to the church and I'd sit in cow manure and I'd spread it all over my body," he says. "That is what I would do and I'm not kidding, I'm not laughing."

Woah. Sackcloth and ashes is definitely not appropriate wedding attire. It's an Old Testament thing where people wear super uncomfortable shirts made from like, goat hair or burlap or something, and rub ashes all over themselves to show repentance or grief.

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

But Swanson is all, "Nah, ashes are too tame for me," and takes it to the next level. The poop level.

But wait, in his effort to win the Crazy Olympics he levels up to the pus level. And let me clarify before you read this that "pus" means "full of pus" and is pronounced as such. He is not talking about cats or vaginas.

"I'm grieving, I'm mourning, I'm pointing out the problem! It's not a gay time," he says, shouting and near tears. "These are the people with the sores, the gaping sores! The sores that are pussy, and gross, and people are coming in and carving happy faces on the sores. That's not a nice thing to do. Don't you dare carve happy faces on open pussy sores."

**Thankfully nobody would ever take this guy seriously. Unless you're Republican presidential hopefuls Mike Huckabee, Bobby Jindal and Ted Cruz. Then you attend Swanson's hatefest. Because you want to be publicly associated with a man who wants to smear shit all over himself and thinks gays should be killed.**

Don't you ever do that. Don't you ever do that. I tell you don't do it!"

It sounds to me like Swanson is confusing a same-sex wedding with a "Walking Dead" wedding. He has a really sick imagination.

"Sack cloth and ashes," Swanson continues. "This is what America needs. America needs to hear the message. We are messed up."

Speak for yourself, Swanson. You're the one having fever dreams about carving pus-filled smiley faces, which is one of the most messed up things I've ever heard.

Thankfully nobody would ever take this guy seriously.

Unless you're Republican presidential hopefuls Mike Huckabee, Bobby Jindal and Ted Cruz. Then you attend Swanson's hatefest. Because you want to be publicly associated with a man who wants to smear shit all over himself and thinks gays should be killed.

To borrow a phrase from Swanson's own rant: "That's not a nice thing to do."

## HRC, Partnership For Drug-Free Kids To Prevent LGBT Teen Substance Abuse

New issue brief aims to increase understanding of challenges faced by LGBT youth

BY BTL STAFF

The HRC Foundation and Partnership for Drug-Free Kids released a new brief Oct. 29 titled "Preventing Substance Abuse Among LGBTQ Teens" as a guide to help parents, educators and other youth-serving professionals understand the unique challenges – including bullying and family rejection – faced by LGBT youth that contribute to their heightened rates of substance abuse.

The publication is the first product of a new collaboration between the educational arm of the HRC, the HRC Foundation and Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, a national nonprofit working to reduce substance abuse among adolescents.

"We're excited by this opportunity to reach the parents and families of LGBT kids via our online resources, our telephone helpline (855-DRUGFREE) and parent coaching program, and provide them with research-based materials that can help reduce family conflict and rejection, strengthen acceptance and lead to healthier LGBT youth," said EVP Research and External Relations at the Partnership, Sean Clarkin.

Together the organizations developed content and materials for LGBT teens, parents and families designed to promote understanding and provide practical guidance on protecting LGBT youth, along with reducing their risk of drug and alcohol abuse through better family support, safer schools and more caring adults in communities.

Among the issue brief's recommendations to reduce the risk of substance abuse by LGBT youth:

### ► Mormon Church

Continued from p. 15

which until now has been reserved primarily for people who practice polygamy, teach inaccurate doctrine or publicly defy guidance to church leaders.

Last month, two high-ranking church leaders delivered speeches that gave LGBT advocates hope that the faith was moving toward greater acceptance. The leaders reiterated the religion's commitment to promoting families led by married heterosexual couples but also urged people not to shun those with opposing views.

That message of "fairness of all" appeared to distance the faith from the blowback that came when it was a major backer of California's gay marriage ban in 2008.

Mormons appear to be slowly growing more accepting of homosexuality, albeit at rates that still put them among the least accepting among

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to discuss their concerns and expectations about substance use with teens, focusing on health risks and asking teens to share their perspectives;

Parents, educators and youth-serving professionals should actively affirm and support LGBTQ teens' sexual orientation and gender identity;

Educators and youth-serving professionals are urged to confront bias and create supportive environments for LGBTQ teens;

And policymakers should fund research into substance abuse prevention, address LGBTQ youth homelessness and eliminate zero-tolerance policies for drug violations.

Additionally, the Partnership and HRC Foundation will work together to expand the visibility and participation of LGBT youth in teen-targeted programming, including Above the Influence, the Partnership's teen substance abuse prevention campaign that reaches millions nationally through social media, public service announcements and community-based activities.

"This collaboration strengthens our efforts to ensure that the unique experiences and needs of LGBTQ youth are recognized and addressed, by parents and teachers, as well as professionals who provide substance abuse prevention and treatment services," said Ellen Kahn, director of the children, youth and families program at the HRC Foundation. "It's critical that higher rates of substance use among LGBT youth be understood and addressed in a context of understanding and support."

To read the full issue brief, please visit <http://hrc.org/teensubstanceabuse>.

major religions, a new survey from the Pew Research Center shows.

In a survey done last year, 36 percent of Mormons said homosexuality should be accepted by society. That's up from 24 percent in 2007, the last time Pew conducted its U.S. Religious Landscape Study.

Support for gay marriage is lower, with just 25 percent of Latter-day Saints approving such unions.

Kitchen is currently single but hopes to one day marry again, this time to a man. More pressing is how he'll tell his five children, ages 11 to 23, about the new rules. It is his weekend with the kids, and as of Friday afternoon, he hadn't decided how to address it.

In the past two years, they have learned their father is gay and endured their parents' divorce.

"This is very bad position to put children in," Kitchen said. "It will be devastating to them when they find this out."





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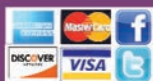
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# BTL Sales Rep And MCCD Pastor Tie The Knot



BY AJ TRAGER

**WATERFORD** – After many years together, Indiana farm girl and Between the Lines sales rep Ann Cox and Deb Dysert, also known as Reverend Dysert from the Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit, tied the knot and married before 220 of their most beloved friends and family.

They met 25 years ago and attended the same church. The year they met, Cox lived on a farm in Cambridge City, Indiana and Dysert in Indianapolis. But they would attend the same service and after awhile got to know one another.

Ten years after getting together, Dysert moved to Michigan to be a pastor in Hazel Park. Cox, who generally wasn't as interested in attending faith services as much as Dysert, wanted to spend some more time taking care of her mother in Indiana. A year and a half later she followed Dysert to Metro Detroit.

Everyone knows that relationships shift and evolve throughout the years. Over the course of their love, Cox says that she has become "easier to get along with."

"We don't argue about hardly anything anymore," Cox said.

Even though she lived an out life in Michigan,

See Married, page 20

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## ► Married

Continued from p. 19

Cox did not come out to her family until she called to invite them to the wedding. It was going to be a tough conversation – one that she had been putting off for quite some time.

“We’ve been together all this time, but I had never talked to my family about it,” Cox told BTL. “She (Dysert) wanted me to invite my family, so I said, ‘OK.’ I called them up and spoke to my brother and I said, ‘Deb and I are getting married on this date, and I’d like you to be there.’”

Dysert came out to her family while she was in college and provided a lot of support to Cox who had some reservations about calling her family. With the support of her bride-to-be, Cox then called her sister who was not surprised to hear the news and told her that she had been waiting for Cox to tell her about the significance of Dysert in her life for quite some time. Cox thought that her sister would be more negative than her brother but that was not the case.

“It made it worth all the money that we spent. It really was cool because all this time I really have not talked to my family about it, because I didn’t want to go through any shit with anybody. And it worked out,” Cox said.

Much to her surprise, Cox’s brother attended her wedding held Oct. 24 at the Pontiac Waterford Elks Lodge. Even more significant than his arrival, he stood in her wedding party and even gave a toast.

“My favorite part of the wedding was when my brother said what he said. He said, ‘Bub, I don’t care what you do. I love you,’” Cox recounted.



The wedding had a life of its own, Cox explained. After the ceremony was over, guests seemed to flock to the wedding table in waves to congratulate, take a picture with and even sing for the lovebirds. The dance floor was packed with community members like Jerry Peterson, executive director of Ruth Ellis Center, and Rev. Roland Stringfellow of MCCD.

“It was really, really nice. I thought that we had a very eclectic group of people. Deb’s principal at school told her that it was the best wedding she had ever been to,” Cox said.

Instead of hyphenating their last names, Dysert is planning on changing her surname to Cox. They took their honeymoon in Florida.



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# Life After Self-Improvement: Comedian Lisa Lampanelli Talks Eating Issues, Feeling Sorry For The Kardashians & Ridding Herself Of Hate

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

Between talking about her extremely amicable divorce with “Jimmy Big-Balls” – a long-running gag in her stand-up – and her dip into theater with a show about eating issues, comedian Lisa Lampanelli has turned the corner on being angry. Now, the “Queen of Mean” funnels that former rage into creativity that’s leaving her with “tons of energy” and making her question if she even has any hate left in her.

**Based on your “Celebrity Apprentice” background, I have to ask – what are your thoughts on Donald Trump’s crack at presidency?**

Oh my god – I’m about to announce my vice presidency. We’re going to be the hair team because we’ve both gotten so much press about our hair lately. I think we make the perfect fit.

**People are still giving you flack about your haircut?**

They were when I was doing that Miley Cyrus effed-up look that was standing straight up. Now that it’s a little more feminine, they’re like, “OK, that’s cute now.” The haircut was pretty funny because I’d make fun of it so much ... not a lot hurts my feelings lately because I know what I’m doing and I’m old enough to go, “If you don’t like me, that’s OK.” Opposed to, “Why don’t they like me?”

**I’ve heard you’ve been doing yoga and other things to get yourself to a better place. Has all of this self improvement shaped your comedy, which is known for being mean?**

I think it’s made it that, for two shows a week, I get to say or do whatever I want and not care about anybody’s feelings. So all the cursing and anger that I feel for the five days a week that I’m offstage finds its way out there in a way that people know I’m joking and I’m kidding around. Ever since I’ve started being like that, I’ve started getting standing ovations again. People started responding happier because I’m bringing something fresher to the table.

**How does your ex-husband Jimmy “Big Balls” Cannizzaro play into this now?**

We had two phone calls this week! We’re really good friends still and he’s getting married again to a girl I kind of accidentally introduced him to – and she’s awesome. But he’s a really good guy. He

just wasn’t right for me. We just grew in different directions, and we’re both lucky we got out before anyone cheated or lied or stole, so I just feel like it couldn’t have been an easier divorce. It probably was the easiest divorce in history. We both got a little more mature, I think.

**Do you feel like you can joke about him the same way in your acts?**

Oh god yeah! I did a show the other day with his girlfriend, and she’s a singer. So we did a little show together, and I introduced her with, “We’re both Italian, we’re both family-oriented, we’ve both fucked Jimmy,” so I mean, she can take a joke.

**How would you say your Italian upbringing has shaped your humor?**

Well, my mother was and still is an amazing storyteller. She’s just entertaining, compelling; she’s just hilarious. She’s very irreverent; she’ll say crazy racial stuff to get me to laugh. And she *loves* the gays. She can’t live without the *gays*. It’s hysterical, and I learned all that from her.

I got the other side of the coin from my dad who was a painter, a fine artist. And he had the more sensitive side. So with things like playwriting and writing different articles and stuff, I’ve summoned his stuff. I got both sides of me from them.

**Speaking of playwriting, can you tell me more about your one woman show, “Fat Girl, Interrupted”?**

Well, now it’s “Fat Girls Interrupted” since I turned it from a one-person show into a four-person play. And it’s in conversation format. It’s a show about different eating and weight problems, since part of my one-person show was the weight issue. Now it’s four different women with four different weight problems: one being anorexic, one being too skinny, one being fat and happy, and one being me. Which is the overeater who can’t have a life and stuff. So the play’s great! The timing is so perfect.

You ever notice when you’re doing the right thing, the right people come into your life to help you? The minute I give a reading of it, all of these producers and theaters want to meet with me and I know in my gut I’m doing the right thing. This is going to help a lot of people to see they’re not alone in their weight struggles and their body issues.

**That’s definitely going to reach a lot of people, including in the LGBT and especially gay community, where there is a prevalence of eating disorders and issues.**

Yeah, right? It’s almost like women used to get it the



## PERFORMING

### Lisa Lampanelli

6 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 14

Mature Audiences

Andiamo Showroom

7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren

Tickets: \$25-75

586-268-3200

<http://andiamoitalia.com/showroom/>

worst, and now I'm like, "At least I'm not a gay guy – they get it even worse than we do!"

#### How has the Supreme Court ruling for same-sex marriage impacted your gay jokes?

I have more of them! There's more to make fun of – like how you guys think gay marriage is real. I think that's hilarious. Or how you think you're equal now. You guys wanted marriage so bad? Good, now we'll make it illegal to get gay divorced so you're stuck with whatever asshole you picked, so enjoy that. I have a lot of fun with it; I enjoy talking about gay marriage a lot because now all of my friends can get married. All my gays. I'm so happy. I love weddings, and I love love, and hopefully I'll get married another three or four times.

#### You've done a lot of work with Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York. How did you get so strongly involved with the gay community?

It started off when I found out the Westboro Baptist Church was going to protest my show years ago. And I started thinking, "OK, I want to pull this trick on them where however many protestors show up, I'll donate \$1,000 to a gay cause." I heard about Gay Men's Health Crisis, so I looked them up online. We became pretty good friends, and I donated that money to them after the protests. And when I got on "Celebrity Apprentice," there was no doubt those were the guys that I was going to work with. I just love that organization; they do a lot of good work for people who feel alone. I think that's what resonates with me – people who feel disenfranchised, people who feel left out of things. And they really bring the group together at that place in New York.

#### So you've been to the Detroit area before, but based on your insult comedy, what do you have to say about the city based on our, uh, "reputation"?

Usually in some of these towns there's

no black people, and now I'm like, "Oh, so there's only black people." So hopefully white people will come to my show. Don't be afraid to come to my show white people: there'll be gays there. There'll be blacks, but they'll be well behaved, so I think we'll be fine.

#### You've said before you only make fun of people you like or admire. Is there anyone you'd never roast because you can't stand them?

Yes! Who do I hate?

The hate has really bottomed out since I started working on myself. I used to be able to rattle off a lot of people I resented or hated, but now that I've been working on myself a lot offstage, I find I don't really hate that many people anymore. I kind of feel sorry for people, like the Kardashians and people who have no talent and are just kind of leeches. I don't love them by any means, but I don't hate them anymore. The people to roast, though, are the people who are your heroes, so my real dream would be to roast Howard Stern and Don Rickles. But yeah, it's weird; I really don't hate that many people. It's really bothering me!

Oh, you know who I really hate? Mrs. Dog the Bounty Hunter. She's a battle-axe; I can't stand her. She's never going to be roasted by me. I had to dig a little, but I found one!

#### Which is funny, since you actually did some voice-over work on a CMT show called "Bounty Hunters."

Yes! It was a cartoon about Jeff Foxworthy, Larry the Cable Guy and Bill Engvall, and they asked me to do this part of a battle-axe who was their boss. And voice over is the *easiest* thing to do. You go in a room, you don't have to wear good clothes, you don't have to wear make-up, you don't have to get your hair done. You basically read into a mic and then they go, "Here's your check. Byeeeeeee." Sign me up for more of that crap.

#### Do you have anymore animated work lined up?

I do, but it's top secret! You'll hear about it soon! I was dying when I got the offer, too, because I thought, "Are you sure you know who I am?"

#### Ha, I was just about to say, "I'd love to see your name on a Disney cast list."

It's not Disney, but I will tell you one thing: I did an episode of "The Simpsons." *That* was the high point of my animated life. I mean, they sent me the cell of me as a drawing with the other Simpsons, and I was just crying. It's so beautiful.

#### Do you have any other career goals?

I don't have any other career goals other than writing this play. I'm actually going to make it into a series of plays. The next play is going to be the same four women and their issues with men and relationships and codependency, since that was a big issue in my life and for a lot of my friends. The next one will be about women and anger, because I feel a lot of women don't express anger and hold it in or express it not great, like I used to. And the fourth show will be about women and grief because I think, as we get older and our parents start to die and things to start happen, we have to *really* go through the grieving process, and I don't think there's ever been a show that's put a lighter spin on it... so those four plays are sort of my mission for this decade, and then we'll see what happens after that. I've got, I'm projecting now, until age 94. (Laughs) They'll wheel me out in a chair. I don't care if I'm deaf, dumb and blind. I'll figure out a way to sign language that crap out.

#### With all of the stress you've been shedding, you're probably way further ahead than other people!

Yeah, that's why I have so much energy! The weight loss was the first part of getting rid of stress. The second part was getting a dog, who's just the best dog in the world and is very stress-free. And the third part was working on those real issues, like anger. I'm really glad it's all coming together!

#### What are your thoughts on up-and-coming female comics, like Amy Schumer?

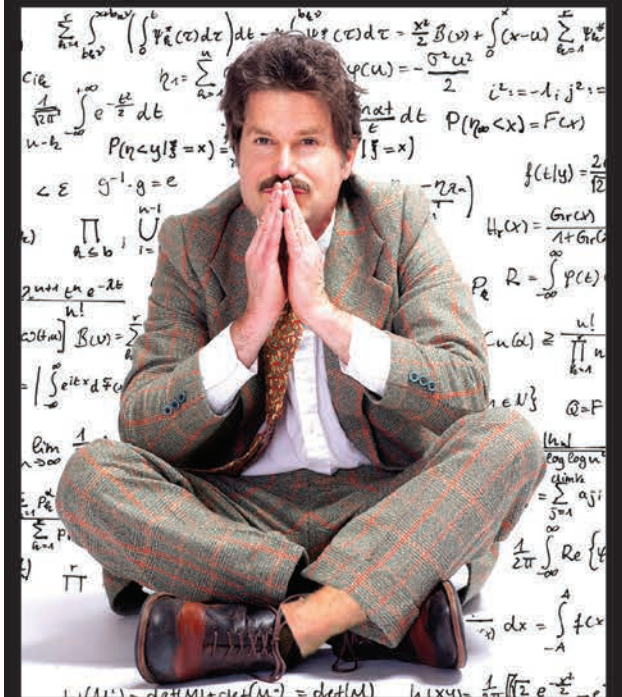
Oh my god, I'm so proud of her. It's so funny with women comics: It used to be where you were the one where they were like, "Oh, *you're* the funny woman comic." Nobody liked woman comics. And I had such a strong male fan base – even straight guys were like, "Wow, she's cool; we'll go see her." Now that I look at Amy's audience, Whitney Cummings's audience, people like that, I'm like, "Yes!" Men are finally starting to figure out, just because you have a vag doesn't mean you're only good for vag-ging. And Amy's so edgy and so smart, and when I saw her movie I thought, "This broad can act." She took two years of conservatory acting at a really hard school in New York (William Esper Studio) – I dropped out after a month (of that kind of acting). She's really gangster and a hard worker. The time is now for edgy female comics, and men are sitting up and noticing.

#### Finally!

Yeah! It only took, like, 800 years.

# Einstein!

Saturday, November 21  
8 p.m.



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## All Girls, All Zeppelin!

BY BTL STAFF

Lez Zeppelin, the New York City-based all-girl band, has gained worldwide critical acclaim for the musicianship, passion and gender-bending audacity they bring to the music of Led Zeppelin. Founded in 2004 by New York guitarist, Steph Paynes, it wasn't long before the group's reputation for playing Zeppelin's music with a kind of passion and force beyond anyone's expectations began to attract major interest from press and industry.

In June 2005, Chuck Klosterman wrote an article for SPIN magazine that featured Lez Zeppelin as a leading protagonist in a trend of all-female hard rock "tribute" bands. He referred to the group as "the most powerful all-female band in rock history" and described the rise of bands like Lez Zeppelin as a "kind of multilayered cultural phenomenon." The fortunes and notoriety of the group surged after this and Lez Zeppelin became a provocative subject for the news media across the world.

Stories about the group appeared in the Times of London, whose journalist called the band "the best new band I've seen all year, no question"; Reuters and CNN.com, which ran a front page feature that called the group so "electrifying" they are "driving club audiences to a frenzy." The group also appeared as part of a major feature on CBS Good Morning, which ran nationwide, as well as on many other local TV news spots in New York (ABC, WB) and across the country.

In April 2007, after extensive touring in the U.S. and Europe, the band released its first album, *Lez Zeppelin*, which was produced by Eddie Kramer, renowned

for his work as recording engineer on several of Led's albums – most notably, "Led Zeppelin II," "Physical Graffiti" and "The Song Remains the Same." In the wake of this release, the band was invited as the first "tribute band" to ever appear at a series of major rock festivals including the Download Festival (formerly Donnington Park) in the U.K.; Rock-Am-Ring and Rock-Im-Park in Germany; and at the Voodoo Festival in New Orleans. However, it was an announcement in February of 2008, that Lez Zeppelin would take the stage at the Bonnaroo Festival that sparked a worldwide media storm.

Several major press organizations, including the Associated Press, Billboard, NME, the Chicago Sun Times and more, reported mistakenly that Led Zeppelin – in the wake of their historic reunion at the O2 in London -- would headline the festival, an embarrassing gaff that had to then be corrected, turning the announcement of Lez Zeppelin's appearance into headline news across the world. Lez Zeppelin became a much-anticipated highlight of the festival, headlining opening night with a blistering set for an audience of 20,000 people.

Throughout 2008, the group continued to tour heavily in the U.S., and in the late fall made its first visit to Japan to promote the release of the debut record, which had sold nearly 7,000 copies the first few months after release. In March 2009, Lez Zeppelin was invited to India by a major network media task force to headline The Concert for Mumbai, a benefit organized to buy ambulances which were sorely lacking in the aftermath of the terrorist bombings in Mumbai. Again, Lez Zeppelin held

### PERFORMING

#### Lez Zeppelin

8 p.m. (doors), Nov. 14

The Magic Bag

22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale

\$20

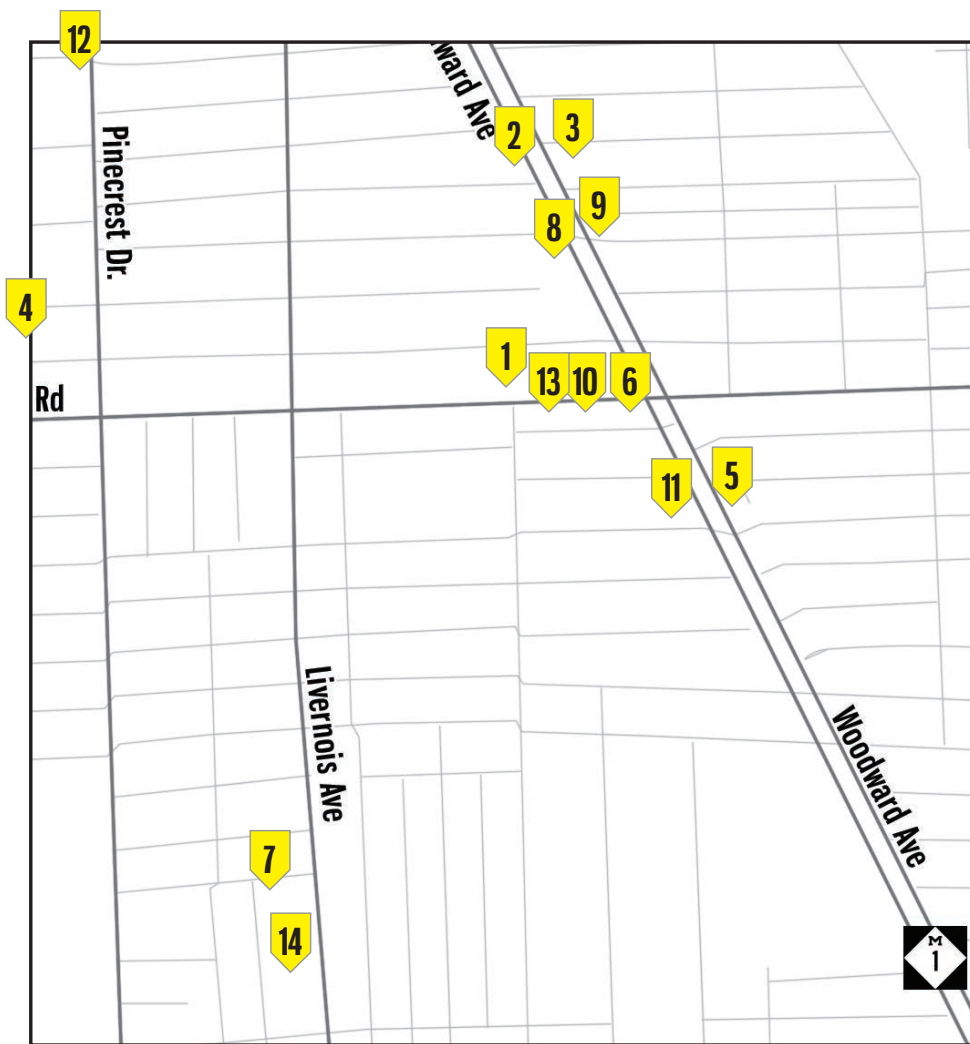
White Shag will be opening for the girl group

the unique distinction of being the first American group of its kind to take part in an event of this magnitude.

Following a three-month tour of the U.S., the band headed back into the studio to start on a second album, which would take the group back to where it all began – Led Zeppelin's 1969 debut. The band solicited the help of producers Perry Margouleff and William Wittman, who approached the project with two main musical intentions: to remain true to the sounds and textures of the "vinyl" version of the record and capture that "tight-but-loose" intensity in the moment. Recording at Margouleff's Pie Studio's, a world class analog facility, the band employed all of the same vintage equipment used by Led in 1968 – from the '50s era Les Paul and Telecaster, to the Supro amp, '60s era compressor, Hammond organ and Fuzzbender stomp box – working fastidiously to recreate the incredibly complex layers of the album with a dedication that has never before been demonstrated by any band of this type in the history of the rock world.

Lez Zeppelin is set to launch a full-length tour of Europe, the U.S. and Japan in early 2015 to support "LEZ ZEPPELIN I," and to continue to deliver a musical experience that not only exceeds expectations, but serves as the authentic female counterpart to one of the greatest rock groups of all time.





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# Allie X Marks The Spot

## Singer Talks LGBT Community, Genre-Bending & Resisting The Thrall Of Los Angeles

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

Canadian singer-songwriter Allie X has quickly been making her mark on U.S. pop charts since Katy Perry tweeted her obsession with the single “Catch” over the spring.

Born Alexandra Ashley Hughes in Toronto, the singer crafted the Allie X persona prior to her newfound fame, creating a stage presence separate from a past that included schooling at Michigan’s prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy where the likes of Betty Who, Josh Groban and other artists have studied.

Allie X spoke to BTL from Los Angeles prior to her upcoming tour stop in Detroit on Nov. 18 and was more than ready to step into her new self.

“I don’t speak to my past, sorry,” she admits. “Since I’ve become ‘X,’ this is the chapter of my life that I feel comfortable talking about.”

As per her evolution into this “X” persona, the singer described the concept of “Feeling X,” a name she gives to the development of her current sunglasses-wearing incarnation

“*Everyone’s tastes changes, and I never feel that sense of anger towards artists who radically change their sound or put out an album that doesn’t sound like their other albums, you know? At the end of the day, if you’ve chosen to lead the torturous life of an artist, you should at least have the right to evolve as you see fit.*”

on her website.

“Feeling X” is difficult to talk about,” she says, laughing. “I don’t meant to be a difficult interview candidate here! But ‘feeling X’ is, in essence, an indescribable feeling. It speaks to confusion and irony; I like contradictory images ... what I like is being an image that is rather dark, but also has sort of a wit about it.” When elaborating on contradictory images – apparent in the clash between her ethereally light pop sound



with darker lyrics – she mentions some influences for this artistic collision.

“(If you haven’t) heard of Toilet Paper magazine, you should check it out. It’s a great example of the kind of contradictory images I’m speaking of.”

Though some artists bristle at the need for

hard labels for their sound, X thinks honestly about the music “that naturally comes out of me.”

“My music has legs in a mainstream sense,” she notes. “I believe that it does. I would like for as many people to hear my music as they can. Obviously, there’s differences in the lyric

### PERFORMING

#### Allie X

Doors 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18

The Shelter, Detroit

Tickets: \$12

All ages welcome

content and in the sound design; I guess I don’t really consider myself a pop artist ... I like to say that I’m theatrical electronic dreampop.”

With influences like Bjork, Sylvia Plath and Sia, among others, her mix of mainstream and eclectic sounds with heavier lyricism is likely to find a home in Detroit, known by many as the home of techno and house music.

“I hear great things about the music scene in Detroit,” she adds. “I know that there’s a lot of excitement around electronic music in Detroit ... Not to say that I’m a true electronic artist, but I can expect that my audience will enjoy my music.”

One of her more recent singles, “Bitch,” again highlights X’s love of contradictions.

“Bitch was a strange song. It was written very quickly, which isn’t usually the case for me; usually I labor over songs for a long time,” she says. “But ‘Bitch’ happened in one day, and I just walked in a room in this house with a single drum machine and a single synth, and with those limitations I kind of made it. I started improvising a melody over top, and those words came out: ‘I’m your bitch; you’re my bitch.’ And these very domestic kind of lyrics (came out); I never really analyzed it, I just sort of did it and let it be. When it came to releasing the song, I did start to analyze it. I came to the conclusion that it was about the relationship with myself, and sort of the darker parts of myself versus the lighter parts of myself, and the compromise you have to make with yourself in order to just live a balanced life.”

It’s quickly apparent that X does not separate her life goals from her music, noting that any future plans involve “finding the missing parts of myself and becoming a peaceful person.” She finds herself getting closer to this milestone with her success, noting, “My success has been in that I now have an audience who I care about very much and who care about what I’m doing very much, and that’s made me feel fulfilled as an artist.”

Allie X’s desire to keep in close touch with

“All of my closest friends are queer, and it’s a social issue I’ve always cared about and I’ve always related to and I will always fight for.”

her inner self has carried over in her passionate support of the LGBT community.

“All of my closest friends are queer, and it’s a social issue I’ve always cared about and I’ve always related to and I will always fight for,” she says. She counts herself fortunate to surround herself with positivity around the community as well, as she adds, “My perspective (of homophobia and anti-LGBT actions in the United States) is skewed because I am an artist, and I’ve only lived in artistic hubs full of very liberal people. So other than the news or the bullshit that you’ll see shared online, I don’t actually see that hatred.

“And in L.A., there hasn’t been too much of a difference,” she laughs. “Most of my friends there (Toronto) are queer, most of my friends here are queer.”

Despite the more liberal, artistic similarities between her hometown and L.A., the singer acknowledges the differences she’s feeling on the west coast.

“Since I’ve moved to L.A., I have noticed

the way I write songs has changed slightly, though I think for the most part it’s for the better and I’m more efficient and more aware of melody and lyric and really what constitutes good songs,” she reflects. “I also feel afraid sometimes that I’m falling too much into the writing of pop music culture here and my ears are changing, so I always try and balance out my co-writing sessions with me just working at home in my studio like I used to do, so I’m still creating things in a way that really comes from me and my lyric brain.”

Like with her development into Allie X, will L.A.’s influence shape her continued evolution as an artist?

“Everyone’s tastes changes, and I never feel that sense of anger towards artists who radically change their sound or put out an album that doesn’t sound like their other albums, you know?” she says. “At the end of the day, if you’ve chosen to lead the torturous life of an artist, you should at least have the right to evolve as you see fit.”

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# Happenings

## OUTINGS

### Thursday, Nov. 12

**Annual Awards Gala** 6 p.m. Each November, the Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce honors the best of the best in business, and pays tribute to outstanding members. The Gala is held to celebrate the growth, new relationships, and generosity of members. The night is accompanied with refreshments, entertainment, and a silent auction. GALA Individual Ticket (\$50) GALA 4 Pack Tickets (\$190) GALA 10 Pack Tickets (\$450) Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce, 2201 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 248-542-2160. info@ferndalechamber.com www.ferndaleareachamber.com/gala-2015.html

**Cheryl Wheeler in Concert** 7 p.m. A recording artist since the mid 80s, Cheryl is recognized as one of folk musics premier and unforgettable acts. Her songs have been recorded by Bette Midler, Holly Near, Juice Newton and Peter, Paul and Mary. Ticket price \$15-20. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Flint (UUCF), 2474 S. Ballenger Highway, Flint. 810-232-4023. office@uufint.org www.Uufint.org

**MAC Health** 11 p.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), 928 McNichols Road W, Detroit. 313-863-3934. www.MichiganAIDScoalition.org

### Friday, Nov. 13

**Cheryl Wheeler Concert** 8 p.m. Cheryl Wheeler has to be seen to be

appreciated. Nothing you read and nothing you hear from her albums prepares you for how entertaining a performer she is. It has always seemed as if there were two Cheryl Wheelers, with fans of the New England songwriter relishing watching the two tussle for control of the mic. There is poet-Cheryl, writer of some of the prettiest, most alluring and intelligent ballads on the modern folk scene. And there is her evil twin, comic-Cheryl, a militant trend defier and savagely funny social critic. The result is a delightful contrast between poet and comic. Her concerts are not only hysterical, but are also filled with lyrical portraits often remembered for years to come. Tickets \$20 public, \$18 Ten Pound Fiddle Members, \$5 Students (more if you can, less if you cant) Women in the Arts & Ten Pound Fiddle, 469 N Hagadorn, East Lansing. 517-449-8767. producer@witafestival.com http://www.witafestival.com/

**MAC Health** 11 p.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), Detroit. www.MichiganAIDScoalition.org

### Saturday, Nov. 14

**Women in the Arts Festival (WITA)** A celebration of regional women artists. Circe Productions and Sistrum, 469 N. Hagadorn, East Lansing. producer@witafestival.com www.Witafestival.com

**Kathy Griffin** 10 p.m. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 586-286-2222.

**Lisa Lampanelli** 10 p.m. Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E. 14 Mile

Road, Warren. 586-268-3200. www.Andiamoshowroom.com

### Sunday, Nov. 15

**Annual Jewish Book Fair** The oldest and largest Jewish book fair in the nation. Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 248-661-1900. info@theberman.org www.Jccdet.org/bookfair

**Dirty Dancing** Tickets: \$38+ Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan State University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 800-WHARTON. www.Whartoncenter.com

**Head Full of Snakes: Exploring Medusa** 2 p.m. An interpretive performance that touches on themes of gender, power, beauty and more. Recommended for mature audiences. Eastern Michigan University, 103 Quirk, Ypsilanti. 734-487-1220.

**Livingston County PFLAG Monthly Meeting** 2 p.m. Please join us for our monthly support group the third Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. Livingston County PFLAG, 200 W St Paul St., Brighton. 517-548-0839. LivingstonPFLAG@aol.com www.Facebook.com/pflaglivingston

**Pride NA** 6:30 p.m. Confidential and anonymous. Open to all individuals impacted by addiction. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. www.Kglrc.org

**Indigo Girls** 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$27-45. Sound Board - Motor City Casino, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 800-745-



## Editor's Pick

As part of its Second Stage Series, Eastern Michigan University presents "Head Full of Snakes: Exploring Medusa." The interpretive performance "spectacle" is mostly comprised of original works, including a Sinatra-style song, Greek-style chorus, an intense monologue, interpretive dance and "good old-fashioned schtick."

The wide range of styles come together to explore the idea of Medusa in the performance, adapted and directed by Amy Johnson. Themes that will be touched on include gender, betrayal, identity, power, beauty and truth.

"Head Full of Snakes: Exploring Medusa" will play at 7 p.m. on Nov. 13-14 and 2 p.m. Nov. 15. The work is recommended for mature audiences. Ticket prices for Second Stage shows are \$7. The EMU Theatre is located at 103 Quirk, Ypsilanti. For tickets or more information, call 734-487-2282 or visit www.emutix.com.

3000. www.Ticketmaster.com

### Monday, Nov. 16

**Jazz in the Gallery** 7:30 p.m. A local jazz ensemble, led by pianist and vocalist Brandon Perkins, rehearses and holds casual jam sessions in the Pittmann-Puckett Gallery every Monday evening. Jazz in the Gallery is open to the public. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. (248) 398-7105. khug@goaffirmations.org http://goaffirmations.org/programs-services/community-events-activities

### Tuesday, Nov. 17

**Treasure Screening** 6 p.m. Free. Ruth Ellis Center, 77 Victor St., Highland Park. www.Ruthelliscenter.org

### Wednesday, Nov. 18

**Equality Knowledge Project Speaker Series** 5:30 p.m. Different speaker and presentation each time. Equality Research Center, 329 King Hall, Ypsilanti. 734-487-3032. equality.emu@gmail.com

**Affirmations Run Club** 6 p.m. An informal group of runners and walkers of all abilities. Seasoned marathoners, beginner walkers, and everything in between! Everyone is welcome, just show up! Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. jproctor@goaffirmations.org www.Goaffirmations.org/programs-services/community-events-activities

### Thursday, Nov. 19

**MAC Health** 1 a.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), Detroit. www.MichiganAIDScoalition.org

**Faith Alliance Meeting** 12 p.m. Welcoming new members who would like to be involved with the intersection of faith, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 2208 Winchell Ave., Kalamazoo. www.Kglrc.org

**Connections** 6 p.m. Open to all LGBTQ and Ally youth from 13-18. Join us to meet other LGBTQ and Ally teens and socialize in a safe space. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. www.Kglrc.org

**The Parent Network** 6 p.m. This group aims to assist parents in understanding their child's identity, while also giving parents the opportunity to socialize with other adults who have LGBT children. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. www.Kglrc.org

**12th Annual Wine Cellar** 6:30 p.m.

Join HARCAPM for an evening of live music, a tasting of the seasons best wines courtesy of Everyday Wines, delicious hearty appetizers from Bona Sera and hand-crafted chocolates and confections by Sweet Gem Confections. Tickets: \$50-60. HARC & APM, 2275 Platt Road, Ann Arbor. 734-572-9355 261. cmcullen@hivaidresource.org Hivaidresource.org/winecellar/

### Friday, Nov. 20

**Bistro Fridays** Special menu. \autBAR, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-994-3677. www.Autbar.com

**MAC Health** 11 p.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), Detroit. www.MichiganAIDScoalition.org

### Saturday, Nov. 21

**turnIt aut** \autBAR, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-994-3677. www.Autbar.com

**Annual Black Tie Awards and Homecoming** 6:30 p.m. Tickets: \$75. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. 313-868-1347.

### Sunday, Nov. 22

**Salsa Night** Salsa lessons. \$1 tacos. \autBAR, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-994-3677. www.Autbar.com

**TransCend** TransCend provides support and resources to the Southwest Michigan transgender community, their significant others, family, friends, and allies. Meetings occur twice per month on the 2nd Wednesday and 4th Sunday. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. www.Kglrc.org

**So You Think You Can Dance** 7 p.m. Tickets: \$43+. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan State University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 800-WHARTON. www.Whartoncenter.com

### Monday, Nov. 23

**LGBT Sexual Assault Survivors Groups** 5:30 p.m. Any member of the LGBT community, age 13-24, who is a survivor of sexual assault is welcome. This group is open to all LGBTQIA+ individuals who have experienced any form of sexual assault in their lifetime. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-345-5595. nschneider@ywckalamazoo.org www.Kglrc.org

### Tuesday, Nov. 24

**Karaoke and Half Off Wine** \autBAR, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-994-3677. www.Autbar.com

**Mobile Mammography Day** Must be pre-registered. For women 40+. Institute for Population Health, 9053 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-309-9303. www.lpophealth.org

**MAC Health** 2 p.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), Detroit. www.MichiganAIDScoalition.org

**Free STI & Rapid HIV Testing** 5 p.m. Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, Trichomoniasis, Syphilis. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.Goaffirmations.org

**Dynamic Duo** 10 p.m. 21+. Free. Menjo's, 928 McNichols Road W, Detroit. 313-863-3934. www.Facebook.com/dynamicduoact

### Wednesday, Nov. 25

**Free Pool and \$1 Off Beer** \autBAR, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-994-3677. www.Autbar.com

**MAC Health** 10 a.m. Michigan AIDS Coalition (MAC), Detroit. www.MichiganAIDScoalition.org

**Senior Koffee Klatch** 1 p.m. A discussion and networking group for people 45 and older. Various discussion topics, social outings, bake-offs, and potlucks are incorporated throughout the year. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. khug@goaffirmations.org http://goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

**LGBT Know Your Rights Project** 3 p.m. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. www.Jimtoycommunitycenter.org

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

**Queer People of Color** 6 p.m. QPOC hopes to be a supportive radical environment for people of color that are part of the LGBTQIA+ community. The coalition will support conversation about issues that face our community, build friendships and, furthermore, serve the greater Kalamazoo area. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. www.Kglrc.org

**Yours Truly, John Waters** 7 p.m. A different John Waters film every week. Michigan Theatre, 233 State St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-TIME. www.Michigantheater.org

### Thursday, Nov. 26

**A Streetcar Named Desire** The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward

See Happenings, page 27

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2015**

6-8pm

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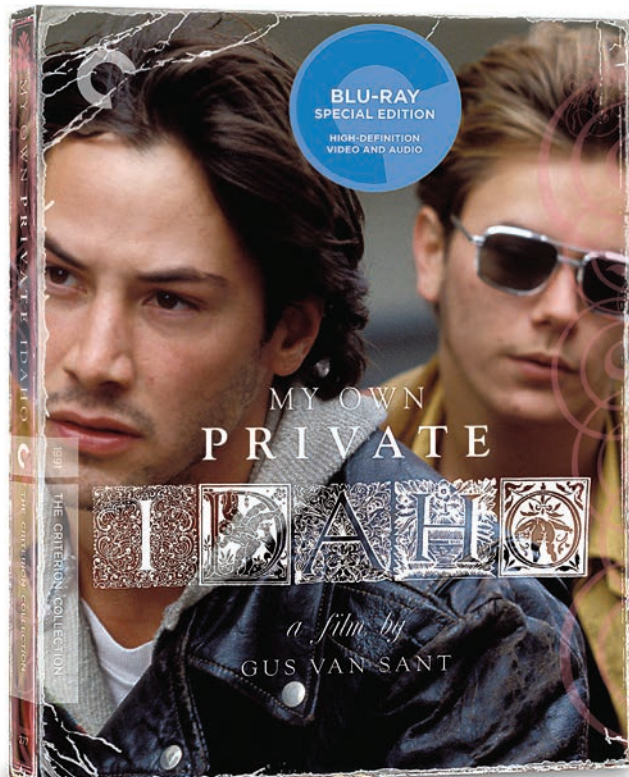
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# Screen Queen



BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

## My Own Private Idaho

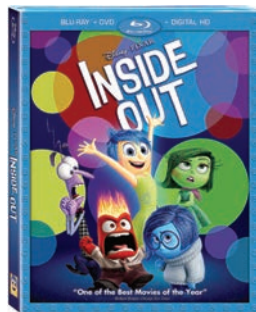
Two years before a drug overdose ended River Phoenix's life in 1993, the dreamboat poeticized a tortured gay street hustler with gutting sorrow in out director Gus Van Sant's groundbreaking queer-cinema classic, "My Own Private Idaho." The actor's piercing eyes and windblown hair were as aesthetically pleasing as Van Sant's languidly shot rural landscapes. The quiet countryside, the time-lapsing clouds. But it's Phoenix's lonely, lived-in performance that, to this day, and especially among those in the LGBT community with intensely emotional connections to the film, is heralded as a spellbinding turn for the then-21-year-old actor. As Mike Waters, he is broken and lost. His mother is gone. The man he loves doesn't love him. And exacerbating his crippled state is his long battle with narcolepsy. Searching for his mother – and himself – Mike sets off on the road

with another gay hustler, Scott Favor (Keanu Reeves, also impressive). Their companionship unfolds both beautifully and tragically, most memorably amidst the crackling of a campfire and the sound of a breaking heart. Thanks to Criterion Collection, the Blu-ray debut of "My Own Private Idaho" includes a candid conversation with Van Sant and fellow filmmaker Todd Haynes focusing on various elements of the film and its enduring impact as one of the earliest "New Queer Cinema Movement" films. Also included are a lengthy documentary, an interview with Phoenix's sister Rain and an extensive booklet featuring archival interviews.

## Magic Mike 2

Butt floss was sexy before the jockstrap out-sexied it, but the '90s are dead and Sisqó is not popular anymore. So, let's retire the thong, OK? The skivvies the "Magic Mike 2" men don around their you-know-whats in Channing Tatum's cinematic gift to the

world should not be a thing. This is an important detail because this *is* a movie about men who dry hump metal poles. What conceals their bits is a supporting character. And the stripping itself – wait, what stripping? There's hot-and-heavy dancing, to that song "Pony"... in a workshop... with a saw, but rarely do clothes come off. Rarely is there nudity. THIS IS A STRIPPING MOVIE AND THE PEOPLE WANT NAKEDNESS. But whatever. If you have high expectations for "Magic Mike 2," just stick to Sean Cody. This is not your movie. But if you want Joe Manganiello, as Big Dick Richie, giving a not-having-it store clerk a good time with his trusty Cheetos and a bottle of water? Matt Bomer's overdone hippy-dippy character, Ken, sexing up the stage as he sings D'Angelo? The whole hot herd voguing at a drag club? Then get those \$20s out. Behind the scenes, we get to meet one very lucky tatum choreographer. Channing Tatum grinds her. You know, just another day on the job.



## Inside Out

Oh, emotions. Those crazy, complicated things that occupy our messy minds – they have lives of their own, don't they? In Pixar's moving new classic "Inside Out," they even have names: Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger and Disgust. Since birth, they've occupied Riley's noggin, overseeing every life-changing evolution as she faces those difficult tween years. You know the ones. And during those years, the film's

emotions react to a variety of Riley's new surroundings as the once-newborn kisses her youth goodbye and faces those inevitable growing pains. This is a cute, colorful, emotional film – one of Pixar's best. Kids will adore it. It makes important assertions, like, without Sadness we couldn't fully appreciate Joy. But the film resonates on a different, deeper level for adults – for anyone missing that special imaginary friend who embodied childhood innocence. The ones wishing they were still pulling their little red wagon. In those nostalgic memory-laden moments, we are all Riley, and we are all experiencing the full range of misty-eyed emotions as we reflect on letting go and growing up. Among the release's two-disc extras: "Lava," the sweet short about two lovestruck volcanos; hand-drawn deleted scenes with commentary; and interviews with voice actresses Amy Poehler, Mindy Kaling and the wonderful-as-Sadness Phyllis Smith.

## The Gift

New home. Happy couple. Dog. Shower. In "The Gift," you know inevitable stranger danger looms just around the twisted and twisty corner, each shot a setup for the messy fallout. When Gordo (Joel Edgerton, who also wrote and directed the film) comes into the picture, creepily stopping by unannounced with presents, it's only a matter of time before things go awry. Another shower scene. The dog again. When weird stuff starts happening, Gordo's former classmate, Simon (an intensely serious Jason Bateman), tries to keep his distance, but one by one, the gifts keep coming; Simon's too-nice wife, Robyn (Rebecca Hall), though, is charmed by Gordo's weirdness... and the gifts.

See Screen Queen, page 26

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## ► Screen Queen

Continued from page 25

For a while, anyway. As Gordo's motives become clear, the characters come undone, challenging our initial perceptions and then smashing them to smithereens. The movie's mind bends make Edgerton's film a top-notch thriller, toying with your expectations all the way through that doozy of an ending. It wraps with the highest caliber of '90s-thriller, leave-you-speechless crazy, messing with your mind as much as your moral compass. "The Gift," in all its demented deliciousness, certainly is a gift. Extras include a wisely-changed alternate ending, some deleted scenes and an Edgerton commentary.

## Spy

See big woman run. See big woman fall. See big woman try to hop a fence and fail. So funny, right? ... No? Uninspired weight-centric punchlines have been the bread and butter of Melissa McCarthy's IMDB after her "Bridesmaids" breakthrough in 2011, cheapening the actress' natural comic instincts. But leave your Melissa McCarthy hate at the door. "Spy" is a game-changer for McCarthy skeptics, as Paul Feig's sharply scripted comedy gives the actress her best big-screen role yet. Fine with just blending in, McCarthy's Susan Cooper is a frumpy middle-aged CIA analyst with a schoolgirl crush on her hunky partner, Agent Bradley Fine (Jude Law). When she's compelled to step in, Cooper puts on her brave belt and goes undercover, disguising herself in some really hideous costumes, one of which, she jokes, resembles a "homophobic aunt." Laughs don't let up, especially during two of the film's funniest scenes – one on a plane, another at a fancy restaurant – involving McCarthy and her "Bridesmaids" co-star Rose Byrne, who plays Susan's diva-haired nemesis Rayna Boyanov. Luckily, there's no shortage of supplements, with bloopers, character-centric features, a making-of, and alternate and extended scenes. The best? Watching Byrne hold it together while McCarthy goes on a wine ramble.

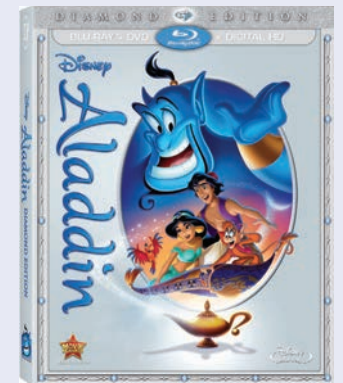


## Also Out

### Cinderella (2015)

Anyone still grappling with the fact that Angelina Jolie turned Maleficent into a wounded saint in the dreadful film of the same name, fear not. "Cinderella" at least remains faithful to its source, and Cate Blanchett knows not to screw with an evil icon. As the stepmother, Blanchett is masterfully torturous, while the lovable Lily James, as Cinderella, imbues authenticity as she channels the film's two constants: courage and kindness. Helena Bonham Carter also stars, radiating the winsome aura of the Fairy Godmother, "bippity boppity boo" and all. This live-action take on the legendary 1950 "Cinderella" is handsomely rendered and lovingly retold, and if that and Blanchett still aren't doing it for you, there's always the magic happening in the prince's pants. The "Frozen Fever" short is included among a slight collection of extras.

the world, the end. When does the third one come out again? Among a plentiful heap of special features: a behind-the-scenes feature with director Elizabeth Banks.



### Aladdin

It's true – there won't ever be another "friend like him." As the Genie, Robin Williams wasn't just the wish-making magic behind one of Disney's classics – he was the big, beating heart. Williams' Genie is still one of Disney's most celebrated sidekicks, boosting the fun factor to extremes (even doing drag) as he grants a misunderstood street criminal, Aladdin, three wishes. Naturally, there's a pretty girl, Jasmine. Aladdin pines for her, they sing a song ("A Whole New World" is just as sweet as you remember it), and it's all so enchanting. Supplements include several Genie-centric features, as filmmakers reflect on Williams' "warmth."



### The Rocky Horror Picture Show

How's this for a time warp: It's been 40 years since newlyweds Janet (Susan Sarandon) and Brad (Barry Bostwick) stumbled upon a transvestite scientist's sex chamber in the film version of the 1973 London-produced musical romp. And talk about a "hello from the other side" – things get weird. A queer cast of freewheeling fishnet-clad eccentrics spice up the otherwise spice-less lives of Janet and Brad – and anyone else needing to let their guard and girdle down. Can't get enough of the cult classic's delicious tastelessness? With a feature on the shadow cast craze, along with from-the-vault extras like outtakes and a sing-along (as if you don't already know it by heart), the Blu-ray will rock your world.

### Pitch Perfect 2

Crushed it? Not quite. Even Rebel Wilson, who returns to steal scenes from her co-stars as Fat Amy, can't give this off-pitch sequel enough of that Rebel Wilson-y ridiculousness for the film to achieve the same novel flair of the original. Wilson is fine and funny enough, but the script doesn't hit many high notes. The Aussie fave's only truly die-from-laughing scene? A cheesy showstopper wherein she belts Pat Benatar's "We Belong" on a boat; it ends with a make-out session, a parody of every big, goopy rom-com climax. As for the rest of the Barden Bellas, they're vying for another title, they do "Cups" by the campfire (awww), a new girl joins, Anna Kendrick moves up in

## Editor's Pick



The HIV/AIDS Resource Center (HARC) newly merged with AIDS Partnership Michigan (APM) will host the 12th Annual Wine Cellar in Ann Arbor. The evening will consist of live music, a tasting of the season's best wines courtesy of Everyday Wines, delicious hearty appetizers from Bona Sera and hand-crafted chocolates and confections by Sweet Gem Confections. A silent and fast live auction will add to the evening's excitement, as will live jazz by The Jesse Kramer Trio.

At the heart of the event is a raffle of over 100 bottles of wine donated by celebrities, wine collectors, bon vivants, sports figures and chefs. Over 50 bottles of wine go to one lucky winner – an instant wine cellar. Reservations for the event are \$50 in advance and \$60 at the door. Raffle tickets are \$10 each.

The 12th Annual Wine Cellar will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 19 at Vineyard Church, 2275 Platt Road, Ann Arbor. Visit [www.hivaidresource.org/winecellar](http://www.hivaidresource.org/winecellar) to make reservations or call HARC's office at 734-572-9355 for more information, including how to purchase raffle tickets. Please RSVP by Friday, Nov. 13. For more information, contact Development Director, Chris McMullen, at 734-572-9355, ext. 261 or [cmcmullen@hivaidresource.org](mailto:cmcmullen@hivaidresource.org)

### ▶ Happenings

Continued from page 24

Ave., Ferndale. 248-545-5545. [www.Theringwald.com](http://www.Theringwald.com)

**Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol**  
Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-SHOW. [www.Williamstontheatre.com](http://www.Williamstontheatre.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. [www.Autbar.com](http://www.Autbar.com)

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

## MUSIC & MORE

**The Magic Bag** "Lez Zeppelin" Tickets: \$20. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Jan. 31 - Nov. 14. 248-544-3030. [www.Themagicbag.com](http://www.Themagicbag.com)

### Classical

**Detroit Symphony Orchestra**  
"Debussy's Sensuous La Mer". Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 12 - Nov. 14. 313-576-5111. [www.Dso.org](http://www.Dso.org)

**UMS** "Leif Ove Andsnes, piano" Tickets: \$10-65. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Nov. 20. 734-764-2538. [www.Ums.org/performance/leif-ove-andnes-piano/](http://www.Ums.org/performance/leif-ove-andnes-piano/)

**University Musical Society** "Leif Ove Andsnes, piano" Sibelius Kyllikki Three Pieces, Op. 41 The Birch, Op. 75, No. 4. The Spruce, Op. 75, No. 5. The Forest Lake, Op. 114, No. 3. Song in the Forest, Op. 114, No. 4. Spring Vision, Op. 114, No. 5. Beethoven Sonata No. 18 in E-flat Major, Op. 31, No. 3 The Hunt Debussy La soiree dans Grenade from Estampes. Etudes Nos. 5, 6, and 11 Chopin Etude in A-flat Major from Trois nouvelles etudes. Impromptu in A-flat Major, Op. 29 Nocturne in F Major, Op. 15, No. 1 Ballad No. 4 in f minor, Op. 52. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Nov. 20. 734-764-2538. [Ums.org/performance/leif-ove-andnes-piano/](http://www.Ums.org/performance/leif-ove-andnes-piano/)

### Comedy

**AEG Live** "Craig Ferguson" The New Deal Tour. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W.

Fourth St., Royal Oak. Nov. 15. 248-399-2980. [www.RoyalOakMusicTheatre.com](http://www.RoyalOakMusicTheatre.com)

**Royal Oak Music Theatre** "Craig Ferguson" 18+. Tickets: \$45-65. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. 7 p.m. Nov. 15. 248-399-2980. [www.RoyalOakMusicTheatre.com](http://www.RoyalOakMusicTheatre.com)

### Concerts

**Blind Pig** "Turquoise Jeep" 18+. Tickets: \$15. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 10 p.m. Nov. 14. 734-996-8555. [www.Blindpigmusic.com](http://www.Blindpigmusic.com)

**The Ark** "Willie Nile" Tickets: \$20. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Nov. 13. 734-761-1800. [www.Theark.org](http://www.Theark.org)

**The Ark** "Colin Gilmore Band" Tickets: \$15. Free at the door to members at the Solo level and above. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Nov. 18. 734-761-1800. [www.Theark.org](http://www.Theark.org)

**The Blind Pig** "Vanessa Carlton" 18+. Tickets: \$25-30. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. Nov. 13. 734-996-8555. [www.Blindpigmusic.com](http://www.Blindpigmusic.com)

**The Shelter** "Allie X". The Shelter, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit. Nov. 18. [www.Livenation.com](http://www.Livenation.com)

**UMS** "Youssou NDour and Super toile de Dakar" When You gives a concert, everything jumps he brings entire stadiums to their feet. Fusing traditional Senegalese percussion and griot singing with Afro-Cuban and indigenous dancepop flavors that fluidly cross borders and genres, Youssou NDour is a passionate singer and composer who leads one of Africa's greatest bands. A true voice of his generation, Youssou is known as much for his musical talents as for his strong political advocacy. After running for Senegals presidential seat in 2012, Youssou earned a spot on TIME magazines annual list of the hundred men and women whose power, talent, or moral examples are transforming the world. Tickets \$10-60. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Nov. 14. 734-764-2538. [www.Ums.org/performance/youssou-ndour-and-super-toile-de-dakar/](http://www.Ums.org/performance/youssou-ndour-and-super-toile-de-dakar/)

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### Other

**Sound Board - Motor City Casino** "Night of Knockouts VI" Tickets: \$20-150. Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. Nov. 12. 800-745-3000. [www.Motorcitycasino.com](http://www.Motorcitycasino.com)

## THEATER

**Almost, Maine** A real romantic comedy. Tickets: \$14-16. Spotlight Players, The Village Theater, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton. 8 a.m. Nov. 13. 734-394-5300. [www.Dspotlightplayersmi.org](http://www.Dspotlightplayersmi.org)

**Herb the Green Knight**. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through Dec. 27. 313-868-1347.

**National Theatre Live Shakespeares Hamlet** High-Definition Broadcasts from National Theatre, London. University Musical Society, Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Nov. 15. 734-764-2538. [www.Ums.org/performance/nt-live-hamlet/](http://www.Ums.org/performance/nt-live-hamlet/)

**The Passenger**. Michigan Opera Theatre, Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Nov. 14 - Nov. 22. 313-237-SING. [www.Motopera.org](http://www.Motopera.org)

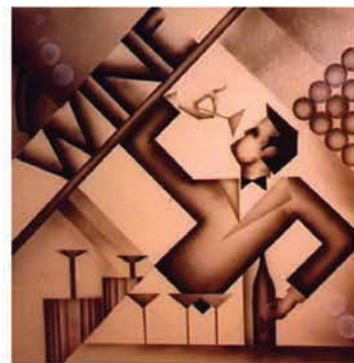
## ART 'N' AROUND

**DIA** "30 Americans" Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 1 - Jan. 18. 313-833-7900. [www.Dia.org](http://www.Dia.org)

**MOCAD** "The Sick Man of Europe" Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 27 - Jan. 3. 313-832-6622. [www.Mocadetroit.org](http://www.Mocadetroit.org)

**MOCAD** "United States of Latin America" Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Sep. 23 - Jan. 3. 313-832-6622. [www.Mocadetroit.org](http://www.Mocadetroit.org)

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Reservations & Information

[www.hivaidresource.org/winecellar/](http://www.hivaidresource.org/winecellar/)

[cmcmullen@hivaidresource.org](mailto:cmcmullen@hivaidresource.org)

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# Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## 'King Cobra' will bring you porn, murder and James Franco

James Franco, in his seemingly never-ending quest to confer gayness upon himself via association, is producing what is sure to be a shocker of a movie called "King Cobra." The film, directed by Justin Kelly – who also worked with Franco on the upcoming "I Am Michael" – will tell the ugly story of the 2007 murder of gay adult film producer Bryan Kocis, who had worked with gay porn star Brent Corrigan. Franco will act in the film, alongside Christian Slater (who'll play Kocis), Molly Ringwald and Disney Channel's "Teen Beach" and "Teen Beach 2" alum Garrett Clayton as Corrigan. That last bit of casting makes perfect sense in a Vanessa-Hudgens-and-Selena-Gomez-starring-in-"Spring Breakers" way. Can't wait for this one to make us all feel creepy and upset.

## 'Bear With' Cheyenne Jackson and Lea Delaria

Perhaps shockingly, the upcoming film



"Bear With Us," starring Cheyenne Jackson, has absolutely nothing to do with "bears" as they are commonly understood in the complex taxonomy of gay subcultures. No, this horror comedy is about an actual bear. An actual angry, murderous and hungry bear that happens upon a charming cabin in the woods where a couple is getting engaged. The official word is "think "Jaws," with a bear," but

knowledgeable fans of killer animal movies know better: think "Grizzly," that 1976 ripoff of "Jaws" about a giant ursine killer, or, in the words of that cheap B-movie's lurid ad campaign, "18 feet of gut-crunching, man-eating terror." Come to think of it, "Grizzly" was kind of a horror comedy, too. Anyway, "Bear With Us," from indie filmmaker William J. Stribling, is currently in production, and will also feature – although we don't know exactly what this means at the moment – "the voice of" "Orange Is The New Black" star Lea Delaria. Mysterious

## Gay spying on Ben Whishaw

"London Spy," airing very soon in the U.K. on the BBC, sounds like just the ticket for all the "Sherlock" fans out there. Bond film regular Whishaw plays a gay young man deeply involved in London nightlife, who then finds himself in an unlikely romantic relationship with a man from the British Secret Intelligence Service (Edward Holcroft, from "Kingsman: The Secret Service"). When that man dies, Whishaw's character is whisked into the world of espionage to uncover the truth. The five-part miniseries was written by gay writer Tom Rob Smith and is directed by Jakob Verbruggen ("The Fall"). Right now the show is mentioned on BBC America's website, but

no dates are set. That means it's time to begin politely pestering them.

## YouTube stars hit 'Dirty Thirty'

We don't know if you're allowed to be a YouTube sensation after thirty, but if all goes as planned, the trio of Hannah Hart, Mamrie Hart and Grace Helbig will have moved on to bigger things when their next film, "Dirty Thirty," is digitally released by Lionsgate. The YouTube stars – lesbian comic Hannah Hart's "My Drunk Kitchen" is a favorite there – have already had a streaming hit with "Camp Takota," so Lionsgate decided to snap them up for this next project, which is about a birthday party gone wild. There's no other information available yet, but the pattern of millennial female comics using the Internet to launch themselves is set thanks to breakout hits like "Broad City," and this feels like the beginning of big things for these young women. The countdown to more famous funny people jumping on their bandwagon begins now.

Romeo San Vicente's kitchen features what might be considered a surprising number of carb-rich treats for someone with such perfect abdominal muscles. You mad? He can be reached care of this publication or at [DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com](mailto:DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com).

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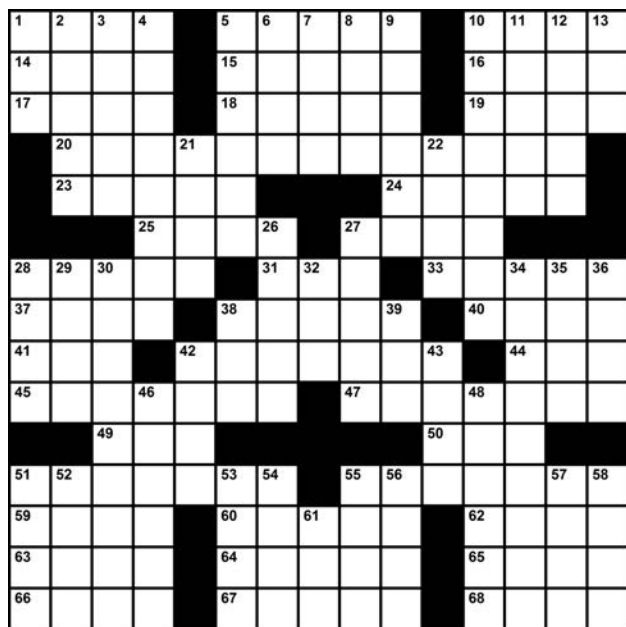
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# Q Puzzle



- Down**
- 40 Ramirez of "Grey's Anatomy"
  - 41 Meat source Down Under
  - 42 Caught at a gay rodeo
  - 44 Spill one's seed
  - 45 Umpire Dave
  - 47 Homo chaser?
  - 49 Hosp. scan
  - 50 Verlaine's name
  - 51 6-0 for Mauresmo
  - 55 Mason portrayer Burr
  - 59 "There oughta be \_\_\_\_"
  - 60 Costar's last name in 30-Down
  - 62 "If \_\_\_\_ I Would Leave You"
  - 63 Avis adjective
  - 64 Contest venue
  - 65 Q to a Scrabble player
  - 66 "Blowjob" filmer Warhol
  - 67 Title character for Barbra
  - 68 Emmy award winner Ward
- Across**
- 11 Part of a "Tommy" lyric
  - 12 Orgasm, e.g.
  - 13 Select, with "for"
  - 21 Puts out
  - 22 "\_\_\_\_ first you don't..."
  - 26 Cut down to size
  - 27 Resort lake
  - 28 Bottomless
  - 29 Humorist Bombeck
  - 30 2015 film named for a street
  - 32 They could come from Uranus
  - 34 30-Down, to 20-Across
  - 35 Drop \_\_\_\_ (moon)
  - 36 Tools for woody targets
  - 38 Toto's home st.
  - 39 Suffix with law
  - 42 Big sticks
  - 43 Say "She's just a friend" to a jealous lover, e.g.
  - 46 Street named for Liberace?
  - 48 Houston's WNBA team
  - 51 Angelina's tomb-raiding role
  - 52 Wife of Buck's Wang
  - 53 Auction site
  - 54 Receptacle weight
  - 55 Musical critics were torn about?
  - 56 Shrinking sea
  - 57 Foster title role
  - 58 De Matteo of "Desperate Housewives"
  - 61 Boy toy?

## Street Smart

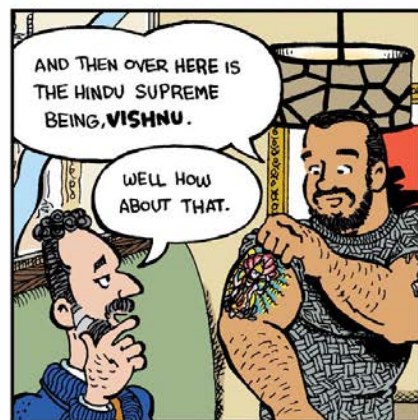
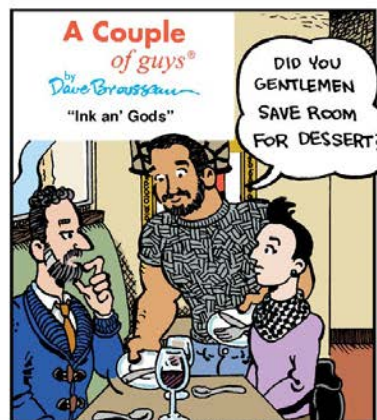
### Across

- 1 Where men might sweat together
- 5 "The Silence of the \_\_\_\_"
- 10 Bygone pump name
- 14 Type of sword
- 15 Turn inside out
- 16 "Ed Wood" star Johnny
- 17 Doctor Zhivago
- 18 Where to see chaps in chaps
- 19 AIDS flick "Under \_\_\_\_"
- 20 He played a closeted gay man in 30-Down
- 23 Uttered obscenities
- 24 "The Deep Six" actor Zimbalist
- 25 Craig Claiborne's gumbo pod
- 27 Peter I, for one
- 28 They're outstanding
- 31 A woman named Arthur
- 33 Fouls, to the Pinball Wizard
- 37 Matchmaker of myth
- 38 Costar's first name in 30-

### Down

- 1 Professional voyeur?
- 2 Prepares to serve at the Manhole
- 3 Straight as an \_\_\_\_
- 4 Footwear for Aspen
- 5 "My Fair Lady" lyricist
- 6 Own up to
- 7 Prefix for care
- 8 Songwriter Jacques
- 9 Wraps for female impersonators
- 10 Oscar nominee for "The Hours"

Find solution to this puzzle at [www.pridesource.com](http://www.pridesource.com)



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Equality Michigan is working with state legislators to update the Ethnic Intimidation Act to include proper protections for the gay and transgender community.

To get involved in the movement for better hate crimes law, contact [policy@equalitymi.org](mailto:policy@equalitymi.org).

Hundreds more resources can be found at  
[www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS - COMMUNITY SERVICES

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