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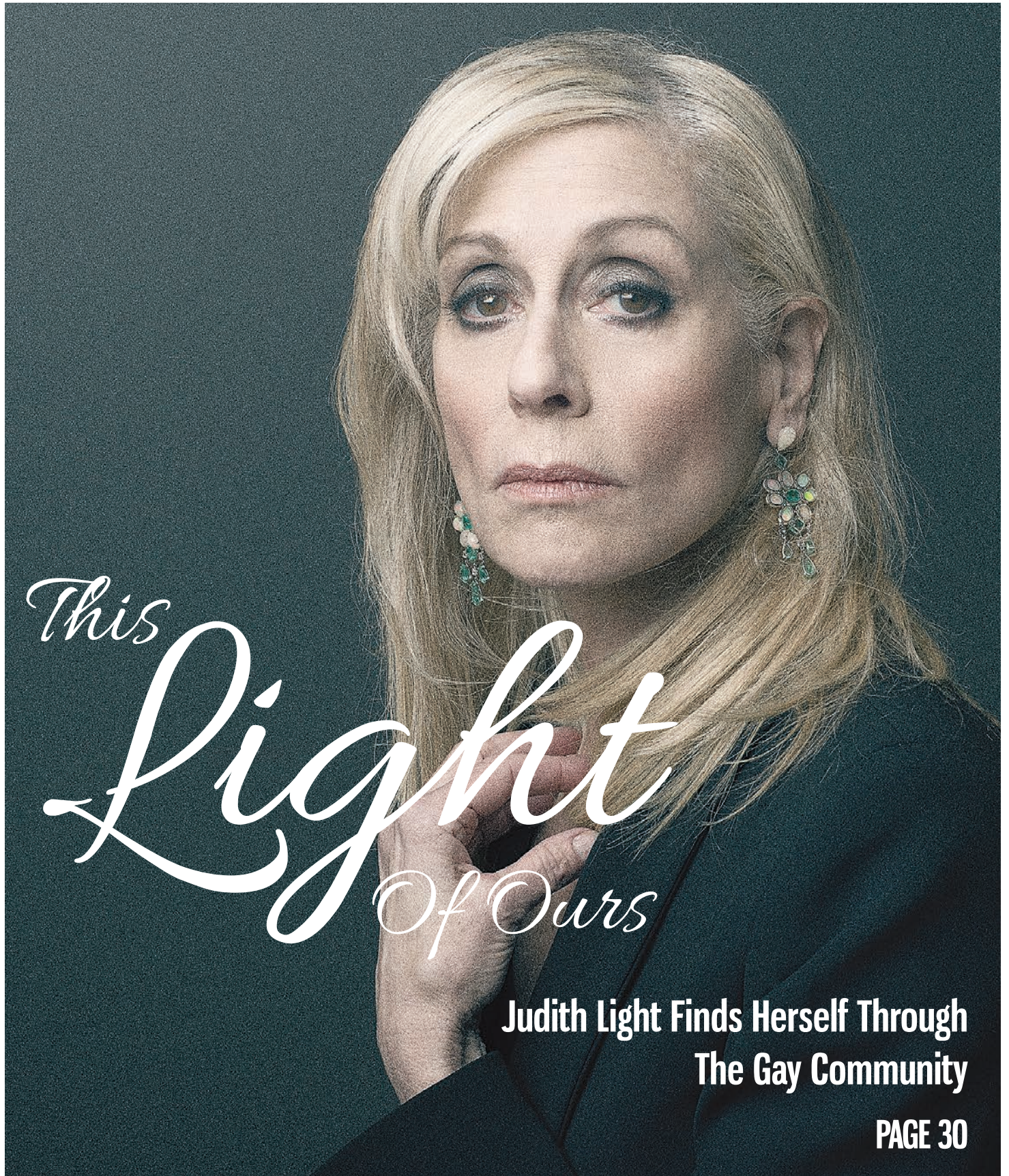
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Please see Brief Summary of
Patient Information with important
warnings on the following pages.

Brief Summary of Patient Information about GENVOYA

GENVOYA (jen-VOY-uh)
(elvitegravir, cobicistat, emtricitabine, and tenofovir alafenamide) tablets

Important: Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with GENVOYA.

There may be new information about GENVOYA. This information is only a summary and does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about GENVOYA?

GENVOYA can cause serious side effects, including:

• **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).**

Lactic acidosis may happen in some people who take GENVOYA. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms, which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**

- feel very weak or tired
- have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
- have trouble breathing
- have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
- feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
- feel dizzy or lightheaded
- have a fast or irregular heartbeat

• **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems may happen in people who take GENVOYA. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large and you may develop fat in your liver.

Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:

- your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
- dark “tea-colored” urine
- light-colored bowel movements (stools)
- loss of appetite for several days or longer
- nausea
- stomach pain

• **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking GENVOYA for a long time.**

• **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** GENVOYA is not for use to treat chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV). If you have HBV infection and take GENVOYA, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking GENVOYA. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.

- Do not run out of GENVOYA. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your GENVOYA is all gone.
- Do not stop taking GENVOYA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- If you stop taking GENVOYA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking GENVOYA.

What is GENVOYA?

GENVOYA is a prescription medicine that is used without other HIV-1 medicines to treat HIV-1 in people 12 years of age and older:

- who have not received HIV-1 medicines in the past **or**
- to replace their current HIV-1 medicines in people who have been on the same HIV-1 medicines for at least 6 months, have an amount of HIV-1 in their blood (“viral load”) that is less than 50 copies/mL, and have never failed past HIV-1 treatment

HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS.

GENVOYA contains the prescription medicines elvitegravir (VITEKTA®), cobicistat (TYBOST®), emtricitabine (EMTRIVA®) and tenofovir alafenamide.

It is not known if GENVOYA is safe and effective in children under 12 years of age.

When used to treat HIV-1 infection, GENVOYA may:

- Reduce the amount of HIV-1 in your blood. This is called “viral load”.
- Increase the number of CD4+ (T) cells in your blood that help fight off other infections.

Reducing the amount of HIV-1 and increasing the CD4+ (T) cells in your blood may help improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or getting infections that can happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

GENVOYA does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS. You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.

Avoid doing things that can spread HIV-1 infection to others:

- Do not share or re-use needles or other injection equipment.
- Do not share personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them, like toothbrushes and razor blades.
- Do not have any kind of sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to other people.

Who should not take GENVOYA?

Do not take GENVOYA if you also take a medicine that contains:

- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®, Tegretol-XR®, Teril®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- midazolam, when taken by mouth
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- pimozone (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John’s wort or a product that contains St. John’s wort

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking GENVOYA?

Before taking GENVOYA, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have liver problems including hepatitis B infection
- have kidney or bone problems
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if GENVOYA can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking GENVOYA.

Pregnancy registry: there is a pregnancy registry for women who take HIV-1 medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take GENVOYA.
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - At least one of the medicines in GENVOYA can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in GENVOYA can pass into your breast milk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Other medicines may affect how GENVOYA works.

Some medicines may interact with GENVOYA. **Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.**

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with GENVOYA.
- Do not start a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take GENVOYA with other medicines.

How should I take GENVOYA?

- Take GENVOYA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it. GENVOYA is taken by itself (not with other HIV-1 medicines) to treat HIV-1 infection.
- GENVOYA is usually taken 1 time each day.
- Take GENVOYA with food.
- If you need to take a medicine for indigestion (antacid) that contains aluminum and magnesium hydroxide or calcium carbonate during treatment with GENVOYA, take it at least 2 hours before or after you take GENVOYA.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking GENVOYA without first talking with your healthcare provider. Stay under a healthcare provider's care when taking GENVOYA.
- Do not miss a dose of GENVOYA.
- If you take too much GENVOYA, call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.
- When your GENVOYA supply starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to GENVOYA and become harder to treat.

What are the possible side effects of GENVOYA?

GENVOYA may cause serious side effects, including:

- See “What is the most important information I should know about GENVOYA?”
- **Changes in body fat can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine.** These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system** (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking GENVOYA. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking GENVOYA if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take GENVOYA. Bone problems may include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.

The most common side effect of GENVOYA is nausea.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

- These are not all the possible side effects of GENVOYA. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

General information about the safe and effective use of GENVOYA.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use GENVOYA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give GENVOYA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about GENVOYA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about GENVOYA that is written for health professionals.

For more information, call **1-800-445-3235** or go to **www.GENVOYA.com**.

Keep GENVOYA and all medicines out of reach of children.

Issued: November 2015


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First Grant Awarded by 'Our LGBT Fund' plus, Michigan LGBT Aging Project Awarded \$25,000 Grant

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PROFILE



"I resolved to stop hiding my sexuality and raise my head high to become a role model for others in the LGBT community."

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Nancy M. Schlichting is one of these rare, uniquely talented leaders. As CEO of Detroit's Henry Ford Health System, a \$5 billion enterprise and one of the city's largest employers, Schlichting is one of the highest ranking – if not the highest – out, LGBT corporate leaders in Michigan.

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Ohio City Passes Ban On LGBT Conversion Therapy

CINCINNATI (AP) – An Ohio city’s council has passed a ban on therapy aimed at changing the sexual orientation of minors.

Cincinnati council members voted 7-2 on Dec. 9 to outlaw the practice known as “conversion therapy.” The Cincinnati Enquirer reports that nearly two dozen pastors and other people packed in to council chambers to unsuccessfully oppose the move.

But council voted to prohibit therapy by health professionals designed to change sexual orientation or gender identity, imposing a \$200-a-day fine on violators.

There are laws against the practice in California, New Jersey, Oregon, Illinois and Washington, D.C. The American Psychological Association and other health organizations say conversion therapy doesn’t work and can increase suicide risks.

Councilman Chris Seelbach (SILL’-bahk) referred to the suicide nearly one year ago of transgender teen Leelah Alcorn of suburban Cincinnati.

150 Businesses Pushing For Indiana LGBT Protections

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) – A coalition of 150 Indiana businesses said Dec. 2 that the absence of a state law guaranteeing LGBT civil rights protections could hamper the ability of companies to draw talented workers, harming the state economy.

Indiana Competes, which includes Eli Lilly and Co., Cummins, AT&T and Anthem among its ranks, plans to hold events around the state in the coming weeks to publicize the issue ahead of the legislative session that begins in January.

For Marya Rose, the chief administrative officer for Cummins Inc., it’s as simple as looking at what other companies have to offer – especially if they’re bordering an ocean or mountain range, providing natural beauty that surpasses Indiana’s prairie

“When we think about Indiana, we have to make sure that Indiana is creating environments where people want to come and work,” she said, adding that the question for top talent becomes: “Do I want to go live in Indiana, or do I want to go live in Seattle?”

The issue of expanding civil rights protections to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people has dogged lawmakers ever since a national uproar last spring over the divisive religious objections law, which some said could sanction discrimination against LGBT people.

The law was changed amid the unrest. But in the aftermath, business groups and other supporters of gay and lesbian rights have pushed for a statewide ban

on discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodation based on a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity. Religious conservatives, however, object because they believe it could force Christian businesses owners to violate sincerely held religious beliefs.

Influential members of the GOP state Senate are trying to bridge that gap. Last month they proposed a bill that would grant such protections while also carving out religious exemptions. Neither Republican Gov. Mike Pence nor Republican House Speaker Brian Bosma have said if they support the proposal. Pence said he is studying it and having conversations with people around the state.

Stephen Fry, a vice president for human resources and diversity at Eli Lilly, said the company supports the bill but believes some changes should be made to it. He declined to say what changes the company would like.

Upland Brewing President Doug Dayhoff said he was at a brewery festival in North Carolina during the height of the national outcry over the religious objections law. He said he was approached by numerous people who all seemed to have a negative perception of Indiana as a result of it.

“Within the first 15 minutes of starting to share our beers the first person made a remark and said ‘Oh you’re from Indiana. I’m not sure I like what your state stands for,’” Dayhoff said. “As somebody who works to export our product outside of our state, around the country, that is really troubling for us.”

Clerk Known For Gay Marriage Case At Kentucky Governor Event

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) – The Kentucky county clerk known for spending five days in jail over her refusal to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples is attending the governor’s public swearing-in ceremony.

Rowan County clerk Kim Davis was at Tuesday’s event for Gov. Matt Bevin. Davis’ incarceration energized thousands of religious conservative voters. That aided Bevin, a Republican, in his campaign.

Davis’ case is still pending in federal court. Bevin has promised to issue an executive order removing the county clerks’ names from marriage licenses in Kentucky. Davis has said that would satisfy her conscience and potentially end the long-running issue.

Davis was a Democrat but recently changed to the Republican party. Her attorney, Mat Staver, said in a statement there was “no question” that Davis and the question of religious freedom played a role in Bevin’s victory.



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Polling v. Modeling: Can A Ballot Initiative Win In 2016?

BY JAN STEVENSON

Radically different polling and modeling numbers were reported at an LGBT community forum Dec. 7 on the topic of a ballot initiative for LGBT and women's civil rights. Polling data from Fair Michigan, the ballot question committee led by civil rights attorney Dana Nessel, shows strong support across all demographic sectors. But modeling analysis reported by Amy Mello from Freedom For All Americans paints a much bleaker picture. She reported data that shows a ballot initiative would lose next year in Michigan.

This discrepancy prompted a call from Mark Schauer, former congressman and 2014 Michigan gubernatorial candidate, for deeper analysis of all the research and empirical data available. He said that campaign organizers

Freedom For All Americans' modeling analysis predicted the Nov. 3 Houston vote, which struck down the city's nondiscrimination ordinance, within two percentage points. FFAA's model predicts the (Michigan) ballot initiative would lose by 720,000 votes.

have to know and agree on what is the real starting point so the community can rally behind a unified plan to win in 2016. The meeting occurred on Tuesday in Ann Arbor.

What's In the Numbers?

Polling asks potential voters directly how they intend to vote, either over the phone, in focus groups or in one-on-one conversations. Nessel reported the results of a poll conducted

by The Glengariff Group, a highly respected market research firm for political issues, that showed the proposed ballot language reached support of 68 percent YES, 24 percent NO and 8 percent Undecided. They found strong support across a broad swath of the electorate including Democrats, Republicans, Independents, all age groups and churchgoers. Voters said their top reason to amend the Michigan Constitution was to prohibit discrimination, and 74 percent said they believe discrimination exists based on both gender identity and sexual orientation.

Modeling is a sophisticated analytical tool used by political campaigns to predict how a specific electorate will vote in a given election. It uses many of the same data mining techniques that marketing companies use to determine who will buy a company's products. FFAA did a modeling analysis in mid-November that found likely voters in Michigan in 2016 would vote YES only 42 percent of the time.

Amy Mello, public engagement director at FFAA, flew in from Denver Dec. 7 to present the group's findings. In a phone interview with BTL the next day, Mello explained the methodology and findings from FFAA's modeling.

"First, it is important to know that Dana's numbers are not wrong," said Mello. "But what modeling does is different from polling. We collect a huge amount of data about voters and then create a model of each voter by looking at hundreds of variables such as what groups they belong to, what magazines they subscribe to, education levels, etc.," said Mello. "We also did dial testing, which

involves showing voters actual opposition ads and messaging, and then measuring their visceral reactions."

Mello explained that FFAA's modeling used data collected by Michigan's Democratic Party over the last decade in a huge database known as the Voter Activation Network. VANs are now used in almost every major democratic campaign in America.

"By using this sophisticated statistical modeling we assign each voter a score from zero to 100 indicating how they will vote on this specific issue in this specific election," said Mello. "We then do a prediction based on the collective electorate, crossing it with other models such as voter turnout expectations."

She said FFAA has found modeling to be a more accurate predictor of voter behavior, especially on LGBT issues. "When the opposition comes out with exaggerated and emotional claims that voters may hear for the first time, we found that polling was not capturing what happens when people actually vote on LGBT issues," said Mello. "It takes a lot to combat the negative impact of the opposition ads. It requires lots of inoculation ahead of time for voters to reject that messaging."

Using the same techniques, FFAA's modeling analysis predicted the Nov. 3 Houston vote, which struck down the city's nondiscrimination ordinance, within two percentage points. Other polls in Houston were far less accurate with some predicting a win.

"This is not a typical issue," said Mello. "It isn't necessarily true that young people, Democrats, women, are favorable on our issues. It is far more complicated than that."

Capacity – What Would It Take To Win?

If the FFAA model is correct and the electorate is only at a 42 percent YES vote, the next logical question is: Do we have the resources to move the number over 50 percent

“You have to have 3.6 million individual conversations and really about six communication touches per voter to move them. That's a total of 22 million touches – mail, phone, visit, etc. We simply do not have that capacity.”

- Equality Michigan Executive Director Stephanie White

Who is Freedom for All Americans?

Freedom for All Americans is the national campaign dedicated to ensuring that every American, regardless of where they live, is protected under the law from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity & expression – without allowing overly broad and harmful religious exemptions that will encourage employers, business owners or others to choose to disregard those protections. With the ultimate goal of securing federal statutory protections for LGBT Americans, FFAA works at the federal, state and local level to advance nondiscrimination measures and laws.

FFAA's programs include the LGBT University, a training program to develop and support current and future nondiscrimination campaign leaders and staff. LGBT-U's nationwide faculty and researchers include some of the LGBT movement's most experienced and sophisticated political operatives.

FFAA is headquartered in Washington D.C. and has a staff of 30 professionals located across the country including:

Executive Director Matt McTighe has managed campaigns for governor, U.S. Senate and Congress and ran or advised state and municipal ballot initiatives across the country on a range of issues. He previously served as the Marriage Project Coordinator for Gill Action.

Kasey Suffredini, chief program officer of FFAA, has helped to elect 116 pro-LGBT candidates to office, including the nation's first openly gay state attorney general. Prior to joining Freedom for All Americans, Suffredini was the executive director of MassEquality, the Bay State's statewide LGBTQ advocacy group.

Sarah Vaughan, state legislative consultant, was the policy director at Gill Action. Before joining Gill Action, Sarah served as political director at the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee, working to retain and win democratic majorities in state Legislatures throughout the country. Sarah also worked as caucus director in the Colorado senate for the first female president of the Colorado Senate, Joan Fitz-Gerald.

Amy Mello, public engagement director, was the field director at Freedom to Marry from 2013 through 2015. She was field director for five statewide campaigns to win marriage for same-sex couples, including three years working to protect Massachusetts' first-in-the-nation marriage rights from legislative attempts to repeal the law or place it on the ballot for public referendum. In addition to Massachusetts, she has worked on marriage campaigns in Connecticut, California, Rhode Island and Maine, the country's first-ever popular vote victory for marriage.

“When the opposition comes out with exaggerated and emotional claims that voters may hear for the first time, we found that polling was not capturing what happens when people actually vote on LGBT issues. It takes a lot to combat the negative impact of the opposition ads. It requires lots of inoculation ahead of time for voters to reject that messaging.**”**

Amy Mello, Freedom For All Americans

by next November?

Mello said that given the high voter turnout expected in Michigan next year – 62 percent in a presidential election – FFAA’s model predicts the ballot initiative would lose by 720,000 votes. “That means we would have to change the minds of 365,000 voters. That is a daunting task,” she said.

State Rep. Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo, has consulted and advised on hundreds of campaigns across the country. He ran the successful campaign to elect Bridget McCormack to the Michigan Supreme Court in 2012. He is well versed in Michigan’s VAN and how it has been used to do modeling in Michigan elections, including his own successful race last year. Hoadley is recognized nationally as a leading expert on field organizing, which is the hard work of making direct contact with voters by knocking on doors, phoning and sending direct mail.

“The size and scope of the field operation is determined by how many minds have to be changed. First you have to find the voters who are persuadable and that are likely to vote,” he said.

“The type of conversations that we are talking about are not casual conversations with your friends. Obviously we hang out with people that have a similar clustering of values and opinions as our own. But we will want to find those unlikely conversations and have long-form conversations about LGBT rights with people who are unfamiliar and/or hostile to the idea,” said Hoadley. “This is arduous and takes a long time because we’re dealing with fears and prejudices.”

Hoadley guessed that to move 365,000 voters to a YES vote could require about 100 field organizers working full time between now and the election.

“It is sobering but has edges of hope. Even with all the success on marriage equality in the last decade, we have a long way to go before we reach full LGBT equality. That said – there is a path forward,” said Hoadley. “Ten years ago the numbers were very similar on marriage equality. In 2004 the marriage vote in Michigan was 41 percent. When we take the time to do the education we can change hearts and minds. Given the marriage work that was done, maybe it will take less time. But the gap right now is huge and we need to figure out how to close it.”

Stephanie White, executive director of Equality Michigan, was political director for the “Schauer for Governor” campaign in 2014 and the Michigan Democratic Party. After seeing the modeling numbers from FFAA, White became concerned that a ballot initiative would take far more resources – volunteers, time, energy and money – than the ballot question committee leaders expect. White invited Mello to attend the Dec. 7 forum to present FFAA’s findings.

“If you have the votes to win and the framework is settled in people’s minds that this is an issue of fairness, then the opposition has a harder job to change the framework,” said White. “We have neither now. The press is already talking about this in terms of religious freedom.”

White, who does not believe there is a way to win a ballot initiative in 2016, said that to change 365,000 votes we need to talk to 3.6 million voters. “You have to have 3.6 million individual conversations and really about six communication touches per voter to move them. That’s a total of 22 million touches – mail, phone, visit, etc.,” said White. “We simply do not have that capacity.”

State Rep. Jon Hoadley guessed that to move 365,000 voters to a YES vote could require about 100 field organizers working full time between now and the election.

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West Michigan Child Custody Case Not Clear Cut

BY AJ TRAGER

GRAND RAPIDS – A West Michigan judge will soon decide if Michigan’s former ban on same-sex marriage will impact a child custody case currently being disputed in Kent County.

Joy Phillips, 41, and Amber Berndt, 37, were together for over 10 years and purchased two homes together. They took on an added financial responsibility when Berndt gave birth to two girls (now ages 10 and 7). The children bare the name Berndt-Phillips.

Phillips and Berndt broke off their relationship last year. After Berndt’s new partner got a job in Petoskey, Berndt discussed her intention to move with Phillips, who then petitioned the court to have Berndt deal with custody issues.

Phillips opposes the move and claims that Berndt has denied her access to the children in person and by phone. MLive reports that Berndt’s attorney claims to have attempted to

work out an arrangement in mediation, but the other side wants the case to be heard in court.

The question before Kent County Family Court Judge Kathleen Feeney is whether documents disclosing that both Phillips and Berndt were primary caregivers of the children while together is evidence enough to legally bind them as equal parents to the two young girls.

The relationship dissolved by December 2014 and, at the time, had a 50-50 co-parenting agreement until sometime this past summer. Christine Yared, Phillips’ attorney, says the fact that the couple was denied marriage under a state law that was deemed unconstitutional in June of this year should give her client standing to make a valid claim towards parenthood of the children she helped raise for the past decade.

Berndt’s lawyer, on the other hand, insists that Phillips has zero legal right to claim custody of the children.

Like many couples before the marriage

equality decision in June, Berndt and Phillips did not pursue a legal confirmation of their union. They wore rings but did not have an official ceremony.

ACLU LGBT Project attorney Jay Kaplan has filed a brief to the court in favor of Phillips’ argument, stating that not recognizing Phillips as a parent of the children would be unconstitutional.

“It is of vital importance that children of LGBT parents are afforded the same legal protections as children of heterosexual parents and that such children are not discriminated against because of the marital status and or sexual orientation of their parents, particularly when their parents were unconstitutionally prohibited from marrying,” the brief reads.

When the children were born, Michigan did not recognize same-sex marriages. A couple cannot second-parent adopt in the state unless they are married, so Berndt and Phillips were prevented from pursuing a joint adoption. Now that the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled

same-sex marriage bans unconstitutional throughout the country, cases like this have become murky.

“This case, and other equitable parenthood cases, are important at this time in history – post-marriage equality – because they focus on LGBT couples and families that were unable to obtain this protection associated with marriage, because they (the same-sex partners) were prevented from marrying by laws like Michigan’s during their relationships. Should parents be erased out of their children’s lives due to the whims of the former partner (who is the legal parent) and should kids lose those relationships because their parents were unconstitutionally denied the right to marry, and thus the benefits of marriage, which include equitable parenthood? We (ACLU of Michigan) think not and eventually Michigan’s appellate courts and the Legislature will have to grapple with this issue,” Kaplan told BTL.

Ky. Same-sex Adoption Case Challenges What It Means To Be Parent

BY ADAM BEAM

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) –The 9-year-old Kentucky girl calls the woman “nommy” and bears her middle and last name. They lived in the same household until the girl was 4, and “nommy” once carried the child on her insurance plan.

But they are not biologically related. The girl’s mother – the woman’s ex-partner – became pregnant in 2006 with the help of a sperm donor, according to a court record that identifies the women and child only by their initials. The women ended their same-sex relationship in 2011, and now the biological mother has cut off contact with the other woman and married a man. That man is trying to adopt the child, and the other woman is trying to block the adoption before the Kentucky Supreme Court.

It’s one of several cases across the country involving wrenching personal questions about what it means to be a parent under today’s ever-changing definition of family in the eyes of the law.

While the U.S. Supreme Court effectively legalized same-sex marriage nationwide earlier this year, the ruling hardly settled the myriad family law issues surrounding the custody of children. Compounding the problem, the definition of “parent” differs from state to state, leaving same-sex parents with no biological connection to a child vulnerable to losing parental rights.

“The law does not fit the reality of these families,” said Joyce Kauffman, a

Massachusetts-based family law attorney who specializes in LGBT issues. “If there is no way that your parental relationship with the child can be recognized by the laws in the state where you live, you’re in trouble.”

The Kenton County Family Court ruled in favor of “nommy,” identified in court documents only as “A.H.” But the state appeals court ruled in favor of the biological mother, “M.L.” The state Supreme Court is scheduled to hear arguments in the case Thursday.

Attorneys for both women either declined to comment or did not return a message seeking comment. Amy Anderson and Jacqueline Sawyers, attorneys for the biological mother, noted in court filings that “the law may be emerging and may eventually be changed as it relates to children conceived, born and reared during a same-sex relationship.” However, they said the court must apply the statutes as currently written.

Similar issues have arisen in other states. In Maryland, a state appeals court ruled this summer that, absent a change in state law, “the non-biological, non-adoptive parent cannot prevail over the objection to custody and visitation by the biological mother.”

Some states are changing their laws to establish a new category: “de facto parent.” In Maine, a new law allows courts to recognize “de facto parents” if they meet certain standards, including living with the child for “a significant period of time,” establishing “a bonded and dependent relationship” with the child and having “accepted full and permanent responsibilities” as a parent without getting paid

for it. In Massachusetts, a state judge recently awarded joint custody to a de facto parent and a biological mother for the first time.

In court documents, A.H. argues she had a shared parenting agreement with the biological mother. The child has her middle and last name. She was listed as a parent on medical, childcare and school documents. And the girl was covered under her health insurance plan for a time.

“(The girl) understands A.H. to be her mother,” Christopher Clark, an attorney with the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, wrote in a brief before the state Supreme Court.

But the biological mother says the decision to have a child was hers alone. Her attorneys argue that while they did “live as a family unit” for a while, “it was never her intention to relinquish exclusive custodial rights in favor of ‘shared’ custody.” The biological mother says she did not consent for A.H. to cover the child on her health insurance plan nor allow A.H. to claim the child as a dependent on her tax returns. And she explains that “nommy,” the child name for A.H., is pronounced “no-me” and is a combination of the words “no” and “mommy.”

“She and the child may have had a bond and may have had a relationship with one another. And, A.H. may have been actively involved in the rearing of M.L.’s child while she and M.L. were together as a couple,” Anderson and Sawyers wrote. “But that does not make A.H. the child’s parent. At best, she is in the capacity of a baby sitter, nanny, au pair or some other non-parent relative who may spend time with a child.”

Married Lesbian Couples Challenge Indiana Birth Certificates

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) – Two legally married lesbian couples are suing Indiana’s health commissioner and local officials, accusing them of violating their constitutional rights by not listing the names of both spouses on their children’s birth certificates.

Although the U.S. Supreme Court legalized gay marriage in June, the lawsuit says Indiana’s birth certificates still treat marriage as between a man and a woman without giving equal recognition to married same-sex couples.

The lawsuit filed Dec. 7 in U.S. District Court in Indianapolis contends that Indiana’s laws overseeing birth certificates violate the Fourth Amendment’s equal protection and due process guarantees.

The suit asks a judge to require that both same-sex parents be named on their children’s birth certificates, which it says are vital documents often needed for parents to register a child in school, make medical decisions and arrange Social Security and inheritance benefits, among other things.

Under Indiana’s law, if a child’s mother is married to a man, he is presumed to be the child’s father, even in cases of artificial insemination. A mother can also provide other paternity information. But if a mother is married to a woman, the female spouse receives no legal status in relation to the child, the lawsuit states.



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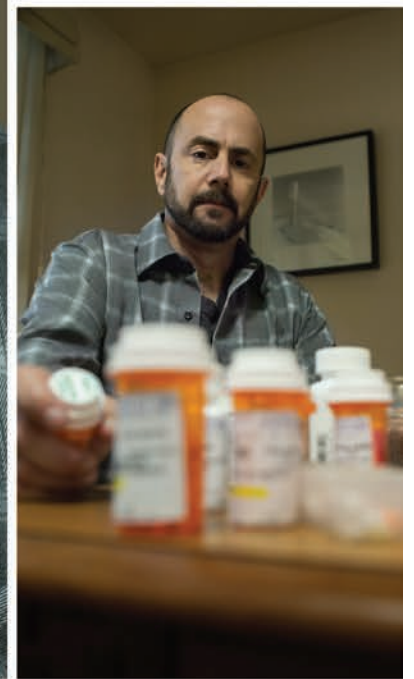
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Brian, age 45, California

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Schlichting Talks Leadership And Being An LGBT Role Model

BY JAN STEVENSON

True leaders are rare. They possess a magical mix of vision, the ability to inspire others and the skill to motivate people to do things they may have believed themselves incapable of achieving.

Nancy M. Schlichting is one of these rare, uniquely talented leaders. As CEO of Detroit's Henry Ford Health System, a \$5 billion enterprise and one of the city's largest employers, Schlichting is one of the highest ranking – if not the highest – out, LGBT corporate leaders in Michigan.

In her new book, "Unconventional Leadership: What Henry Ford and Detroit Taught Me About Reinvention and Diversity," Schlichting chronicles her rise to the top position at one of the nation's most prestigious health systems, and what it was like when she was anonymously outed and passed over for promotion expressly because of her sexual orientation.

Schlichting was the featured speaker to about 350 people Dec. 9 at The Gem Theatre in Detroit at an event sponsored by Inforum Healthcare NEXT, a professional organization for women in Michigan. She spoke about her book and her leadership philosophy in a Q&A format moderated by Linda Forte, SVP at Comerica Bank.

A woman in the male dominated world of health care management, and a lesbian, Schlichting has a unique perspective that has shaped her concept of unconventional leadership. "Being out and open for 25 years has made me a better leader, intent upon fostering a safe and comfortable environment where people can bring their unique gifts and true selves to work each day," she wrote in her book.

Schlichting stressed how important it is to find the right people, create an environment where they feel valued, productive and challenged and allow each of them to reach their full potential. She said sometimes the right person can be found in unconventional places, and told a story about a parking attendant she got to know while CEO at Akron City Hospital.

"Talking to him I discovered that he had a Ph.D and far more skills and talents than were being utilized overseeing parked cars. I moved him into the personnel department where he eventually rose to become the hospital's chief diversity officer," she said.

Schlichting has had a meteoric rise through the ranks of hospital administration – at age 28 she was named COO of a 650-bed hospital



Nancy Schlichting, CEO of Henry Ford Health System, discussed her new book with Linda Forte, SVP Comerica Bank. The event was sponsored by Inforum, a professional women's networking organization, and attracted over 300 people to The Gem Theatre in Detroit Dec. 9.

in Akron, Ohio and just a few years later named CEO of a 1,000-bed teaching hospital with 6,000 employees in Columbus. But an anonymous letter to her board of directors outed her upon her promotion to CEO, saying, "Congratulations on hiring a lesbian to run your hospital."

Most of the board rallied behind her and she was able to keep her position. But a few years later the system-wide CEO position opened up. One board member, and big donor, threatened to pull his support if she was hired for the job, solely because of her sexual orientation. Someone else got the job. She soon resigned and left Columbus for good.

"I was unemployed for the first time in my life and I felt humiliated and shell-shocked by how it all went down," she wrote. "It was the worst time in my life in a number of ways. My mother was dying of cancer, I'd left a job I loved and I was forced to abandon my career aspirations simply because I was gay. But I wouldn't change what happened in Columbus because it is part of what made me who I am today. I took some time off to reflect and regroup. I resolved to stop hiding my sexuality and raise my head high to become a role model for others in the LGBT community."

Eventually Schlichting returned to Akron

A woman in the male dominated world of health care management, and a lesbian, Nancy Schlichting has a unique perspective that has shaped her concept of unconventional leadership.

as CEO of Summa Health Care, formerly Akron City, but was there only 18 months when Henry Ford Health System called. The board was looking for a skilled leader to help turnaround a hospital system that was facing near bankruptcy. She jumped at the chance.

Her talent for leading through tough times was never more challenged than when she became COO of HFHS in 1998. The organization was in financial free fall, bleeding more than \$900,000 every year, and the city itself was in rapid decline. Schlichting was charged with overseeing the system's turnaround, and she claims that she relished the opportunity.

And she has delivered.

Under Schlichting's leadership HFHS has completely reinvented itself into a world-class hospital system. Schlichting said she is especially proud that HFHS won the coveted Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 2011, the only formal recognition of the performance excellence of both public and private U.S. organizations given by the president of the United States. HFHS was named to the Becker's Hospital Review 100 Great Hospitals in America 2014 list. HFHS is now financially stable and looking to invest heavily in Detroit, medical research and service expansion.

Schlichting said she has crafted a leadership style that blends intense empirical data analysis and rigorous accountability with keen attention to the culture of the organization. In discussing the HFHS turnaround, she writes, "The other major issue we worked on in terms of culture was reducing blame and encouraging camaraderie. That effort started during the turnaround and is something we continue to work on even today. For my part, I try to set the right tone."

Schlichting dedicated the book to her wife Pam.

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Michigan LGBT Aging Project Awarded \$25,000 Grant

Kendal Charitable Funds announced Tuesday that it has awarded a \$25,000 Promising Innovations grant to the Michigan LGBT Aging Project to develop resources and trainers for two categories of unpaid caregivers: caregivers for LGBT older adults; and LGBT caregivers for older adults. Both types of caregivers often are not family members.

“This project involves coordination and support with a collaborative partnership between Michigan’s leading LGBT aging advocacy group – the LGBT Older Adult Coalition – the Detroit area’s three Area Agencies on Aging and LGBT organizations serving the Metro Detroit region,” said attorney Jay Kaplan of the American Civil Liberties Union Fund of Michigan (ACLU-MI), which is administering the grant. ACLU-MI convened the LGBT Older Adult Coalition in 2010 in response to the lack of culturally competent services for LGBT older adults. The Coalition includes several local LGBT organizations, as well as mainstream organizations serving older adults.

Those caring for LGBT older adults often must deal with several issues specific to the LGBT community. Caregivers must:

- Be attuned to how “out” the elder wishes to be when interacting with various health care providers.
- Realize that finding LGBT-affirming healthcare providers can be difficult.
- Understand the fear of discrimination and/or mistreatment that LGBT older adults may have, especially when moving to a residential care or nursing environment.
- Help older adults maintain their connections to the LGBT community.

LGBT people often become caregivers for family members because they are less likely to have children. LGBT caregivers also face many issues.

Making arrangements with employers can be tricky, especially when caring for a significant other if the caregiver is not “out” in the workplace. (It is still legal in Michigan and many other states to fire someone for being lesbian, gay or bisexual.) LGBT caregivers want to be sure they and their spouse and children will be welcomed in any setting providing health care for their family member. LGBT caregivers must be prepared to provide any legal documentation needed to identify them as the designated caregivers for non-family members.

“With this grant, the Michigan LGBT Aging Project will be able to empower caregivers to enhance the uncompensated care they provide to loved ones while addressing many unique issues faced by LGBT individuals,” said Jim Dowell, chair of Kendal Charitable Funds, in announcing the award. “We hope to see this approach replicated in LGBT communities nationwide.”

Kathleen LaTosch, MSW, will direct the pilot project. She has successfully led several LGBT cultural competency projects in Michigan and was appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to the state’s Commission on Aging for her work in the field of aging and as an advocate for LGBT elders.

“The biggest challenge we anticipate is identifying aging service providers that are LGBT-affirming. Past experience has taught us that many administrative staff are unversed on LGBT issues, do not have protective policies in place and do not require training for their staff,” LaTosch said.

“The Kendal Charitable Funds grant will allow us to provide LGBT cultural competency training for staff and volunteers at each of the three Detroit Metro-area county service agencies



Our LGBT Fund advisory committee who reviewed the grant applications for the 2015 grant and will be helping to raise funds in the future. Members include Jeanne Engelhart, Carol Sarosik, Dottie Rhodes, Marilyn Lankfer, Bryan Hoffman, Jill May, Garnet Lewis, Mira Krishnan and Mark Nettleton. Jason Franklin and Shelley Padnos aren’t pictured. Courtesy Our LGBT Fund.

First Grant Awarded by ‘Our LGBT Fund’

GRAND RAPIDS – Our LGBT Fund at Grand Rapids Community Foundation recently awarded its first grant, \$20,000, to a new collaborative project between Arbor Circle and the Lesbian Gay Community Network of Western Michigan (The Network) for a program that will help LGBT youth and families.

Both organizations will work collaboratively to identify youth in need of care and to implement an evidence-based therapeutic program focused on The Family Acceptance model. This model works to prevent health and mental health risks for LGBT youth, including suicide, homelessness and HIV in the context of their families, cultures and faith communities.

The project, “Safe and Supported,”

represents a new collaboration for both organizations which have existing youth components – and builds on each other’s strengths. Arbor Circle has worked with runaway and homeless youth – LGBT and straight – for decades and The Network is often a go-to resource for members of the LGBT community, offering a variety of support groups and services for young people and families.

“What stands out most to us is the common goal between Arbor Circle and The Network of preventing LGBT youth homelessness through family and crisis intervention. This grant will help strengthen each of the project partner’s area of expertise and reduce the barriers for LGBT youth who are seeking support,” said Carol Sarosik, chair of Our LGBT Fund committee.

“We are excited about the partnership with Arbor Circle. Through our collaboration we will pursue the best ways to prevent LGBT youth homelessness through family acceptance and support services. The Network looks forward to increasing its services to the LGBT youth in our community,” said Mike Hemmingsen, board president of The Network.

Our LGBT Fund, a field of interest fund at Grand Rapids Community Foundation, was created with a matching gift from Shelley Padnos and Carol Sarosik. Since its inception in August of 2013 more than 250 people have made contributions to the fund.

Learn more online: www.grfoundation.org/lgbtfund

and the region’s network of Area Agencies on Aging,” LaTosch said. “This would not be possible without outside support.”

A panel of leading experts on aging selected the Michigan LGBT Aging Project proposal for funding from among 97 initial applicants and 12 finalists from across the nation. Promising

Innovation grants provide seed money for the creation of new services that are in keeping with Kendal’s Values and Practices.

“Kendal’s pursuit of better ways to address the unmet needs of older adults, coupled with the generosity of the Janet Comey Foundation, Kendal residents, board members, staff and others outside

Kendal, led to the creation of the Lloyd Lewis Promising Innovations grant program,” said Beverly Grove, Executive Director of Kendal Charitable Funds. “Promising Innovations grants provide an opportunity for greater collaboration among those of us who seek to improve the quality of life and care for all older people.”



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DEC. 11, 2015 | BTL



Gay Grinching It ... Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

I hate to play the Gay Grinch Who Stole Christmas, but there's a movement afoot by the Southern Comfort Baptists to do away with all suspected gay references in Christmas carols and holiday traditions. (Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Veterans' Day are targeted next.)

Unless we act with a united front (and a well-padded backside), "Don we now our GAY apparel" is doomed. "God rest ye, MARY gentlemen" is a goner. Gold, frankincense & myrrh (and patchouli) are out. Mince pie and sugar plum you-know-whats are things of the past.

Rainbow ribbons and wrapping paper are taboo. Red stockings for the chimney will be minus silver belles or D&G designer fur trim. Dancer, Prancer and Cupid are dead ducks. (Substitute: Butch, Bouncer, Bimbo.)

Yes, Christmas may never be its gay old self again. And Mr. Gailey will forever be a delete from "Miracle on 34th Street." (How gay, by the way, is Kris Kringle? He even looks a bit, well, you know, suspect. And what's all this fascination with kids, anyhow? Has he ever had an authentic FBI security check?)

For readers who are in the dark about the Southern Comfort Baptists, they're a boisterous offshoot of gay bashing, Disney boycotting, 15-million-strong Southern Baptists.

The 100 proof Southern Comforters swarm like a plague of biblical locust. And they're two-fisted when it comes to minding other people's business and sampling other people's Texas Tea.

Every neighborhood has one or two Southern Comforters livening things up way into the wee-wee Sabbath hours. (I spotted one leaning against a lamppost and singing the doxology to my neighbor's calico pussy just the other morning. The cat has yet to return. Saved or unsaved. Neutered or otherwise.)

In case you're too busy to speed-read the scandal sheets at checkout counters, Santa really got a few below-the-belt punches from these burning bush holy rollers.

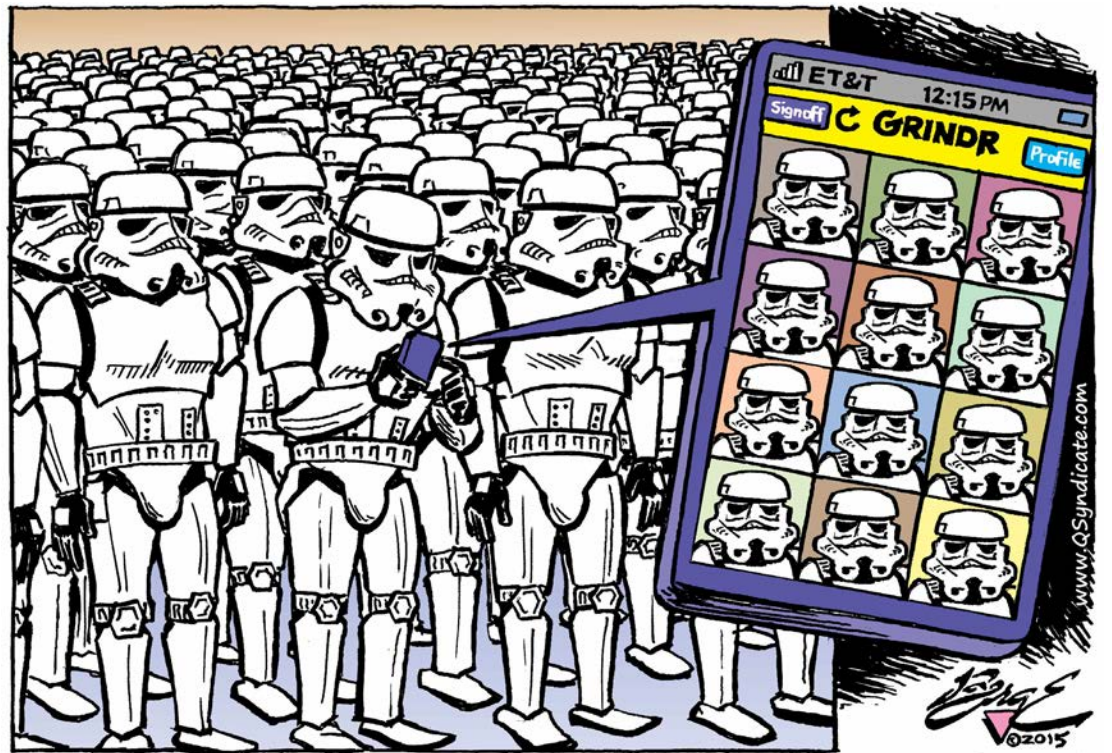
Southern Comforters are headquartered in Myopic Flats, Texas, home of the world-famous batter-dipped, low-cal Gila Burger. ("The burger with a bite to die for!") They broadcast over radio station TPARTY-AM, and their TV program, "The Church Key Hour," is syndicated worldwide. Sarah Palin, who likes peeking through an occasional narrow-minded keyhole, is thinking about converting. Again.

The Southern Comforters perform what they call brinkmanship baptism. "We don't sprinkle. We dunk, count to 10 very slowly and ask God for a miracle." They don't smoke weed, boogie down, play Bridge, skinny-dip, practice Feng Shui, eat kosher mayonnaise or play kissy face on the first and last date. Their motto: "One taste of 100-proof heaven goes a long, long way."

More than likely you've seen a controversial full-page ad the Southern Comforters took out in National Expirer tabloid recently (appearing next to Lady Gaga's 'candid camera cuties'). SANTA: A GAY AGENDA PLOT! Homos put the X in X-Mas! Are There 'Toys' Under Your Tree? Is Your Sock 'Hung' by the Chimney with 'Care?' Beware! The GAGs are coming.

In case you're too busy to speed-read the scandal sheets at checkout counters, Santa really got a few below-the-belt punches from these burning bush holy rollers: "It's bad enough the Gay Agenda Gang (GAG) has shoved TV's Burt & Ernie and Tinky Winky down our collective throats, but the real Trojan Horse is Old St. Nick himself!

See Gay Grinching, next page



IT WASN'T EASY BEING GAY A LONG TIME AGO IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY

As Heard On Facebook

As of press time, the fifth Republican presidential debate gets ready to televise live from Las Vegas. D'Anne Witkowski's renowned "Creep of the Week" is no stranger to these candidates, including write-ups this year of Jeb Bush, Ted Cruz and Ben Carson. But with GOP presidential hopeful Marco Rubio making yet another appearance only a few weeks after his last in the weekly column, readers are wise to take note of the other threats to civil rights outside of the vociferous Donald Trump. Commenters on Facebook shared their thoughts on Rubio earlier this month.

Jim R. "No law is settled law, eh? See laws banning slavery. See repeal of prohibition, see Texas v. White (unless he thinks the question of secession is still up for debate.)"

Stephanie M. "I for sure think it (the Creep of the Week) should be Trump ... every week for that matter."

Gary F. "Ass hat obsessed with cells, but can't help them when their born. I hate all this crap that they drag out every election."

To get involved with Between The Lines and PrideSource and share your thoughts, visit www.pridesource.com or www.facebook.com/BetweenTheLinesNewspaper.

Creep of the Week

Marco Rubio

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

There is a certain bench that presidential contenders long to fill. It's the Holy Grail of appointments: the Supreme Court.

Since Supreme Court Justices serve lifetime terms, getting a justice or two on the bench means leaving a legacy that far outlives your time in office.



Rubio

And while all the GOP candidates know this, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida, has been particularly outspoken lately about his dream of filling the court with justices who would try to undo marriage equality.

Back in November, Rubio said we should just ignore the marriage equality ruling since God didn't like it.

During that same interview Rubio said, "I think one of the biggest things the

next president is going to do is appoint justices to the Supreme Court – justices who understand that the Constitution is not a living and breathing document. It is a document of limitation and it's supposed to be interpreted and applied based on its original intent. And there is no way that you can read that Constitution and deduce from it that there is constitutional right to an abortion, or a constitutional right to marry someone of the same sex."

Ah, the old, "The Constitution is like the Bible, perfect the first time and intended as, well, gospel." Except for the fact that the Constitution has been amended many times, and the Bible has been translated and retranslated and rewritten and revised many, many times. My personal favorite is "The Action Bible," where Jesus is transformed into a comic book hero. I bet the Apostles never saw that one coming!

It's interesting that Rubio insists that since the Constitution doesn't say anything about abortion or marriage equality, Americans thus do not have a right to these things. The Constitution also doesn't say anything about assault weapons with huge magazines

Of course, Rubio doesn't see LGBT people as a minority group deserving of equality. He doesn't seem to see LGBT people as people at all. "I don't believe any case law is settled law. Any future Supreme Court can change it."

capable of mowing down a crowd of people in seconds. Yet somehow that always makes its way into tea party Founding Fathers fan fiction.

On Dec. 13 Rubio told Chuck Todd on "Meet the Press" that marriage equality is "bad law."

He does not, however, favor an anti-gay constitutional amendment. "That would be conceding that the current Constitution is somehow wrong and needs to be fixed," he said.

Granted, I don't want an anti-gay marriage amendment to the Constitution, but Rubio seems to be ignoring the fact that any amendments have ever been made. The right for women to vote, for example, is number 19.

But don't worry, because Rubio says, "It's not about discrimination."

"It is about the definition of a very specific, traditional and age-old institution. If you want to change it, you have a right

to petition your state Legislature and your elected representatives to do it," he said.

Never mind the hideousness of putting the rights of minorities up for a vote by the majority. If you look at history you'll see benevolent state Legislatures helping vulnerable minorities all over the place. Ha ha. Just kidding. It's the opposite of that.

Of course, Rubio doesn't see LGBT people as a minority group deserving of equality. He doesn't seem to see LGBT people as people at all.

"I don't believe any case law is settled law," Rubio continued. "Any future Supreme Court can change it. And ultimately, I will appoint Supreme Court justices that will interpret the Constitution as originally constructed."

In other words, he wants to fill the bench with right-wing ideologues who will be making law long after Rubio leaves office. Which is why it's so important that he – or his GOP opponents – never get elected in the first place.

► Gay Grinching

Continued from p. 18

"It's true. Santa, who wears a leather belt and boots, sports a beard and a big beer belly, is what GAGs call a card-carrying 'bear.' His red suit is color-coded to convey a deep-seated message. (Years ago, gay men wore bright red ties. And, those unmentionable hankies!) And while there may be a Mrs. Santa – a 'beard' of another kind – what grown man in his right mind breaks bread with elves, second cousins to hobbits, twinks and fairies?"

"Be forewarned. Sitting on Santa's ample knee and telling him you're naughty or nice, when God knows you're a loathsome, rotten, stinking sinner, is an invitation to disaster and damnation. Santa, and all he stands for – which includes same-sex marriage – is anti-American, anti-family values, anti-Republican and a GAG plot to boot. Amen."

PS: The less said about Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, the better. Mary Christmas, PGers!

YULETIDE TIP: Instead of donating LGBT dollars to the Salvation Army this year, put a note in the little red kettle: "The Salvation Army's homophobic! No donation from me, my family, my friends. MARY Christmas!"

Charles@pridesource.com



BY GREG NEVINS

Ask Lambda Legal The Office Holiday Party

Q. I am a lesbian who just started a new job on the management team at a new company. Invites have already started going out for the office holiday party, and it is expected that all members of the management attend and bring their families. The problem is, nobody knows I am married to a woman. I am afraid that us attending together could affect me negatively on the job. How can I protect myself?

A. Employment fairness has been a central part of our work for 42 years — and it is a priority we will continue to fight for.

My advice: Bring your wife to the party. But before you go, check out your employer's personnel policies, employee manual and/or your union contract to learn about any contractual rights you may have, as well as any complaint procedures. Does your employer or state have a nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation?

No one should worry that their sexual orientation could cost them their job or affect their standing at work. Federal law makes clear that discrimination because of an employee's gender is illegal. A landmark decision by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in July, citing some of Lambda Legal's recent work, confirms that sexual orientation discrimination against an individual occurs because of that individual's gender. In your case, that means that if it's fine for others to bring a wife to the party, it cannot be a problem that you did just because you're a woman.

In September, Lambda Legal argued on behalf of our client Kimberly Hively before the U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals during which we cited the EEOC decision. Hively was an instructor at a community college in Indiana for 14 years, but the college denied her fulltime employment and promotions – and eventually terminated her employment – because she is a lesbian. We urged the Court to reverse a lower court ruling and allow Hively her day in court. We also are representing a Georgia woman making

similar arguments before the U.S. 11th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Importantly, Lambda Legal is continuing its advocacy for the Equality Act, a broad and explicit federal law prohibiting employment nondiscrimination, and securing protections in housing, credit, education and jury service. Passage of the Equality Act would write sexual orientation and gender identity explicitly into Title VII, which currently prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and national origin.


It is our hope that our work increases public understanding of who LGBT people are and what a fair, inclusive workplace looks like. This makes our country a more just and accepting place for everyone.

If you feel you have been discriminated on the job because of your sexual orientation, feel free to contact Lambda Legal's Help Desk at 866-542-8336 or visit www.lambdalegal.org/help.

For more information on your rights in the workplace, check out our "Know Your Rights: LGBT Employees & Employees with HIV."

Greg Nevins is Counsel and Employment Fairness Strategist for Lambda Legal.

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Trans Sistas Fundraiser

Imagine This Productions held a holiday fundraiser for the fledgling Trans Sistas of Color Project on Dec. 6. The event raised over \$300 for the new group, which is in the process of incorporating and trademarking its name. The TSOCP was started to to empower, impact and influence the lives and welfare of trans women of color in Detroit. "It's the goal of

Imagine This to throw all our parties with a purpose and we were happy to be able to help this new group that we feel is sorely needed in our community," said Robert Tate of Imagine This. Pictured are Tate and Bre' Campbell, executive director of the TSOCP. BTL photo: Jason A. Michael




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NOW Endorses Fair Michigan

BY BTL STAFF

EAST LANSING – On Monday the Michigan chapter of NOW (the National Organization for Women) issued a press release announcing their support of a ballot initiative to amend the state constitution to include protections for women and the LGBT community.

The announcement comes one week after a community meeting in which over 100 activists gathered at Washtenaw Community College to discuss the challenges a ballot initiative presents and the feasibility of winning.

The meeting took place five weeks after attorney Dana Nessel formally announced the creation of Fair Michigan, a 2016 ballot committee working to add constitutional protections for women and the LGBT community.

Most of the state's LGBT organizations and leadership have urged caution and careful analysis before officially moving ahead on the ballot initiative. Fair Michigan still has to submit the final language of the proposed ballot question and then is tasked with obtaining a minimum of 315,354 signatures from registered voters to qualify for the 2016 ballot. The final 2014 meeting of Board of

State Canvassers took place Dec. 14 without Fair Michigan's language having been filed.

Michigan NOW has a long history of working for women's rights in the state and hopes that a partnership with Fair Michigan to pass a constitutional amendment to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation will strengthen their work for equality.

In the press release, Michigan NOW said it believes that "now is the time for a constitutional amendment" and highlighted the need for guaranteed protections for all citizens in the state.

"People just assume that women's rights are guaranteed and that discrimination is illegal. Unfortunately, that's not the case. I firmly believe that the people of Michigan want women to be treated fairly and that they will vote for the Fair Michigan ballot initiative," Michigan NOW President Danielle Troia said in the release.

Currently in Michigan, women and LGBT individuals do not have protections against being denied housing or being fired from their job for being LGBT or for announcing a pregnancy. Fair Michigan hopes to change that by adding a ballot question to the 2016 ballot that would bypass the Michigan Legislature

and grant protections through a constitutional amendment.

At the community gathering held Dec. 7, Government Relations Coordinator of the American Association of University of Women of Michigan Mary Pollock discussed the AAUW's support of Fair Michigan and how it will take more than just the women's groups to get the initiative passed in the state.

"I don't think the women's movement can carry this. The LGBT community is going to carry this. We are going to be a grateful partner and a lot of us with equal rights amendment battle experience will be helping and will be supportive, but I think now is the time to do it," Pollock said. "We need to bring the community together to make it happen, deal with our fears and education. We have a moment in time because of marriage equality. If we wait four years, we may lose that momentum."

The most sobering news out of the Dec. 7 meeting was the 42 percent (modeling number) released by Amy Mello, public engagement director from Freedom for All Americans, that painted a radically different picture of the electorate in Michigan than the majority support polling reported out of Fair Michigan. (See pg. 10)

With the clear support of women's groups,

“I don't think the women's movement can carry this. The LGBT community is going to carry this. We are going to be a grateful partner and a lot of us with equal rights amendment battle experience will be helping and will be supportive, but I think now is the time to do it.”

– American Association of University of Women of Michigan Mary Pollock

Fair Michigan now needs to gain endorsements from the many LGBT organizations working in the state. In a recent call, Nessel told BTL that Fair Michigan does have other endorsements, but official announcements are pending.


Mark Schauer, in closing remarks at the Dec. 7 community gathering, urged Nessel and LGBT leaders in the state to sit down within seven to 10 days and see if there is indeed a path forward to win. At press time, that meeting had been scheduled for Dec. 15.

National LGBTQ Task Force Condemns Trump's Muslim Comments

On Dec. 8, Republican Presidential candidate Donald J. Trump called for a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States." Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) advocates are condemning Trump's remarks.

"We wholeheartedly condemn and reject Donald Trump's call to stop Muslims from entering the United States. Moreover, we believe that his comments about Muslims reveal all you need to know about him. First, there are no standards of decency, no limits to where he will go to grab attention in his quest to win the Republican Party nomination. He is willing to attack, alienate and cause harm to anyone for political gain, regardless of the impact on people's lives or the divisiveness he feeds. Second, this is someone who does not learn from history. The same xenophobic frame-of-mind led to the appalling injustice of internment Japanese Americans during World War II. The legacy of that injustice lives on – in the Priority Enforcement Program run by the Dept. of Homeland Security, which targets Muslim immigrants for deportation, and in the climate of racism that puts all Muslims, Arabs and South Asians at risk of harassment and violence. Finally, words are weapons. Do we really want someone who – we can see from his words – fires first and aims later to have his finger on the world's biggest arsenal of weapons of mass destruction?" said Rea Carey, Executive Director, National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund.

The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund works to secure full freedom, justice and equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people. For over 40 years, we have been at the forefront of the social justice movement by training thousands of organizers and advocating for change at the federal, state, and local level.



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New Health Center Commits To LGBT Health Care And Services

BY AJ TRAGER

PONTIAC – A health center in Metro Detroit opened its doors earlier this year and is committed to providing primary care and services to the LGBT and allied communities.

According to the website, the Center for Transforming Health seeks to help patients prioritize and affirm healthy living standards and wellness on a consistent basis, but the center itself does a lot more than just help patients prioritize their health.

For Dr. Patricia Schmidt, creator of the Center, providing patients access to comprehensive care is key to her practice. She collaborates and focuses her care on the entire well being of each individual and her patients appreciate the alternative ways she goes about it. CTH currently has around 130 patients with a third of them identifying as transgender. Clients come to her from all over the state to receive care centered on treating the person as a whole using integrative and collaborative internal medicine practices.

Schmidt graduated from Michigan State University in 1987 with a degree in osteopathic medicine. She began her career as a practicing physician at Hamtramck Health Center of Michigan and held many jobs including teaching before she joined the Visiting Nurses Association of Southeast Michigan-Hospice in 2002. Schmidt left hospice care in 2014 and in March of this year, after talking about it for five years, she opened up CTH.

Two years before CTH opened its doors, a friend of hers came out to her as transgender. At the time, Schmidt didn't know much about the trans experience and sought out informative experiences to not only get more acquainted as a friend, but also as a medical professional. She attended a support group at Affirmations and after a few visits realized that they needed help from a doctor with her expertise.

"I sat there thinking that they need a doctor like me. They were talking about the situations where they were shunned from care. It really impacted me that people were not getting respectful medical care," Schmidt told BTL.

With the mentorship of Darnell Jones, Gender Identity Network Board President, Schmidt learned more about the specific issues affecting the trans community and how they tie into the

person's overall health.

"I would see people with him. They would come for his open house and we started to do a collaboration so I could learn about some of the issues," Schmidt recounted. "There are specific things that I'm learning more about. But people are people and medically things are similar."

She attended a conference hosted by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health, a nonprofit organization dedicated to transgender health, and immersed herself in local and national research. She learned who the movers and shakers were in the trans health community and furthered her education in hormone replacement therapy and continuing care.

"I am all about helping people feel comfortable in their own skin. I want people to reach their highest health and wellness. I wanted this practice to be different than anything that is out here. We call it the clubhouse. People can have cookies and coffee and sit and chat with other people in the waiting room," Schmidt said.

Recently CTH went above and beyond for some members of the LGBT community in Traverse City. When she learned that the northern city was in need of a healthcare professional versed in HRT and trans-related care, Schmidt planned a personal one-on-one meeting with a handful of clients. While CTH does do minor consultations over the phone, Schmidt found it necessary to make a personal appearance to help clients who were in need, but had no willing medical staff to assist them. Schmidt took her equipment, including computer systems and medical tools, and was able to start hormone-related care for seven individuals.

CTH is a non-traditional health clinic that instead of accepting insurance-based payments accepts direct cash. If a client does have health insurance the proper documentation will be submitted to the insurance company for reimbursement or application of their deductible, but Schmidt wanted to provide access for all people in need, especially for those who are financially insecure or cannot put the money down.

"I like being able to put my stamp on something that says I'm a doctor to care for people, and it makes me excited to come to work. Any time one of my trans patients comes back for a follow up, it's like Christmas to me," Schmidt explained. "I am excited because they



Dr. Patricia Schmidt

are happy, validated and moving in the direction that they want to go."

As Schmidt continues her education she is noticing that words like cisgender or gender presentation have slotted themselves into her daily vocabulary, but she does recognize that she still has a long way to go before she knows everything she can on LGBT health care. However, until that time comes, she makes sure that the office system has templates for preferred gender pronouns of her patients as well as preferred names and that all clients are addressed accordingly.

"Leilani (the office manager) and I are learning how to interact with the community and create a space where people feel the most comfortable and are affirmed," she said.

Over the coming months Schmidt hopes to broaden CTH's reach in the LGBT community while continuing to provide primary care for people with all sorts of illnesses. She is working to make sure that the office atmosphere is comfortable and affirming so that trans men, for example, feel comfortable coming to her to get pap smears and pelvic exams.

"My transformation has been to know that I'm a good doctor to be able to do this," Schmidt said. "That I am able to take care of individuals and meet their needs in a safe, welcoming space."

CTH is located at 2111 Cass Lake Road Suite 101 in Keego Harbor. For more information on CTH visit their website at <http://ctransformhealth.com>.

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Jamaica Activist Brings Legal Challenge To Anti-sodomy Laws

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) – A Jamaican gay rights activist has brought a rare legal challenge to the Caribbean island’s anti-sodomy laws that criminalize consensual sex between men, the Canadian advocacy group he works for said Thursday.

Gay rights campaigner and attorney Maurice Tomlinson recently filed a claim in Jamaica’s Supreme Court challenging the constitutionality of the rarely-used 1864 laws that ban anal sex and anything interpreted as “gross indecency” between men.

In a Wednesday statement from the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Tomlinson said longstanding laws are a “gross violation of my human rights” and those of all LGBT people in Jamaica. He is a senior policy analyst with the Toronto-based advocacy organization.

Tomlinson believes the laws infringe on a charter of human rights Jamaica adopted in 2011 that guarantees islanders the right to privacy, among other things. He

Homosexuality is perceived as a sin by Jamaica’s influential religious lobby and nearly a dozen other Caribbean nations

asserts the 151-year-old laws hinder efforts to fight HIV in Jamaica while fueling homophobia and “horrific violence.”

Another Jamaican gay rights activist made headlines in 2013 after initiating a similar constitutional court challenge to the anti-sodomy laws. But that activist, Javed Jaghai, withdrew the case last year because of safety concerns. He was represented by Tomlinson.

Homosexuality is perceived as a sin by Jamaica’s influential religious lobby and nearly a dozen other Caribbean nations where anti-gay laws are on the books. Many in Jamaica consider homosexuality to be wrong, and some insist violence against gays is blown out of proportion by homosexual activists.

In a 2014 report, New York-based Human Rights Watch asserted that LGBT people in Jamaica are frequently refused housing or employment and remain the targets of unchecked violence. The high-profile 2013 mob murder of transgender teen Dwayne Jones outside of Montego Bay remains unsolved. Yet Human Rights Watch noted a “groundswell of change” in the way Jamaica is responding to human rights abuses against LGBT people.

Activists with the country’s main gay rights group say tolerance is clearly expanding on the island even though stigma is common and the laws criminalizing gay sex between men remain on the books. The Jamaica Forum of Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays held the island’s first gay pride celebration last year and the weeklong observance was peaceful in the country frequently portrayed by gay activists abroad as one of the globe’s most hostile places to homosexuality.

It is not clear when a first hearing in Tomlinson’s challenge might be heard.

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

Islamic State Group Targets Gays With Brutal Public Killings

BY BASSEM MROUE

REYHANLI, Turkey (AP) – Before a crowd of men on a street in the Syrian city of Palmyra, the masked Islamic State group judge read out the sentence against the two men convicted of homosexuality: They would be thrown to their deaths from the roof of the nearby Wael Hotel.

He asked one of the men if he was satisfied with the sentence. Death, the judge told him, would help cleanse him of his sin.

“I’d prefer it if you shoot me in the head,” 32-year-old Hawas Mallah replied helplessly. The second man, 21-year-old Mohammed Salameh, pleaded for a chance to repent, promising never to have sex with a man again, according to a witness among the onlookers that sunny July morning who gave The Associated Press a rare first-hand account.

“Take them and throw them off,” the judge ordered. Other masked extremists tied the men’s hands behind their backs and blindfolded them. They led them to the roof of the four-story hotel, according to the witness, who spoke in the Turkish city of Reyhanli on condition he be identified only by his first name, Omar, for fear of reprisals.

Notorious for their gruesome methods of killing, the Islamic State group reserves one of its most brutal for suspected homosexuals. Videos it has released show masked militants dangling men over the precipices of buildings by their legs to drop them head-first or tossing them over the edge. At least 36 men in Syria and Iraq have been killed by IS militants on charges of sodomy, according to the New York-based OutRight Action International, though its Middle East and North Africa coordinator, Hossein Alizadeh, said it was not possible to confirm the sexual orientation of the victims.

The fear of a horrific death among gay men under Islamic State rule is further compounded by their isolation in a deeply conservative society that largely shuns them.

Many Muslims consider homosexuality to be sinful. Gay men are

Notorious for their gruesome methods of killing, the Islamic State group reserves one of its most brutal for suspected homosexuals. Videos it has released show masked militants dangling men over the precipices of buildings by their legs to drop them head-first or tossing them over the edge.

haunted constantly by the possibility that someone, perhaps even a relative, will betray them to the militants – whether to curry favor with IS or simply out of hatred for their sexual orientation. Islamic State group fighters sometimes torture suspected homosexuals to reveal their friends’ names and search their laptops and mobile phones. Even among IS opponents, gays find little sympathy. Some in the public who might be shocked by other IS atrocities say killings of gays is justified. Syrian rebel factions have killed or abused gays as well.

A 26-year-old Syrian gay man told the AP that even two years after fleeing to Turkey, he wakes up shaken by nightmares that he is about to be hurled from a building. The man spoke on condition that he be identified as Daniel Halaby, the name he now uses in his activism tracking IS atrocities, and that the city in Turkey where he lives not be named for his own safety.

Halaby says a childhood friend who became radicalized and joined IS betrayed him to the militants in 2013, forcing him to flee his home city of Aleppo.

“He knew everything about me, such as being secular and gay. ... I am sure he is the one who gave my name to Daesh,” he said, using the Arabic acronym for the Islamic State group.

At that time, in mid-2013, IS had just started to spread from neighboring Iraq into Syria. It didn’t yet hold the large stretches of territory across both countries that it would capture the next year. Instead, its fighters pushed into rebel-held areas in Syria and tried to dominate other rebels, often clashing with them for control and imposing the group’s strict law wherever they could.

In September 2013, IS fighters besieged the Aleppo neighborhood where Halaby lived with his family, trying to wrest it from the rebel Free Syrian Army. The two sides negotiated over an end to the siege and, during the talks, IS gave the rebels a list of people they demanded be handed over to them. Halaby said he learned his name was on that list.

He quickly escaped to Turkey.

There, his bedroom is decorated with a flag of the Syrian opposition and a rainbow banner that covers an entire wall. His parents, who remain in Aleppo, refuse to talk to him because of his sexual orientation. When he watches videos of gays being killed, he said, “What breaks my heart most is that I feel helpless.”

Life for gays in Aleppo, Syria’s biggest city, was always hidden, Halaby said. When the secular-led peaceful protests erupted against President Bashar Assad in 2011, he said he quickly joined, sure they would lead to a democratic government “that will respect everyone no matter their religion, ethnicity, sect or sexuality.”

“We were very naive,” he said. “What happened was exactly the opposite.”

Subhi Nahas, a 28-year-old gay Syrian who now lives in San Francisco, said he fled because he feared his own father might turn him in to al-Qaida’s affiliate, the Nusra Front, which also has targeted homosexuals.

When his father learned he was gay, Nahas said he called him a shame to the family and beat him. Around the same time, in late 2013, Nusra fighters launched a crackdown on suspected gays in Nahas’ hometown of Maaret al-Numan, detaining 25 men and announcing through mosque loudspeakers that they would cleanse the

town of homosexuals.

“With the problems between me and my father, I did not rule out that he might (hand me over),” he told the AP.

So he fled, first to Lebanon, then Turkey. But in Turkey, he said, he began getting death threats from a former school friend who joined the Islamic State group. Fearful that he wouldn’t be safe even in Turkey, he legally resettled to the United States in June.

In August, Nahas and a gay Iraqi man spoke about the suffering of homosexuals in their countries at the first-ever U.N. Security Council session spotlighting violence and discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people.

The stigma surrounding homosexuality makes it difficult to document IS killings and identify victims, rights groups say. Families and friends refuse to talk about victims. Gays under IS rule are terrified to speak, and most who flee abroad go into hiding.

The Islamic State group’s announcements are the main source of information, but the group often does not name the victims, perhaps in deference to their families, who could lash out in anger at having their names publicly linked to homosexuals.

“Such a barbaric show of murder leaves

In August, Nahas and a gay Iraqi man spoke about the suffering of homosexuals in their countries at the first-ever U.N. Security Council session spotlighting violence and discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people.

LGBT individuals in constant state of fear and would deprive them of a normal life that any human being is entitled to,” Alizadeh said.

Widespread public hostility leaves the community even more vulnerable.

“They are violating God’s laws and doing something that is forbidden in Islam, so this is a legitimate punishment,” said Hajji Mohammed, a resident of the IS-held northern Iraqi city of Mosul. There the group has thrown men suspected of being gay off the Insurance Building, a landmark about 10 stories high.

By employing the grisly method, the Islamic State group aims to show radicals that it is unflinchingly carrying out the most extreme strains in Islam – a sort of “ideological purity” the group boasts distinguishes it even from other militants. The punishment “will protect the Muslims from treading the same rotten course that the West has chosen to pursue,” IS proclaimed in its online English-language magazine Dabiq.

The Quran tells the story of Lot and the destruction of Sodom – and sodomy in Arabic is known as “liwat,” based on Lot’s name.

Men having sex with each other should be punished, the Quran says, but it doesn’t say how – and it adds that they should be left alone if they repent. The death penalty instead comes from the Hadith, or accounts of the sayings of the prophet Muhammad. The accounts differ on the method of killing, and some accounts give lesser penalties in some circumstances.

The Islamic State group bases its punishment on one account in which Muhammad reportedly says gays “should be thrown from tremendous height then stoned.”

Before IS, the method was rarely used, though other militants have targeted homosexuals for death. During their rule in Afghanistan in the 1990s, the Taliban had

their own method: The victim would be put in a pit and a stone wall would be toppled on top of them.

Most moderate Muslim clerics ignore the death penalty provisions, even as they fiercely denounce homosexuality. Across the Arab world, homosexuals have been arrested and sentenced to prison on charges linked to “debauchery” – and sometimes lashed in Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Omar, the man who watched the killings in Palmyra, said he remains shaken.

It began when IS militants blared on loudspeakers for men to gather. Then a black van pulled up outside the Wael Hotel, and Mallah and Salamah were brought out.

The first to be thrown off was Mallah. He was tied to a chair so he couldn’t resist, then pushed over the side.

He landed on his back, broken but still moving. A fighter shot him in the head.

Next was Salameh. He landed on his head and died immediately. Still, fighters stoned his body, Omar said.

The bodies were then hung up in Palmyra’s Freedom Square for two days, each with a placard on his chest: “He received the punishment for practicing the crime of Lot’s people.”

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How Actress Judith Light Found Herself By Finding The Gay Community

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Judith Light didn't know courage until she met the gay community.

As one of a few prominent celebrities in the '80s to pledge her unwavering support to "the leaders," as she calls them, the "Who's The Boss?" actress was instrumental in changing the lives of LGBT people at the height of the AIDS epidemic three decades ago. But, she says, it was

her own life that needed changing.

In a candid conversation with Light, 66, the actress reflects on her staunch advocacy and the need for the compassion her hit show "Transparent" is rooted in.

Judith, I watched the first episode and was really moved. The world is a scary place right now, so to see you and co-star Jeffrey Tambor share such a tender moment at the end of the first episode was especially moving. The kindness and love and empathy and compassion between the two of you in that scene was really profound.

Awwww – I love that you started off that way. You know, people have not talked about that enough, I think. They have in other ways, but you noticing that – that really means a lot to me,

so thank you.

I think this is the kind of show that people need right now.

I do too. And I think when you only think about this show as a transgender show, you don't get the real truth of it, which is that it's about transgender people but that it's also about humanity and people – and people living their truth and being honest and authentic and courageous.

What does it mean to you to know you're changing people's hearts and minds with that message?

It's huge. All of us feel a tremendous responsibility to get it right. Jeffrey always says, "Lives are at stake," and so we all do try to make that the top note. That's really important

to all of us. How it makes me feel as a longtime LGBTQ advocate – it thrills me. I feel as though my life and my service and my work have all come together in one place, so it makes me feel fantastic. Even though I hear from people who say, "Why would you do this?" or, "This is weird," the value of it far outweighs those people who have problems.

What is the negativity you're referring to?

There are those voices out there on social media that say, "This is so weird" – they aren't talking about the show; they're talking about the transgender community. I say that this is an issue in our world, and what you started off talking about – the love and the caring and the compassion and the concern – I think that's what we all need to be giving each other. Life is

“It was the LGBTQ community that inspired me to be the kind of person I wanted to be. I wanted to be authentic and courageous, and for so long I wasn’t.”

difficult enough without us being denigrating to anyone in the world. Let people live their truth. Let them be. It’s a message this show supports.

Did you think the show would be given the warm welcome it’s been given before it aired?

No. We literally had no idea. We hoped that it would be something that people would support, that people would love. This is (show creator) Jill Soloway’s parent. It’s her story. So we all hoped, but we didn’t know. We weren’t sure. We just knew that all of us – Jill, the writers and the whole entire team; I’m talking about Amazon and everyone else – hoped that it would be something that would educate and elevate the culture, but we didn’t know. We didn’t have any idea. Then when the success happened, we were all so grateful for it that we had to make sure when we came back for the second season that we were as responsible as we could possibly be. Lives *are* at stake. And there are people who are still being thrown out of their homes, and hate crimes are perpetrated against them and they’re fired from their jobs because they’re transgender. This is 2015. We feel very responsible to do the right thing.

How has that message been transformative for you?

This is something that I have looked toward for such a long time. It was the LGBTQ community that inspired me to be the kind of person I wanted to be. I wanted to be authentic and courageous, and for so long I wasn’t. When I began doing a lot of advocacy work in the early ’80s for HIV and AIDS, I saw the community and the way the community was operating against all odds, against a world and a culture and country that gave them nothing and denigrated them. It was unconstitutional behavior toward the community, and this community just rose up and said, “We will create places to take our friends who are sick, we will do their funerals, we will take them to the hospital, we will change their IVs and their bedpans, and we will learn.” And the lesbians

came in and said, “Gay men, you are our brothers and we will take care of you,” and the drag queens and the bisexual community and the transgender community – everybody pulled together. I looked at this community and said, “This is breathtaking. This is the kind of world and people I want to be around. These are the kind of people I want to be working with.”

I said, “We have to tell the truth about what’s really going on here.” My friends and the community were dying in droves and two presidents wouldn’t even say the word AIDS.

It was reprehensible to me. It was the opposite of the way you started this interview. It was the lack of compassion, the lack of humanity and the pretending that this was something else that it wasn’t. It was sheer unadulterated homophobia and I couldn’t ... I didn’t... I wanted to be like the community.

At the time, there weren’t a lot of celebrity allies stepping up to the plate. Bette Midler, Elizabeth Taylor, yourself. What did that feel like for you?

You know, it wasn’t something of what it felt like. It was the thing that had to be done. And Bette was amazing, and Elizabeth Taylor was amazing. None of us were thinking at that time, “I’m doing important work.” We were thinking, “This is what should be done, what has to be done.” It was, “Get to work everybody. People are dying in droves, and we’re losing an entire generation of people.”

We lost so many people in the theater. Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS was on the frontline for years helping people. We were losing people in droves in the theater community – in every community! It wasn’t even a question. People would come out and tell their families that they had AIDS and their families disowned them. So it wasn’t what you thought about. You went to the hospital because they were dying and nobody was there with them. You didn’t think about it. It wasn’t a thought process. It was an emotional human response to an epidemic where there was no

See Light, page 32



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Judith Light and Jeffrey Tambor star in "Transparent." Photo: Amazon.

► Light

Continued from p. 31

help forthcoming. And I mean, who's more creative than the gay community? So everybody got together and said, "OK, we're gonna put on a show and raise money, and we're gonna create the AIDS rides like Dan Pallotta did and we're gonna raise millions and millions of dollars because this is our family." I took my lead from the community. They were the leaders. To me, they're still the leaders.

When this community knows that, as they did at the height of the AIDS pandemic, they will become even more powerful than they are now. It is this community that got same-sex marriage to happen. It is the devotion to the work, and this community has done it. This community has done this. So that's why I say I took my lead from this community. This is a community I respect and look up to and honor.

You know, we've always considered you to be family.

Thank you and I appreciate that, and that's why when I get to do a show like "Transparent" I get to talk about this with you. We get to talk in a much more powerful, prominent way about the transgender community, which has been too long in the shadows, and it's time. It's really time.

When it comes to transgender issues, this show has hit the zeitgeist.

My manager of 35 years calls it "divine choreography." He coined that phrase. He said there are things in life that are divine choreography, and it's not just cosmic, it's not just coincidence, it's not just serendipity. There

is something that is happening and it's really important, and I'm so grateful to be a part of it.

Looking back at your career from "One Life to Live" on through "Transparent," what does the gay community tend to recognize you most for?

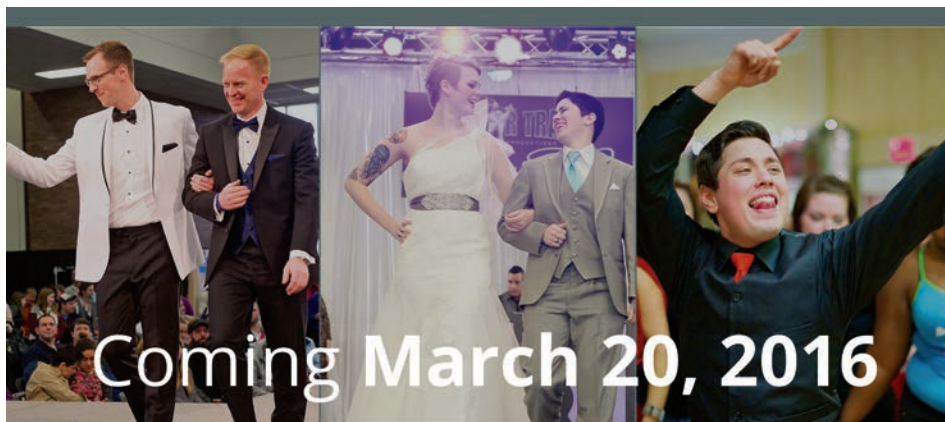
It's everything. It's generational actually. It starts with "One Life to Live" and then it literally goes to "Who's the Boss?" and then after that it's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" and "Ugly Betty," but there's always something that's particularly generational about who it is talking to me that they remember me for. So that's what's so interesting. I mean, I've been around a long time! So, it's generational, and so everything is different for every person. I find it very interesting, and I love it. Other people only remember me from coming back to Broadway in the last five years, so there's that. I'm in a Broadway show right now. I'm actually sitting in my dressing room talking to you. I'm doing this play with Keira Knightley called "Thérèse Raquin" at Studio 54, so then there will be a generation of people who will remember me for being on Broadway.

Like Katy Perry. She raved about "Thérèse" on Twitter.

I know! I adore her. She is such a doll – oh my god. She is so dear, really. She is very, very special. She's a great advocate for the community too.

I know you have a show to get to, but it's been a delight. Such a pleasure. Thank you, Judith.

Of course. Thank you for wanting to talk. I really appreciate it. And thank you for starting the interview off so beautifully.



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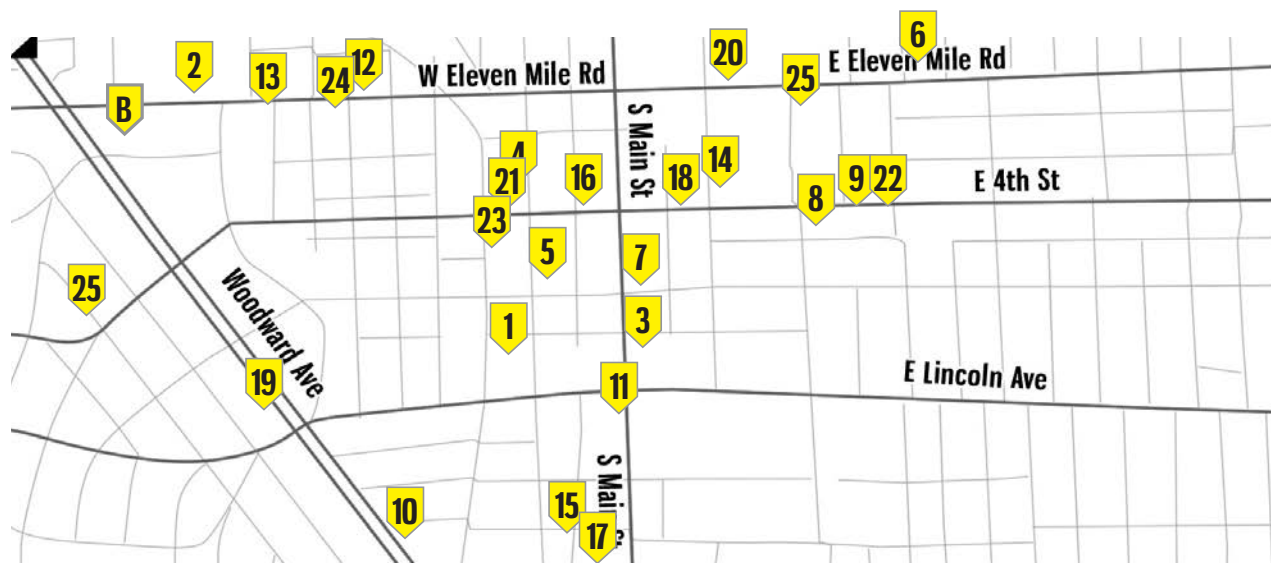


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Royal Oak's Ford Arts, Beats & Eats Distributes More Than \$250,000 To Local Community Organizations

BY BTL STAFF

ROYAL OAK – As 2015 wraps up, Ford Arts, Beats & Eats presented by Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort leaves its philanthropic mark as it crosses the \$4.5 million milestone of overall total charitable donations since the festival's inception. This year \$255,802 was raised from gate admission, beverage proceeds and other festival sponsored community initiatives benefitting over 60 nonprofit and community organizations.

Adding to its goodwill initiatives, Ford Arts Beats & Eats also connects with the community through programs for veterans, children with autism and an annual food drive. Oakland County Parks' Veterans Admission Program gave 1,400 veterans and family members free admission to the festival. The Fourth Annual Family Days presented by the Autism Alliance program gave 1,100 children on the ASD spectrum and family members a



complimentary visit including parking, lunch and unlimited rides. Also, the sixth annual food drive hosted by OUR Credit Union benefitting Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan collected 3,979 pounds of non-perishable items, providing 3,316 meals, in exchange for free admission, while The Deaf Arts festival featured donated booth space to ten deaf artists.

"Partnering with Ford Arts, Beats & Eats is a point of pride for Ford and the

Southeast Michigan Ford Dealers," said Amy Marentic, Detroit Regional Sales Manager for Ford. "It provides an opportunity to make a positive difference in the community through involvement in such initiatives as Family Days for Children with Autism while also sharing our newest products with the many people enjoying the festival."

With 385,000 visitors, this year's Ford Arts, Beats & Eats was the third largest attended in its history, up more

than 5 percent from last year and trailing only 2012 and 2010. Of those, 122,544 were paid admissions while the remainder consisted of festival patrons whose attendance was gained through a variety of health-related and community programs as well as sponsors, stakeholders and those who took advantage of early admission on the opening day of the festival. And, of significant note, two major festival health initiatives saw an increase in participation as the Priority Health Move to the Beats 5K/10K Walk/Run presented by Life Time Fitness saw an increase to 570 runners from 521 last year; and the Priority Health Zumbathon Celebration had 1,254 participants this year versus 1,216 last year.

"Ford Arts, Beats & Eats has become one of our area's most significant annual events," said Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson. "This Labor Day weekend tradition provides tremendous financial impact for local

businesses of all sizes, its numerous charities, participants and partners, as well as for the City of Royal Oak and Oakland County. On top of it all, festivalgoers experience unlimited enjoyment with more entertainment, food and cultural exposure than anywhere else in the area."

This year's festival remains on pace with past years' fundraising, taking into account two initiatives that did not take place. In past years, the CrowdRise Community Challenge and Arts Du Jour charity preview event generated approximately \$100,000 annually. Ford Arts, Beats & Eats continues to be a leader in festival-generated charitable contributions.

"Surpassing \$4.5 million in donations over 18 years is especially fulfilling," explained Jon Witz, event producer. "It's great to see the success of our community programs, and we thank all of our partners for their roles in making this happen."



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Editor's Pick

Famed gay humorist and essayist David Sedaris is having his "seasonal" book adapted in Ferndale. "The Santaland Diaries & Season's Greetings" is adapted for the stage by Joe Mantello. The delightful anti-holiday treat makes its annual return to the Ringwald stage for another round of twisted holiday fun!

According to Dramatists.com, "The Santaland Diaries" is "a brilliant evocation of what a slacker's Christmas must feel like. Out of work, our slacker decides to become a Macy's elf during the holiday crunch. At first the job is simply humiliating, but once the thousands of visitors start pouring through Santa's workshop, he becomes battle-weary and bitter."

"The Santaland Diaries & Season's Greetings" runs Dec. 17-21 at The Ringwald Theatre. The Ringwald Theatre is located at 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. For more

information, call 248-545-5545 or visit www.theringwald.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

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

Thursday, Dec. 24

Christmas Eve Worship 6:30 p.m. Journey of Faith Christian Church, 1900 Manchester Road, Ann Arbor. 734-971-4245. www.A2disciples.org

Christmas Eve Service 7 p.m. Timothy Lutheran Church, 8820 Wayne Road, Livonia. www.TimothyLutheranChurch.com

Christmas Eve Services and Candle Lighting 7 p.m. Children's church at 5 p.m. Unity of Royal Oak, 2500 Crooks Road, Royal Oak. 248-288-3550. www.Unityroyaloak.org

Christmas Eve Worship Services 7 p.m. King of Kings Lutheran Church, 2685 Packard St., Ann Arbor. www.KingofKingsLutheran.org

Christmas Eve Candlelight with Communion 8 p.m. Trinity Lutheran Church, 1400 Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor. www.Trinityyaa.org

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion 8 p.m. Woodside Church, 1509 E. Court St., Flint. www.Woodsidechurch.net

Christmas Eve Candle Light Service 11 p.m. Divine Peace Metropolitan Community Church, 1400 Scott Lake Road, Waterford. 248-332-1186. www.Dpmcc.net

Christmas Eve Worship Services 11 p.m. First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, 1669 W. Maple Road, Birmingham. www.Everybodyschurch.org

Friday, Dec. 25

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

Shabbat Service 6 p.m. Temple Echad, 1420 Hill St., Ann Arbor. www.Temple-echad.org

Saturday, Dec. 26

turnIT aut \aut BAR, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-994-3677. www.Autbar.com

Sunday, Dec. 27

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

Holiday Worship Services 9:30 a.m. King of Kings Lutheran Church,

Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Dec. 17

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

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

Are You phubbing with Phone Apps? 6:30 p.m. Tinder, SnapChat, Grindr, Facebook, etc. Are you constantly checking in while checking out of reality? Do you feel your behavior around dating sites, social media, porn sites, games, or other apps is phubbing those around you a term coined as part of a campaign by Macquarie Dictionary to describe the habit of snubbing someone in favor of a mobile phone. Join Mark McMillan, LLMSW for a presentation and discussion about this topic facing so many millions of Americans today. Learn about the latest thinking around this new social issue and its impact on socializing in public. Participants will also learn useful coping skills and strategies to address phubbing behavior. Fee \$20 a person. For more information and to register, contact 248-399-7447. Center for Relationship and Sexual Health (CRSH), 25600 Woodward Ave., Suite 215, Royal Oak. 248-399-7447. OfficeMgr@CRSH.com <https://crsh.com/phubbing-phone-apps/>

Daybreak Worship 7 p.m. Woodside Church, 1509 E. Court St., Flint. www.Woodsidechurch.net

Midweek Advent Services 7 p.m. Timothy Lutheran Church, 8820 Wayne Road, Livonia. www.TimothyLutheranChurch.com

Friday, Dec. 18

Cookies & Carols 7 p.m. Trinity Lutheran Church, 1400 Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor. www.Trinityyaa.org

Bright and Gay Cabaret 8 p.m. Tickets: \$12-15. Sistrum, 215 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. www.Sistrum.org

Saturday, Dec. 19

Cirque Dreams Holidayze Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan State University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 800-WHARTON. www.Whartoncenter.com

America You Kill Me 9 p.m. 21+. Tickets: \$6. Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore, Detroit. 313-873-1739. www.Northernlightslounge.com

Pride Holiday Bash 9 p.m. Upper Peninsula Rainbow Pride, 911 Lakeshore Blvd, Marquette. www.Facebook.com/events/1099949436705944/

Todds & Liedernacht Reunion Retro Dance Party! DJ Charles English 9 p.m. \$6 cover with a portion of the proceeds to benefit the local film American You Kill Me documentary on gay rights. Static Network, 660 W. Baltimore, Detroit. 313-873-1739. info@staticrecords.com www.Facebook.com/events/1676473895906021/

Sunday, Dec. 20

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-SHOW. www.Williamstontheatre.com

Holiday Services 11 a.m. Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit, 2441 Pinecrest, Ferndale. 248-399-7741. www.Mccdetroit.org

Christmas Pot Luck and \$10 Gift Exchange 11:30 a.m. Divine Peace Metropolitan Community Church, 1400 Scott Lake Road, Waterford. 248-332-1186. www.Dpmcc.net

Yule 1 p.m. Michigan Pagans, 37060 Huron River Dr., New Boston. www.Meetup.com/michiganpagans/events/226824956/

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

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee 2 p.m. Tickets: \$18-20. Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. 248-473-1856. www.Farmingtonplayers.org

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

Monday, Dec. 21

The Santaland Diaries & Season's Greetings The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 248-545-5545. www.Theringwald.com

The Longest Night Worship 7 p.m. Woodside Church, 1509 E. Court St., Flint. www.Woodsidechurch.net

Wednesday, Dec. 23

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 Road, Ferndale. khug@goaffirmations.org <http://goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

The Ringwald Theatre's Annual Festival Celebrates Seven Years, Seeks Submissions

The Ringwald Theatre is sounding a call for new, original one-act plays to be performed at their Seventh Annual Gay Play Series (GPS). The Detroit-area's only LGBT short play festival is striving to provide early-career writers the opportunity to see their work produced, giving them what is oft-needed exposure.

The Ringwald opened their doors seven years ago on May 11, 2007 with "Fatal Attraction: A Greek Tragedy." Quickly, The Ringwald became a mainstay of Detroit's theater community.

The plays submitted should have a performance time of 30 minutes or less and deal directly with issues or characters that are identified as gay/lesbian/transgender, or contain a gay sensibility. From the initial submission pool, a final line up will be chosen by a panel of judges to be performed at The Ringwald Theatre in June 2016, at the Seventh Annual Gay Play Series Festival.

From those performed, an audience poll will be conducted to select one winning script, actor, actress and director.

The 2015 Festival departed from the usual format of 10 minute plays and featured a series of longer-format short

plays written and performed in a 10 day span. From last year's festival, the winning play "Madonna the Dead," written by Joshua Ben-Ra, will have a featured run at The Ringwald later this season. Scott Jason Alexander Cook was named Best Actor for "Orange is the New Black Eyed Peas," with Maggie O'Reilly and Barbie Weisserman sharing Best Actress nods for "My Fair Lady Gaga" and "50 Chers of Gray," respectively.

All submissions must be submitted electronically to: submissions@theringwald.com

- The submitted script must be the script proposed for presentation, with no major alterations necessary.

- Please provide an approximate running time, number of cast members and a one sentence synopsis in the body of the email.

- Only one entry per playwright will

be accepted.

- Neither fax nor paper submissions will be accepted.

- Submission materials will not be returned.

- Previously submitted scripts will not be eligible.

- The deadline for submissions is Feb. 14, 2016.

- The final line-up will be announced in May 2016.



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▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 38

2685 Packard St., **Ann Arbor**. www.kingofkingslutheran.org

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

Monday, Dec. 28

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 LGBTQIAP 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@ywcakalamazoo.org www.kglrc.org

Out Loud Chorus 7 p.m. Trinity Lutheran Church, 1400 Stadium Blvd, **Ann Arbor**. www.trinityaa.org

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, Dec. 29

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

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

Wednesday, Dec. 30

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

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

Thursday, Dec. 31

New Years Eve Dance Women Out and About, 200 N. Main St., **Royal Oak**. 248-943-2411. www.Emagine-entertainment.com

Trivia with Terry and Thirsty Thursday Half off beer and well drinks with student ID. \autBAR, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-3677. www.autbar.com

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

New Year's Eve Burning Bowl Service 6 p.m. King of Kings Lutheran Church, 2685 Packard St., **Ann Arbor**. www.kingofkingslutheran.org

MUSIC & MORE

The Ark "Jorma Kaukonen" Tickets: \$30. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., **Ann Arbor**. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 20. 734-761-1800. www.theark.org

Ypsilanti Community Choir "Annual Holiday Concert" Special guests: Four Old Men and a Babe. Towsley Auditorium, Ypsilanti. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17. www.ypsicomchoir.org

THEATER

An Almost British Christmas Theatre Nova presents this original holiday romp, inspired by the British tradition of Pantomime (or Panto) which takes children's stories and injects a bit of Vaudeville sensibility to create a raucous family entertainment. Well explore what happens when two unsophisticated Americans attempt a British pantomime, using American iconography and traditions. The result is an unusually American and hilarious Panto, with all of the traditional conventions, plus a rotating roster of local celebrities, pop culture references, and choirs of local schoolchildren - a truly unique way to celebrate the season. Theatre Nova, Yellow Barn, 416 West Huron, **Ann Arbor**. Through Dec. 20. 734-635-8450. www.artful.ly/theatre-nova/store/events/7195

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

868-1347.

National Theatre of Scotland Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol Tickets \$60. UMS, Power Center, 121 Fletcher St., **Ann Arbor**. Dec. 17 - Dec. 30. 734-764-2538. www.ums.org/multiperformance/christmas-carol/

National Theatre of Scotland: A Christmas Carol UMS, Power Center, 121 Fletcher St., **Ann Arbor**. Dec. 17 - Jan. 3. 734-764-2538. <http://ums.org/multiperformance/christmas-carol/>

ART 'N' AROUND

Cranbrook Art Museum "Empire by Andy Warhol" The presentation at Cranbrook Art Museum is shown in relation to "Lou Reed, Metal Machine Trio: The Creation of the Universe." Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Dec. 1 - March 13. 877-462-7262. www.cranbrookart.edu

Cranbrook Art Museum "Lou Reed, Metal Machine Trio: The Creation of the Universe" Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Dec. 1 - March 26. 877-462-7262. www.cranbrookart.edu

DIA "30 Americans" Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. Oct. 1 - Jan. 18. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Flint Institute of Arts "The Art of Collecting" Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., **Flint**. Nov. 27 - Jan. 3. 810-234-1695. www.flintarts.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

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

River's Edge Gallery "Title Goes Here" Leo Kuschel, Master Artist painting for over six decades. River's Edge Gallery, 3024 Biddle, **Wyandotte**. Nov. 24 - Dec. 31. 734-246-9880.

robert kidd gallery "Rick Vian: Using the Whole Chicken" robert kidd gallery, 107 Townsend St., **Birmingham**. Nov. 21 - Dec. 19. 248-642-3909. www.Robertkiddgallery.com

UMMA "The Art of Tyree Guyton: A Thirty-Year Journey" University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 S. State St., **Ann Arbor**. Aug. 22 - Jan. 3. 734-763-4186. www.umma.umich.edu



Editor's Pick

Celebrate the holidays this weekend with "Cirque Dreams Holidaze" at East Lansing's Wharton Center for Performing Arts. Broadway director Neil Goldberg re-imagines the holiday season with over 300 costumes, 20 acts and 30 performers from 12 countries showcasing an endless variety of imaginative, heartpounding and gravity-defying feats you have to see to believe.

From the creators of the groundbreaking Broadway hit Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy, Cirque Dreams Holidaze is "so full of energy it could end our

dependence on oil" according to the New York Daily News, and "a delicious confection of charm, sparkle and talent by the sleigh load." Don't miss this international sensation that "Dazzled ... at the Kennedy Center," according to the Washington Post.

"Cirque Dreams Holidaze" plays 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17; 8 p.m. Dec 18-19; and 2 p.m. Dec. 19. The show is appropriate for all audiences ages 5 and up. Tickets start at \$35. The Wharton Center is located at 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. Visit www.whartoncenter.com for more information.

Naughty But Nice

Stocking Stuffers To Spice Up Christmas Day

BY MIKEY ROX

Santa checked his list twice for who's naughty and nice so your Christmas is filled with sugar – and now some spice.

Slaphappy Flat Vibrator

Marketed as the Swiss Army knife of vibrators (which, granted, maybe isn't the best tag line for a device you're putting up your hoo-ha, but I digress), the Slaphappy bendable five-in-one flat dildo is made of 100 percent body-safe silicone, cycles through eight vibrating modes, and stays super quiet so family brunch isn't too awkward in the morning. \$50, slaphappy.com

L. Condoms

Wrap up your love with “the most natural, pleasurable way to practice safe sex,” according to Fast Company magazine. For every L. condom purchased, one is distributed in a developing country where the brand partners with developing organizations to support women and HIV/AIDS prevention. Plus, one-hour delivery is available in Brooklyn and San Francisco for all you bang bros too lazy to hit the bodega. \$15 for 12, thisisL.com



Cheap Undies

There's a veritable smorgasbord of skivvies to choose from at Cheap Undies – including third-party brands like CIN2 and Ginch Gonch – but this holiday season you can make his assets shine with the Golden Luxe Briefs collection, a super-soft cotton blend in saturated tones and shimmering waistbands for that Midas touch. \$10, cheapundies.com

K-Y Love Pleasure Gel Lubes

Intensify your sexual connection with this line of couples' pleasure gels from K-Y – which include “Sensuality” and “Passion” varieties – to take your body-connecting experience to a tingly new level. \$17, k-y.com



Adam & Eve Finger Bangers

For hesitant bottoms who like a light touch, Adam & Eve mini-vibrating finger bangers are designed with a tapered tip to focus vibrations for maximum pleasure in two styles – ribbed blue and nubby purple – to drive your partner wild with every pulse. \$8, adamandeve.com

EZ Reach Prostate Massager

Backdoor play gets a boost with the EZ Reach Prostate Massager featuring a unique textured surface and curved shaped for ultimate satisfaction while a maneuverable tipped handle stimulates as he moves it around – because every time a prostate sings, an angel gets its wings. \$15, adamandeve.com

Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and LGBT lifestyle expert whose work has been published in more than 100 outlets across the world. He splits his time between homes in New York City and the Jersey Shore with his dog Jaxon. Connect with Mikey on Twitter @mikeyrox.



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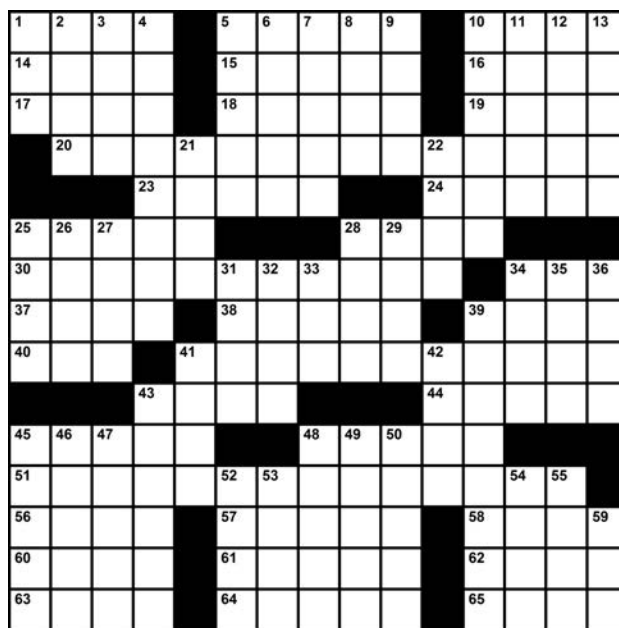
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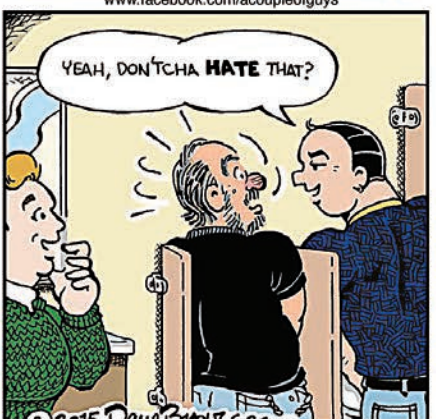
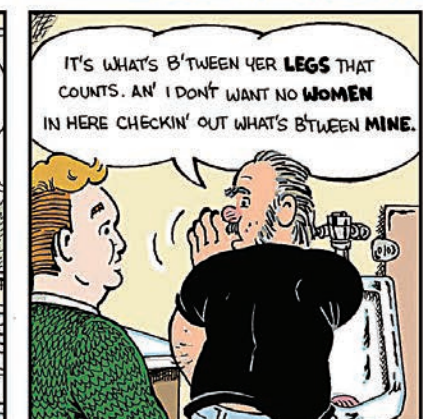
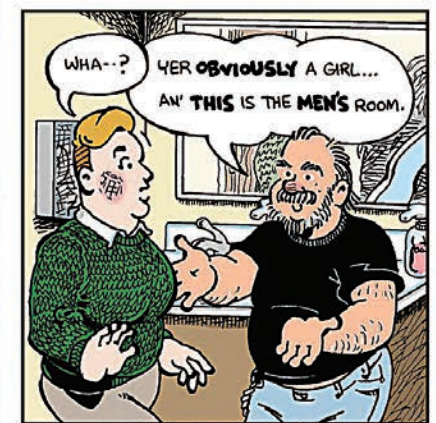
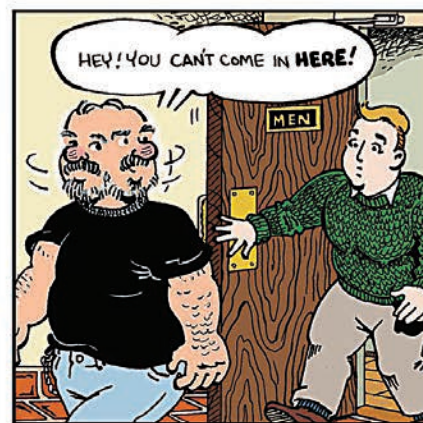
- 1 Michelangelo's "David," once
- 5 Supporters in the bedroom
- 10 Mistake for Paul Taylor
- 14 A fireman goes down on it
- 15 Vietnam capital
- 16 Tow job
- 17 Barrie's getting on in years
- 18 "Ready ____, here I come!"
- 19 Linc portrayer in "The Mod Squad"
- 20 Start of a tweet to Reid Ewing
- 23 Gomer, to city slickers
- 24 Accessory for Wonder Woman
- 25 Composer Lee
- 28 Big manager on campus
- 30 End of the tweet
- 34 Came upon
- 37 First name in detective stories
- 38 Discharge on one's face
- 39 Hang one's head
- 40 Data transmission letters
- 41 Ewing's response to the tweet

- 43 Gift label word
- 44 With blood rushing to the head
- 45 Able to bend over
- 48 Ancient Mexican
- 51 Ewing has openly shared about this condition
- 56 Pass out
- 57 Make up
- 58 Funny Dick
- 60 Web surfer
- 61 Goes lickety split
- 62 Final Foursome org.?
- 63 "Not that I loved Caesar ____"
- 64 Metal waste
- 65 Pack down

Down

- 1 Cruising area
- 2 Lance of "An American Family"
- 3 Weight loss product
- 4 The children's hour to turn in
- 5 Avoided stirring Bond's martini
- 6 Porn director Chi Chi
- 7 Bit of history
- 8 Screwdriver, e.g.
- 9 Is in session
- 10 Condom used at Southern Cal?
- 11 Disney Uncle
- 12 Boast from a successful cross-dresser?
- 13 ____ Novo (Benin's capital)
- 21 Toy that does tricks
- 22 Norwegian saint
- 25 Cultivated pansies
- 26 Cather's "One of ____"
- 27 "____ never fly!"
- 28 Laura of _Recount_
- 29 "Showboat"'s "Nobody ____ But Me"
- 31 Bono's band, written out
- 32 Get juice from a fruit
- 33 Airline to Oslo
- 34 Oliver Twist request
- 35 "Gone With the Wind" was one
- 36 Big top, e.g.
- 39 Shakespeare's Antonio of Venice
- 41 Steamed up
- 42 Lincoln's Johnson
- 43 Earhart and others
- 45 Former "American Idol" judge Paula
- 46 Poke the backside
- 47 Screws around
- 48 Big name in gas
- 49 Some basketball defenses
- 50 Head lock?
- 52 Play area
- 53 It may come before 69
- 54 Foe of Pizarro
- 55 Sandler of "I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry"
- 59 Toto outburst

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