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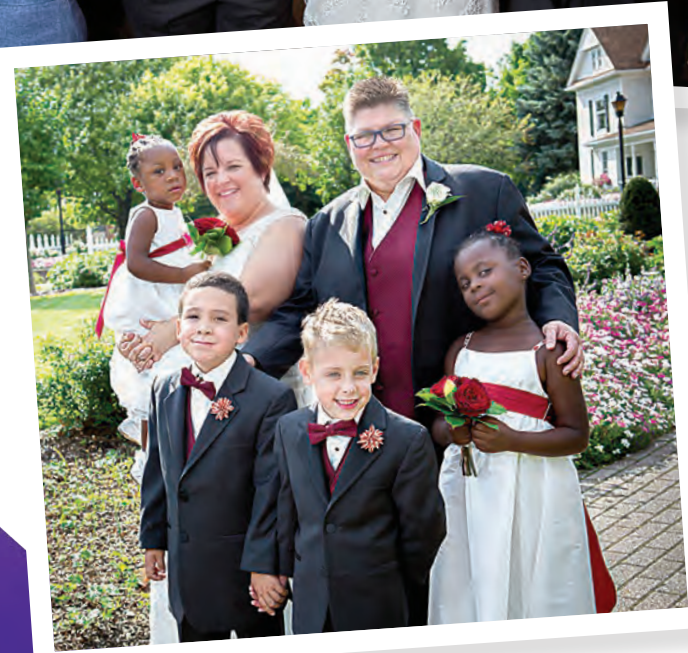
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## 2015 Year in Review

Historic Year for Michigan

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2015 was the Greatest Year Yet for Marriage Equality



The DeBoer-Rowse Family

DEC. 24, 2015

– JAN. 6, 2016

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The Frivolist Picks Biggest Dicks of 2015 PAGE 24

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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 methylethylergonovine 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](http://www.GENVOYA.com).

**Keep GENVOYA and all medicines out of reach of children.**

Issued: November 2015

**Genvoya**  
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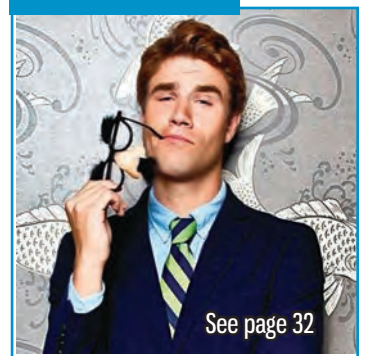
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*Can LGBT Civil Rights Win On Michigan Ballot in 2016?*

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## CALENDAR



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In what Ann Arbor's Comedy Showcase is calling "another hot debut you can't afford to miss," the long-time comedy joint will present Matthew Broussard.

## Online This Week

### PARTING GLANCES



Golly. Gee! Who could resist the "Ultimate Book of Bizarre Lists: fascinating facts and shocking trivia on movies, music, crime celebrities, history" by Jamie Frater?

### TRANSMISSIONS



It is the eve of the Winter Solstice as I write this, and this is no better way to allude to where things are right now for the transgender community as a whole.

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## NEWS

### Bronson Hospital Allows Lesbian Couple On Child's Birth Certificate

**KALAMAZOO** – A west Michigan couple became the first same-sex couple to jointly sign their baby's birth certificate at Bronson Hospital.

Two-week-old baby Asa is the son of Stacy Campbell and Kathryn Crawford. According to a NewsChannel3 report, Campbell and Crawford were surprised when representatives from the hospital informed them that only Crawford could be listed as a parent on the birth certificate since she is the biological mother.

"It was really sad for me because this is my wife," Stacy Campbell told NewsChannel3. "We are married, we made this child together and I can't be on the birth certificate? It was heartbreaking."

The hospital then denied their request to both be listed on the certificate.

However, just before they were going to leave the hospital and return home with Asa, the representative returned with exciting news that, for the first time in Bronson Hospital history, both women were to be listed on the certificate.

"It made me feel like I was part of the family," Campbell said, "the way I should feel."

The couple expects to receive Asa's birth certificate in coming weeks.

### National Ad Campaign Seeks LGBT Family

A search is out currently for real LGBT families to tell their inspiring stories of "acceptance" and love that they would like to share for a major cookie company commercial. The "feel good commercial" will feature "real people, to be organic for the commercial as opposed to hiring actors."

Producer Jodi Weiss is looking for a gay family (specifically with one parent being Hispanic) with children (one or more, ages 5-12) that would be interested in participating in this campaign. Ideally, grandparents live nearby to share their story.

Each feature family member selected to participate will be compensated monetarily. Families can reside anywhere in the United States.

To submit an application, send stories and a picture of the family to Weiss at [jodiweiss55@gmail.com](mailto:jodiweiss55@gmail.com) as soon as possible. Stories should be brief and highlight what makes your family's situation unique; share why you would like to share your special story, as well. Filming will begin in Mid-January 2016. For more information, contact Weiss at 310-918-7774.

### Marquette Adopts New Anti-Discrimination Ordinance

WNMU-FM reports that Marquette has adopted a new anti-discrimination ordinance which states employers, landlords and others cannot discriminate against anyone based on their race, sexual orientation, gender or religion.

"It shows that we are open here," said mayor pro-tem, Sarah Reynolds. "I think Marquette has always been kind of an open society."

The City Commission passed the ordinance unanimously Dec. 14. It's the first of its kind to be adopted in the Upper Peninsula.



Former Michigan Assistant Attorney General Andrew Shirvell seen stalking Chris Armstrong. BTL File Photo 2010

### Assistant Attorney General Shirvell Denied Claim

**LANSING** - In a brief order the Michigan Supreme Court says it will not get involved in an unemployment benefits case regarding former assistant attorney for the state, Andrew Shirvell, who was fired in 2010 after stalking and harassing the openly gay University of Michigan Student Body President Chris Armstrong.

Shirvell made headlines in 2010 when it was discovered that in addition to working for the state, Shirvell ran an online blog titled "Chris Armstrong Watch" where he posted photos and anti-gay comments about Armstrong.

Shirvell was later fired from his position after an investigation found that he used state computers to persecute and harass Armstrong, calling the then student body president a "radical homosexual activist," a Nazi, and "Satan's representative on the student assembly."

Armstrong sued Shirvell for stalking, harassment and defamation of character in 2011. A 2012 jury awarded Armstrong \$4.5 million in monetary damages for the defamation.

On Feb. 2, the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a federal jury correctly found Shirvell liable for defamation, invasion of privacy, intentional infliction of emotional distress and stalking for his relentless campaign against Armstrong.



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## Website Launched To Track And Stop Gay 'Conversion Therapy'

BY BTL STAFF

A new online tool to fight gay "cures" has just launched, thanks to All Out, a global movement for the rights of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people. Crowdfunded entirely by All Out members from all over the world, this online tool allows people to report conversion therapy "treatments" as they show up in their communities. Working with members and international partners, All Out will campaign to shut down gay "cures" wherever they appear. Conversion therapy is still currently legal in Michigan.

All Out is mobilising millions of people and their social networks to build a powerful global movement for love and equality. Their mission is to build a world where no person will have to sacrifice their family or freedom, safety or dignity, because of who they are or who they love.

"No one should be told that their love is a disease," said Leandro Ramos, interim executive director of All Out. "The Gay 'Cure' Watch is a powerful tool, funded entirely by All Out members, which will allow our organization to find out where these dangerous 'treatments' are happening and get them shut down once and for all."

Around the world, extremist groups are promoting "therapy" sessions and seminars to "cure" people from being lesbian, gay, bi or trans, using tactics from degrading verbal abuse to painful electro-shocks and drugs. Outdated and medically unfounded, these "treatments" do nothing but increase the risk of depression and suicide among vulnerable LGBT youth.

Examples of gay "cures" pop up all over the world. Just in 2015, it was reported that one in 10 health workers in the United Kingdom have witnessed a professional colleague promoting gay "cures." In the United States, an anti-gay group was sued and forced to pay tens of thousands of dollars in damages to victims of its gay "cure" treatment. And in India, doctors were discovered giving electro-shocks and drugs in attempts to "cure" their gay patients.

Since the launch of the tool, 17 people have already reported organisations, individuals and therapists which support or practice gay "cures." Those reported include a U.K.-based organisation called "True Freedom Trust," U.S.-based "Portland Fellowship" and Netherlands based "Exodus Global Alliance."

This new tool is part of All Out's ongoing campaign to shut down these so-called "treatments." When a new gay "cure" app appeared on Apple's iTunes store in 2013, over 95,000 people from all over the world signed a petition, which persuaded Apple to take it down in less than 24 hours. In 2014, 116,000 All Out members signed a petition in support of Xiao Zhen, a young man who had been subjected to "conversion therapy" in China, calling on the World Health Organisation to condemn the practice.

To see the Gay "Cure" Watch tool, visit [gaycurewatch.com](http://gaycurewatch.com)

## Affirmations Says Goodbye To Founding Service

BY AJ TRAGER

**FERNDALE** – Big changes are coming to Affirmations next year as the center decides to reorganize its longest running service to the LGBT community: the Affirmations Hotline. The Hotline will no longer be a dedicated line for LGBT questions and concerns and will instead be integrated into the phone service that streams into Affirmations' front desk.

Twenty-seven years ago before Affirmations had a front desk, or even a building, a group of 20 people were trained to answer crisis calls from the LGBT community. With the help of a \$50,000 grant from the city of Detroit to the Michigan Organization for Human Rights, a civil rights and anti-discrimination organization that disbanded in 1994, those individuals gathered to undergo intensive training on tough issues like how to respond to someone in a crisis to helping someone figure out the coming out process. They helped guide these callers through talking about health, HIV and other difficult situations with family. They received professional training from psychologists on how to handle suicidal calls and major moments of crisis before they could be handed over to larger organizations dedicated to that care, like the EMS.

Once the program went live, the team would work seven days a week from 4-10 p.m. and would reach hundreds of LGBT people of all ages from all over southeast Detroit. The Helpline was advertised in Metro Times and local media in hopes that teachers, counselors and other care professionals would know that the service was available.

"We spoke to people who had never talked to anyone about being gay. We spoke to people who were really isolated," said Jan Stevenson, member of the first Helpline team and first executive director of Affirmations. "It was an experience that truly changed my life."

After a year of serving the community through the aid of the grant, the helpline was in danger of closing down and was moved to Brian Wootton's basement. Shortly after that, members of the volunteer helpline team formed a board of directors and Affirmations was born. Speaking to the LGBT community on the Helpline told the board what the most needed services were for LGBT people in southeast Detroit. It was from there that 30 other various support groups were formed followed by Affirmations' second largest service, the teen support group

But this was the world before the internet and the technology boom. The only way to communicate long-distance with people was either through telephone or snail mail. There was a sense of isolation back before everyone was interconnected all day long and it was significantly harder to find a sense of community.

### Internet's Impact

Because people have access to more resources now thanks to the internet, programs and services like the Affirmations' Helpline have had to adapt.

Over the last few years the Helpline has been utilized less and less by members of the community and the community has called the Helpline for different things than they did when it was first created. The line used to receive well over a hundred calls a month but now averages between 80 and 100 calls a month, Lydia Ahlum Hanson, director of programs at Affirmations, told BTL. Most of those calls are requests for information instead of individuals looking for help. And of those calls, 30 percent are hang ups or prank calls and 10 percent are from out of state.

The Helpline was moved from a private room to the Affirmations service desk in 2013 where cross-trained volunteers would answer the Helpline and perform other reception duties. The move was intended to make the front desk an epicenter of information.

"We've been looking at our programs and getting a sense of how to streamline and improve our services. Since this summer we have been working hard at improving services around our front desk and have now shifted the name to be known as the 'Welcome and Resource Desk,'" Hanson said.

The W&RD is manned 12 hours a day, six days a week and is a place for people looking for referrals, resources and support to get aid. After thinking about what programs are offered at the center, the Affirmations team decided that they simply didn't have the capacity to keep investing in the helpline model as they traditionally have known it.

"Hence our decision to transition the helpline into the Welcome and Resource Desk for local callers and then for those that are calling from not this region, which is actually a fair amount of our calls, they will be referred to national helplines which in many ways are better equipped to serve folks who aren't in our

**“** We've been looking at our programs and getting a sense of how to streamline and improve our services. Since this summer we have been working hard at improving services around our front desk and have now shifted the name to be known as the 'Welcome and Resource Desk.' **”**

- Lydia Ahlum Hanson, director of programs at Affirmations

region," Hanson explained.

Hanson says that there has been a misconception on what the Helpline was to the LGBT community. She says that since Affirmations is not a crisis agency, it is instead the job of the organization to reroute those national or crisis calls to more national or crisis focused groups such as the Trevor Project or local organizations such as Equality Michigan or Common Ground. She hopes that the Helpline can shift to be more of a hub, connecting various callers to LGBT programs and services in the area.

Running a helpline can be fairly costly with training time as well as volunteering hours.

"We are very grateful for Rachel (Crandall) and Dave's (Ferber) dedicated time. We took a lot of care in making the decision and we understand of the impact of this being Affirmations' first program," Hanson said. "A whole lot has changed in LGBT services in the last 27 years. It is important, as an agency, that we continue to evolve with that. That evolution, our movement and especially what it means to be a local LGBT community center is what led us to that decision."

The announcement was made in early December to Helpline volunteer staff with the final transition coming in early January. All incoming calls to the Helpline number will be redirected to the W&RD where trained volunteers will answer questions regarding information, resources, housing options, how to handle discrimination and mistreatment, minor crises and many others. To reach the W&RD, call 248-398-7105.

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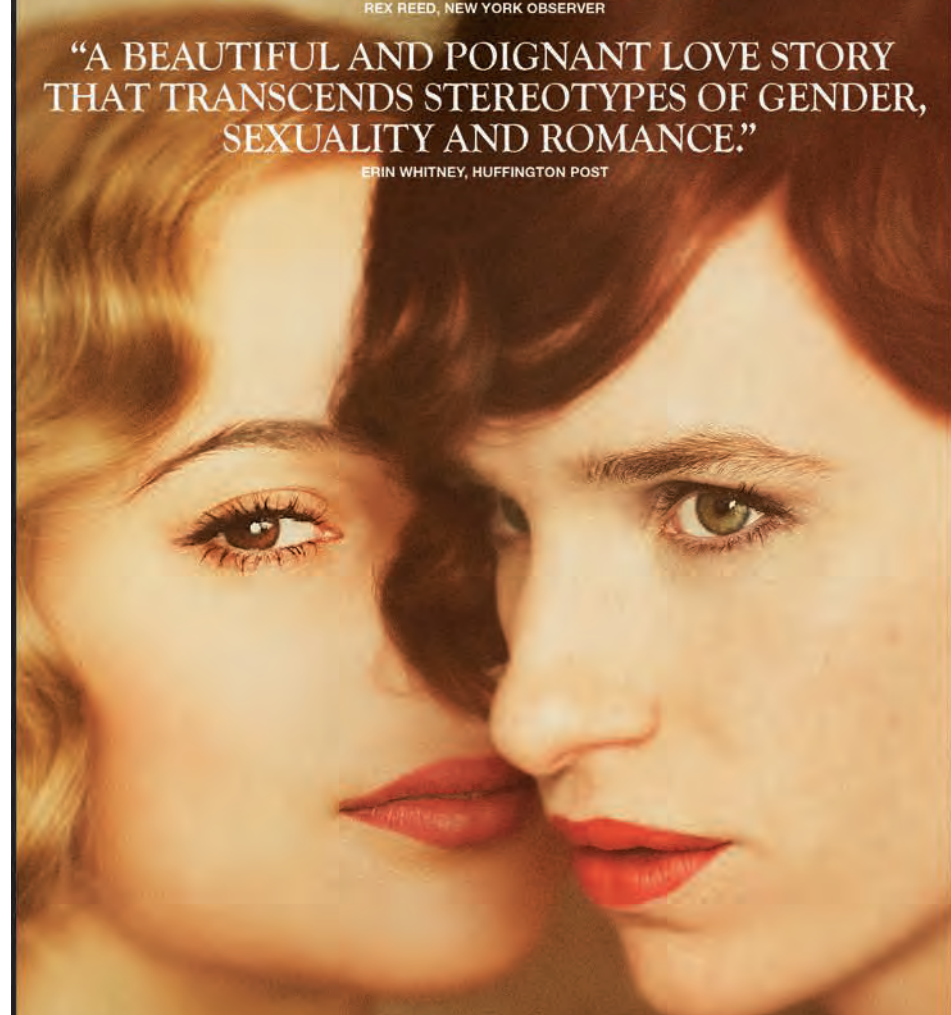


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## Detroit, East Lansing Score High On Municipal Equality Index

For the first time, the city of Detroit was given a perfect score on Dec. 16 for its LGBTQ policies and services by the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index. It is one of only two cities in the state of Michigan to receive such

lack fully inclusive LGBTQ nondiscrimination laws. The only other city in the state of Michigan to receive a score of 100 out of 100 was East Lansing.

"The board and staff of the Ruth Ellis Center congratulate the city of

prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in all city contracts with outside contractors. Sec. 27-8-1 of the Detroit City Code recognizes the rights of and confers benefits to non-married domestic partners among city employees, elected officials and appointees.

– The Detroit Police Department appointed Detroit Police Officer Danni Woods as its first LGBTQ liaison for the department. Officer Woods works in partnership with law enforcement and LGBTQ community-based organizations. The liaison also assists Investigative Operation Units concerning crimes against members of the LGBTQ community and serves as a resource for victims of such crimes. Officer Woods also has an interactive and continuous role in police training and cultural competency regarding the LGBTQ community.

– All appointees, managers and supervisors are required to attend training classes on the city's nondiscrimination policy and guidelines, including nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

– The mayor designated Brad Dick, Director of the General Services Department, and Roland Liggett, a commissioner on Detroit's Board of Human Rights/Ethics, as LGBTQ liaisons for the City.

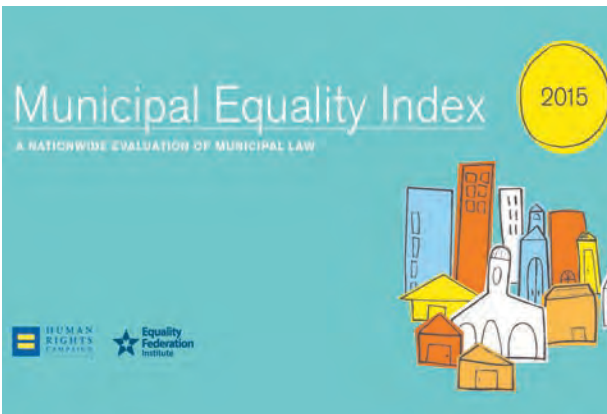
– City leaders have committed to create an LGBTQ advisory board that would meet monthly to discuss local issues affecting Detroit's LGBTQ community.

– Upon taking office, Mayor Duggan issued an executive order that clarifies and strengthens the city's employment practices regarding discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Detroit in achieving the highest rating in serving the LGBTQ community," said Jerry Patterson, executive director of the Ruth Ellis Center in Highland Park, which provides services to homeless and at-risk LGBTQ youth. "We are grateful for a wide range of partnerships, including the city of Detroit. There is still much work to do, but it is wonderful to see this acknowledgment of progress."

The following highlights reflect only a few of the city's recent efforts as they relate to the MEI:

– The Detroit City Council has passed a number of ordinances strengthening nondiscrimination protections in the City Code. Sec. 27-1-1 gives the city's Human Rights Department the authority to eliminate and prevent discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and to take actions that secure the equal protection of civil rights. Sec. 27-3-1 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity in all city employment practices, including hiring, promotion and training. Sec. 27-3-2



a rating this year.

The MEI looked at 408 cities across the country and evaluated them based on their nondiscriminatory laws and ordinances; how the city treats its LGBTQ employees; how the city ensures that the LGBTQ community is included in city services and programs; relationship with law enforcement; and the city's relationship with the LGBTQ community and its advocacy for equality.

Mayor Mike Duggan has publicly advocated for issues such as marriage equality and has directed his appointees and city leaders to institute policies that are inclusive and supportive of Detroit's many LGBTQ employees and citizens.

"Detroit is a welcoming city, where opportunity is available for everyone," said Duggan. "We will continue to expand our policies and strengthen our connection with the LGBTQ community to build a stronger city that all of us are proud to call home."

Detroit was among the MEI's 31 "All-Star Cities" – those that are said to be paving the way on LGBTQ equality in states that still

## Michigan AIDS Coalition Merges With Matrix Human Services

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Earlier this month it was announced that the Michigan AIDS Coalition has joined forces with Matrix Human Services, a Detroit-based nonprofit. As a result, MAC will now be known as MAC Health, a new Matrix program. MAC's prevention, advocacy and education services that are key to the legacy of MAC will be added to the medical case management, home health care, mental health, non-medical case management, linkage to care, and early intervention services of the existing Matrix Ryan White program, providing a full scope of services to the community.

"The affiliation of Michigan AIDS Coalition and Matrix Human Services represents a progressive, entrepreneurial approach to driving the mission of fighting this horrible



epidemic," said Terry Ryan, the chief executive officer of MAC since 2012, who will now be known as the director of MAC Health. "In combining these complementary programs, we are ensuring that the work of both organizations will carry forward, while giving

confidence to our supporters that we continue to be successful in an ever more efficient and effective manner."

The news marks the second time in a year that one of the community's oldest AIDS service organizations announced a merger. In March it was announced that AIDS Partnership Michigan had merged with the HIV/AIDS Resource Center to become Unified – HIV Health and Beyond. But is the Matrix-MAC pairing really a merger or an acquisition?

"The official term here, in legal terms, it's an 'affiliation and an assumption of assets,' but most of the general public doesn't understand that. So for public consumption, we use the word 'merger,'" Ryan said. "We've become a program within Matrix."

According to Ryan, MAC has been looking to partner with another agency for some time.

"This was a planned strategic move on the part of our board," he said. "It really reflects the rapidly changing nature of HIV and also changes in health care coverage, like the Affordable Health Care Act. What we see across the country is rapidly now our health systems (are merging), for example, look at the hospital mergers in the Detroit area. Now also among HIV organizations across the country there was a need to link or partner with some

larger more comprehensive health systems. So our move is strategically in response to that."

In short, the merger will allow MAC to provide the same services they always have along with even more.

"Matrix Human Services is a much larger and stronger agency financially," said Ryan. "They have about a 40 million dollar annual budget. They have numerous programs that also serve inner city populations as we do but, more importantly than that, they have an extensive HIV case management system and that pairs well with what we do. Our focus is HIV prevention, counseling and testing and this gives us an opportunity to directly plug in HIV positive clients to case management."

Ryan said not much will change at MAC's Ferndale office. "We're keeping the office in Ferndale because they wanted an Oakland County presence," he said. "Basically it's business as usual but with enhanced services."

All of MAC's staff has been retained and additional case managers have been brought in. And four members of MAC's board of directors will now join the Matrix board.

"We had a lot of longtime board members, and I mean people who had been committed a long time who were really ready a year ago to step back and retire from that," Ryan explained. "When we began two years ago talking about the idea of looking for a larger partner, those members agreed to stay on until we found a partner and a merger was completed. But we have four board members, some of the newer ones, who have been elected to the Matrix board and that allows us to feel a strong confidence that our programming stuff and other issues are being cared for at a larger level. Matrix has been hugely gracious."

Karen Bisdorf, chief operating officer of Matrix, said that the 109-year-old nonprofit was proud to continue the legacy of excellence and care represented by MAC.

"This merger creates a full service spectrum for the communities we serve," she said. "None of these services are duplicative, so the scope of care and assistance now available to the community is greatly enhanced and fully connected under the Matrix umbrella of programming."

Press materials for Matrix identify the agency as a social service organization offering a range of programs devoted to maintaining and supporting the family unit and improving the quality of life for individuals of all ages. MAC was created in 2009 when the Midwest AIDS Prevent Project, which had been founded in 1988, merged with the Michigan AIDS Fund, which had been founded a year later.

# Creep of the Week

## Ben Carson, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

**M**aking sure that gays and lesbians were never afforded legally recognized marriages was the focus for the anti-gay right for so long. So many resources were poured into stopping John and Bill from saying, "I do" that ever since the Supreme Court said yes to marriage equality, anti-gay groups have desperately been trying to regain lost ground.

You may remember that once upon a time there was the Defense of Marriage Act. If passed by Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush it would have written discrimination against same-sex couples into the U.S. Constitution. But it never got that far.

Now that marriage is legal, the anti-gay right's strategy has changed some. Instead of trying to prevent legal marriage from happening, they're trying to make sure it remains legal for haters to hate under the guise of "religious freedom."

So shortly after the Supreme Court ruled, a bill was introduced in Congress called the "First Amendment Defense Act" which would essentially shield anyone who wants to discriminate against LGBT people. Because discrimination is a religious right and the First Amendment protects "the free exercise of religion."

Needless to say, the anti-gay right would love to get this bill signed into law. But they know it will never go anywhere without a president's support. And so they have asked the GOP dunce troupe of candidates to sign a pledge in blood.

Okay, I made up the blood part (or did I?), but the pledge reads, "If elected, I pledge to push for the passage of the First Amendment Defense Act (FADA) and sign it into law during the first 100 days of my term as President."

Ben Carson, Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz totally signed it.

Carly Fiorina, Rick Santorum and Mike Huckabee also signed on to support this ridiculous bullshit, but they are trailing so much in the polls that, well, nobody cares what they think.

According to the American Principles Project, front-runner Donald Trump has expressed support for FADA but didn't sign the pledge. Since barely a word of what comes out of Trump's mouth is true, this doesn't really mean much. Though it would be a mistake to think that Trump is for, or even neutral on, LGBT rights.

**Now that marriage is legal, the anti-gay right's strategy has changed some. Instead of trying to prevent legal marriage from happening, they're trying to make sure it remains legal for haters to hate under the guise of "religious freedom."**

According to the Family Research Council, a group that has made its name in hating on the gays, "FADA would prohibit the federal government from penalizing people for their personal, moral or religious beliefs on natural marriage in federal employment, grants, contracts, tax treatment and other programs. It also protects individuals or entities that believe, teach or establish in codes of conduct that sexual intimacy is reserved for natural marriage."

That covers an awful lot of ground on which someone can say, "God told me to hate gays so you can't touch me." The intended consequences would be terrible for LGBT people, and no doubt there would be plenty of odious unintended consequences, too. Not to mention the fact that support for marriage equality is only growing in the United States.

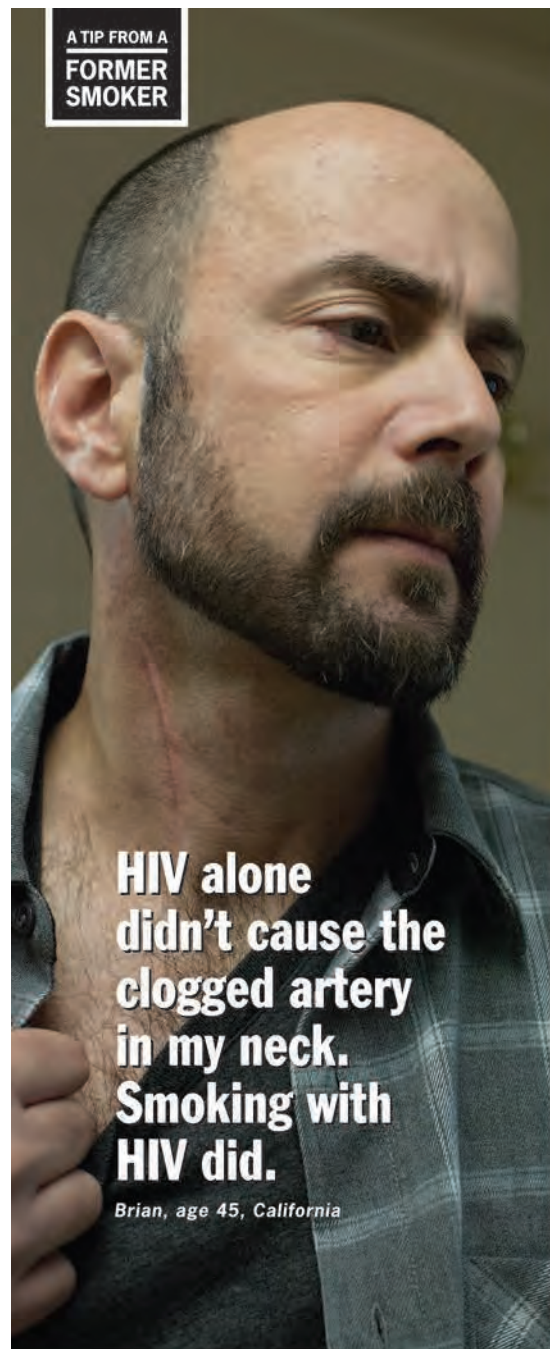
"Natural marriage," as you can see, is the new "traditional marriage." That's because positioning same-sex marriage as "unnatural" sounds worse than merely "untraditional."

But Carson, Rubio and Cruz don't care. They signed the pledge because they just want those sweet, sweet "values voters" to sit on their laps so they can tell them what they want to hear for Christmas. And don't you dare say "happy holidays," because the only religion these guys are trying to protect is Christianity, specifically the gay hating kind.

According to American Principles Project's Maggie Gallagher, "Real, concrete protections for gay marriage dissenters appear to be just one election victory away."

That is, of course, if Americans are dumb enough to elect one of these extremists.

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FORMER  
SMOKER



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Brian, age 45, California



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## 2015 Saw Prevention, Treatment Impacts On HIV

BY TODD HEYWOOD

State health officials earlier this month said they were “cautiously optimistic” that the tools to curb the HIV epidemic were available. That optimism was backed up shortly thereafter with news out of Atlanta. There the CDC reported that from 2005-2014, new HIV diagnoses declined by 19 percent.

That number applies to heterosexuals, people who inject drugs and African-Americans – with the steepest declines among black women. But men who have sex with men – particularly men of color – are not having similar outcomes.

“Among white gay and bisexual men, diagnoses dropped steadily, decreasing 18 percent,” the CDC reported in a press release Dec. 6. “Diagnoses among Latino gay and bisexual men continued to rise and were up 24 percent. Diagnoses among black gay and bisexual men also increased (22 percent) between 2005 and 2014, but that increase has leveled off since 2010. A similar trend was seen among young black gay and bisexual men ages 13-24, who experienced a steep 87 percent increase in diagnoses between 2005 and 2014. Between 2010 and 2014, however, the trend has leveled off (with a 2 percent decline).”

“Although we are encouraged by the recent slowing of the epidemic among black gay and bisexual men – especially young men – they continue to face a disproportionately high HIV burden and we must address it,” said Dr. Jonathan Mermin, director of CDC’s National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention. His statement was released Dec. 6 as well. “Much more must be done to reduce new infections and to reverse the increases among Latino men. There is hope that the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and other efforts are beginning to pay off, but we can’t rest until we see equal gains for all races and risk groups.”

For heterosexuals, intravenous drug users and African-Americans, the decline in new cases has been attributed to successful treatment with anti-HIV drugs. Studies have shown that when a person living with HIV uses the drugs properly to suppress the virus – to what is called an “undetectable level” – it is virtually impossible to transmit the infection.

See HIV 2015, page 23

## NAACP Hosts Town Hall For Clergy On The Black Church And HIV

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

DETROIT – Through their program, “The Black Church & HIV: The Social Justice Imperative,” the NAACP hosted a town hall for Detroit faith leaders on Thursday, Dec. 17 in the Marquette Room of the Detroit Marriott. The luncheon, which was produced in partnership with the Council of Baptist Pastors of Detroit, drew a small crowd of about 35, of which about a dozen identified as clergy.

Rev. Horace Sheffield III, pastor of New Destiny Christian Fellowship Church, spoke about how he got involved with fighting HIV while living in New York.

“I recognized there was a great deal of judgment going on,” he said. “Some of our local clergy and national clergy issued a statement that this was a consequence of sin. It was God’s judgment of people for their lifestyle.”

But Sheffield did not believe that.

“Morality as it relates to sex is not the issue,” he said. “The issue is if we didn’t address HIV/AIDS, our community would be so imperiled we wouldn’t be here.”

Sheffield started a program called “Death Can Wait.”

“We had a real problem with the fact that our own community was not addressing this issue,” he said. “We’re all going to die. But we have a responsibility to postpone the event. And how do you do that? You know your status.”

“I love Jesus,” Sheffield continued. “I really do. And most people I know love Jesus. But they still have sex.”

Sheffield said he has no tolerance for ministers who sit in judgment on this issue.

“I still rebuke pastors who want to blame folks ... I said you want to blame people for this? Who do I blame for your ignorance? Who is responsible doesn’t matter? The moral aspects of this (disease) do not matter. Churches have to simply side with Jesus ... all we’re required to do is help those who need help. We’ve got to just respond to the needs of the people.”

Rev. William Francis, an ambassador to the NAACP program from Atlanta, moderated the event and echoed Sheffield’s sentiments.

“With HIV we always want to know who and how somebody got it,” Francis said. “But with blood pressure we don’t ask them if it’s ham or pork. When they get diabetes (we don’t ask them) was it pie or Patti Labelle’s sweet potato pie. But with HIV we want to know the how and the why versus just focusing on the spirituality.”

Offering some sobering statistics at



Rev. William Francis of Atlanta, who identified himself as HIV-positive, moderated the meeting. BTL photo: Jason A. Michael

the meeting was Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, the executive director and health officer for the city of Detroit.

“Seven thousand Detroiters live with HIV/AIDS, and 1,000 of them don’t know they have it,” El-Sayed reported. “Seventy-three percent of diagnoses of people with HIV in Southeastern Michigan are black and 94 percent of HIV/AIDS diagnoses in Detroit are black.”

In his presentation, El-Sayed focused on how people contract the disease.

“HIV in this city is not simply about people behaving badly,” he said. “HIV in the city is about poverty, it’s about structural racism, it’s about all the challenges that our communities face as a function of how decisions have been made regarding where resources go and what we ought to do about it. So, it’s not an individual problem, it’s a community problem. And we have to see it as such.”

El-Sayed said that while he is Muslim, he also drew “inspiration” from the Christian face and read from the Bible, *Matthew 10:8*.

“Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out the demons,” El-Sayed said. “This particular verse is so powerful ... HIV is like the leprosy of our time.”

Rev. Keron Sadler, from the NAACP Health Department, spoke about the power that black pastors have to help curb the rising number of infections in their community.

“The church can be a very hurtful place, but what the church is, is a very powerful place,” she said. “It’s a place where the leadership has

the power to influence.

“HIV is a movement,” Sadler continued. “We need as many pastors onboard with us moving this movement forward as we normalize testing, decrease stigma by dispelling the myths and get people into care because they know their status.”

Sadler encouraged clergy to download the free packet of information that can be found at [www.theblackchurchandhiv.org](http://www.theblackchurchandhiv.org) and explained that the NAACP program contained a three prong approach that included faith leader training, denomination leadership engagement and seminary courses. Sadler said that black clergy have a responsibility to address the epidemic in their community.

“We pull the race card,” she said. “(We say) nobody cares about us because we’re black. Well, when are we gonna care about us? When we realize there is power in our voice and our numbers ... we may be a minority but we have a majority voice. And when we realize that we create our own change, we create our own justice. But it really is up to us.”

The Detroit town hall was part of a series sponsored by the NAACP. Earlier in the fall they visited Atlanta, Chicago and Dallas. Organizers of the meetings said they usually attract about 40-75 people in each city, and that they plan to expand the number of cities they visit next year.

For more information, visit [www.theblackchurchandhiv.org](http://www.theblackchurchandhiv.org).

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# Biggest LGBT Stories Of 2015



The U.S. Supreme Court rules for marriage equality June 26.

BY LISA KEEN

To be the “best year” ever in LGBT history, 2015 had to do better than 2013. That was the year the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the key section of the federal Defense of Marriage Act and allowed a decision to stand that enabled same-sex couples in California to marry; the U.S. Senate passed the Employment Non-Discrimination Act for the first time and got its first openly gay member; five state Legislatures passed marriage equality laws; and President Obama’s inaugural speech prominently endorsed the LGBT struggle for equality.

Did 2015 do better? These 10 “top stories” make a strong case for “yes!”

## No. 10: Boy Scouts of America ends more of its discriminatory policy.



The executive board of the national Boy Scouts of America organization voted on July 27 to end the group’s national policy of barring openly gay adults as troop leaders and employees. The board left it up to local troops, including religious chartered troops, whether to allow openly gay people as volunteer leaders. Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin criticized the change as not going far enough. Two years earlier, the BSA National Council voted to end its policy of barring youth from membership based on their sexual orientation.

## No. 9: Olympic legend comes out publicly as transgender.

Bruce Jenner, the United States’ 1976 Olympic gold medalist in the decathlon, acknowledged in a Rolling Stone interview and nationally broadcast television discussion in April that she had always felt she was a woman and that she would, going forward, live her life as a woman, Caitlyn Jenner. The resulting publicity prompted a flood of discussions publicly and nationally about transgender people: their prevalence, their needs, their fears and their medical and legal challenges. While violence and discrimination against transgender people continued, Jenner’s openness undoubtedly advanced the American public’s understanding.

## No. 8: Houston repeals city’s anti-discrimination law.

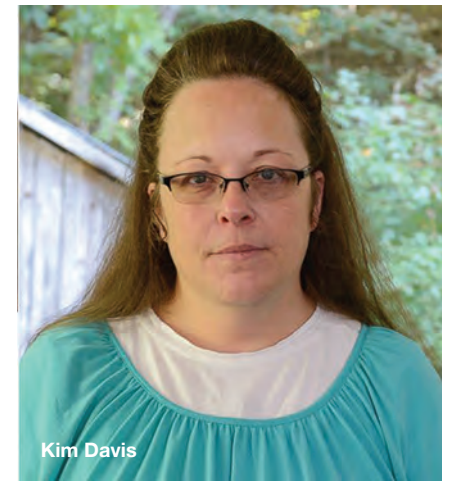
Houston voters on Nov. 3 voted 3 to 2 to repeal a year-old nondiscrimination ordinance – a repeal that appeared to be largely driven by a campaign that claimed the law would enable sexual predators to enter women’s restrooms to assault young girls. The Houston Equal Rights Ordinance passed the City Council in May 2014 as an effort to prohibit discrimination based on numerous factors – including race, ethnicity and religion. But opponents of prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity convinced voters that HERO amounted to a “Bathroom Ordinance.”

## No. 7: GOP candidates flaunt their hostility toward LGBT people.

Many candidates for the Republican presidential nomination for 2016 have worn their hostility for equal rights for LGBT people on their sleeves. U.S. Sen. Rand Paul said LGBT people wouldn’t need nondiscrimination laws if they would just stay in the closet. Neurosurgeon Ben Carson said allowing same-sex couples to marry is equivalent to tossing the “word of God ... into the garbage.” U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz said he wanted a new ban on LGBT people in the military. Meanwhile, all three Democratic presidential hopefuls have expressed strong support for equal rights for LGBT people.

## No. 6: EEOC says Title VII prohibits LGBT discrimination.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled in July that existing federal law prohibits employment discrimination against federal workers based on sexual orientation. The five-member commission said that the prohibition of sex discrimination in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 “means that employers may not ‘rely upon sex-based considerations’ or take gender into account when making employment decisions ... This applies equally in claims brought by lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals under Title VI ... Title VII similarly prohibits employers from treating an employee or applicant differently than other employees or applicants based on the fact that such individuals are in a same-sex marriage or because the employee has a personal association with someone of a particular sex.”



Kim Davis

## No. 5: A state clerk tries to mount campaign against Supreme Court.

A county clerk in Kentucky, Kim Davis, captured national headlines for weeks as she attempted to circumvent a U.S. Supreme Court decision that found state bans against marriage for same-sex couples to be unconstitutional. Davis and her supporters couched her continued refusal to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples as an exercise of her religious beliefs, but others – including a few Republican presidential candidates – said she was violating her oath of office to carry out the law. In August, the full U.S. Supreme Court denied an emergency request to stop enforcement of a federal district court order that Davis resume issuing marriage licenses. A federal appeals court has rejected her appeals; the state’s incoming Republican governor is expected to issue an order removing the names of county clerks from marriage licenses. And last month, members of the anti-gay Westboro Baptist Church staged a protest against her, saying, “God hates oath breakers.”

## No. 4: Pope Francis denies he offered support to outlaw clerk.

Pope Francis stunned LGBT people when it was revealed that he secretly accepted a visit from Kentucky clerk Kim Davis during his wildly popular visit to the U.S. Davis and her attorney characterized the visit, which took place at the Vatican’s embassy in Washington, D.C., as an expression of the pope’s support for her defiance of the Supreme Court’s ruling that bans on same-sex marriage were unconstitutional. But in short order, the Vatican issued a statement saying the pope did not know about or support Davis’ efforts to subvert the Supreme Court’s ruling on marriage and noted, instead, that the only





A man urges people to vote against the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance outside an early voting center in Houston on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2015. The contested ordinance was a broad measure that would consolidate existing bans on discrimination tied to race, sex, religion and other categories in employment, housing and public accommodations, and extend such protections to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people. AP Photo/Pat Sullivan

audience the pope gave while in the U.S. was to a gay friend and his partner.

### No. 3: Catholic leaders maintain opposition to same-sex marriage.

At a three-week-long global summit, Catholic bishops in October rejected efforts to soften the church's policies against homosexuality and same-sex marriage. Instead, the document approved by 86 percent of more than 258 bishops gathered in Rome said that "every person, independently of their sexual tendency, must be respected in their dignity and welcomed with respect." But it also stated that there was "no foundation whatsoever to assimilate or establish analogies, even remotely, between homosexual unions and God's design for marriage and the family."

had approved a bill that prohibits Catholic-run schools from discriminating against teachers based on their sexual orientation. The legislation repeals an existing law, known as Section 37, that allows discrimination against employees based on their sexual orientation. The bill now goes to President Michael Higgins for his signature.



The White House was lit in rainbow June 26 after SCOTUS ruled for marriage equality.

### No. 1: U.S. Supreme Court strikes state bans on same-sex marriage.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 26 that state bans on marriage for same-sex couples are unconstitutional and that states must recognize marriage licenses issued to same-sex couples from other states. The 5 to 4 decision, in Obergefell v. Hodges, ended bans enforced by 13 states and secured lower court decisions that struck down bans in nine other states. Justice Anthony Kennedy, writing for the majority, stated that "the right to marry is a fundamental right inherent in the liberty of the person, and under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the 14th Amendment couples of the same-sex may not be deprived of that right and that liberty ... The Court now holds that same-sex couples may exercise the fundamental right to marry. No longer may this liberty be denied to them."



### No. 2: Ireland approves same-sex marriage, and more.

In the world's first-ever national referendum on giving legal recognition to marriages of same-sex couples, Irish voters in May weighed in 2 to 1 for legalization. More than 60 percent of the country's voters turned out to have their say. And by Dec. 2, the Legislature

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BTL helps launch a job fair that over 300 people attend to find LGBT-friendly employers. Thirty-eight companies participated, including the 8 largest in the state. A second fair is in the works for 2016



BTL launches an annual series exploring LGBT aging issues and needs in the state.



BTL's Annual Wedding Expo will take place for the first time in 2016 when all same-sex couples can legally marry. The Lived Equality event will be at MotorCity Casino on Sunday, March 20, 2016.

## Top Five Michigan LGBT Stories Of 2015

BY AJ TRAGER

### Three Trans Murders In Detroit

In 2015 alone, 22 trans men and women have been murdered with another 20 trans teens and young adults committing suicide. Of the 22 murdered, three of them were from Detroit.

The Michigan LGBT community saw the loss of Ashton O'Hara, 25, who died July 14; Amber Monroe, 20, who died Aug. 8; and Melvin who was taken in October. O'Hara was full of love for his family and friends and lived life on his terms. He loved kids and had a passion for dance and performance. Monroe was a Wayne State University student who loved her friends and voguing. Melvin was found dressed in women's clothing with a fatal gunshot wound to his body. A fourth unidentified trans individual was hospitalized Aug. 11 after sustaining injuries to her hand while she was attacked near the intersection of John R and Nevada. She survived the incident.

### ACLU Sues State in Love v. Johnson

The ACLU filed a lawsuit against Secretary of State Ruth Johnson on behalf of six plaintiffs challenging a department policy that makes it impossible for many transgender individuals to correct the gender marker on their driver's licenses and other forms of identification. While some states have laws that allow for individuals to amend their birth certificates with a court order, Michigan refuses to change the gender marker on a birth certificate until the individual has undergone sexual reassignment surgery and can provide a letter of completion signed by a medial physician. ACLU lawyers argued Nov. 4 before Federal Judge Nancy Edmunds who seemed sympathetic to the plaintiffs' argument. Edmunds rejected the state's request to dismiss the case. The case will move forward in 2016.

### April and Jayne DeBoer-Rowse Tie The Knot

Michigan's plaintiff couple in the case against the state's ban on same-sex marriage exchanged their wedding vows in front of 200 people Aug. 22 at Pi Banquet Hall in Southfield. Witnesses to the ceremony and signing of the license were Carole Stanyar, Ken Mogill, Dana Nessel, Bob Sedler and Mary Bonauto, the lawyers who had represented them throughout the four year journey which began in 2011 when the couple sought second-parent adoption for their kids. The couple and their attorneys were joined by U.S. Rep. Debbie Dingell, County Clerks Lawrence Kestenbaum from Washtenaw



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

County and Lisa Brown from Oakland County, Federal Judge Judy Levy, Gloria Allred, family, friends and longtime, local LGBT activists. Federal Judge Bernard Friedman, who issued the ruling in the 2014 trial that overturned Michigan's voter-approved ban on same-sex marriage, officiated the wedding.

See pg. 20, *Marriage Wrap-up*

### Newborn Girl of Local Lesbian Couple Experiences Religious Discrimination

Bay Windsor Contreras, daughter of Jami Contreras and Krista Dornfried-Contreras, was just 6 days old when she experienced her first instance of discrimination. Jami and Krista knew that they wanted to have children, and after getting pregnant they sought out a pediatrician in the area that specialized in holistic medicine. Dr. Vesna Roi of Roseville was their third of five appointments and fit the bill for everything they were looking for in a pediatrician from medical philosophy to personality. They then met for a prenatal consultation. Bay was born on a Tuesday and they called a day or two later to schedule an appointment for four days out. On the day of the appointment, they were met by a different doctor who explained that Dr. Roi had prayed on it and that she would not be able to take Bay on as a patient.



### Fair Michigan

A ballot initiative to add sexual orientation and gender identity and expression to the state constitution was launched Oct. 30 by DeBoer-Rowse attorney Dana Nessel. The initiative, called Fair Michigan, fell under heavy scrutiny in the first few weeks of its launch as 17 signatories on a letter addressed to Nessel stressed the importance of working with LGBT organizations and activists in the state on the ballot push. Over 100 people from across the state met Dec. 7 at Washtenaw Community College to discuss the plausibility of winning at the ballot box and what the committee is currently doing. As of press time, the committee has yet to be endorsed by any LGBT organization in the state.

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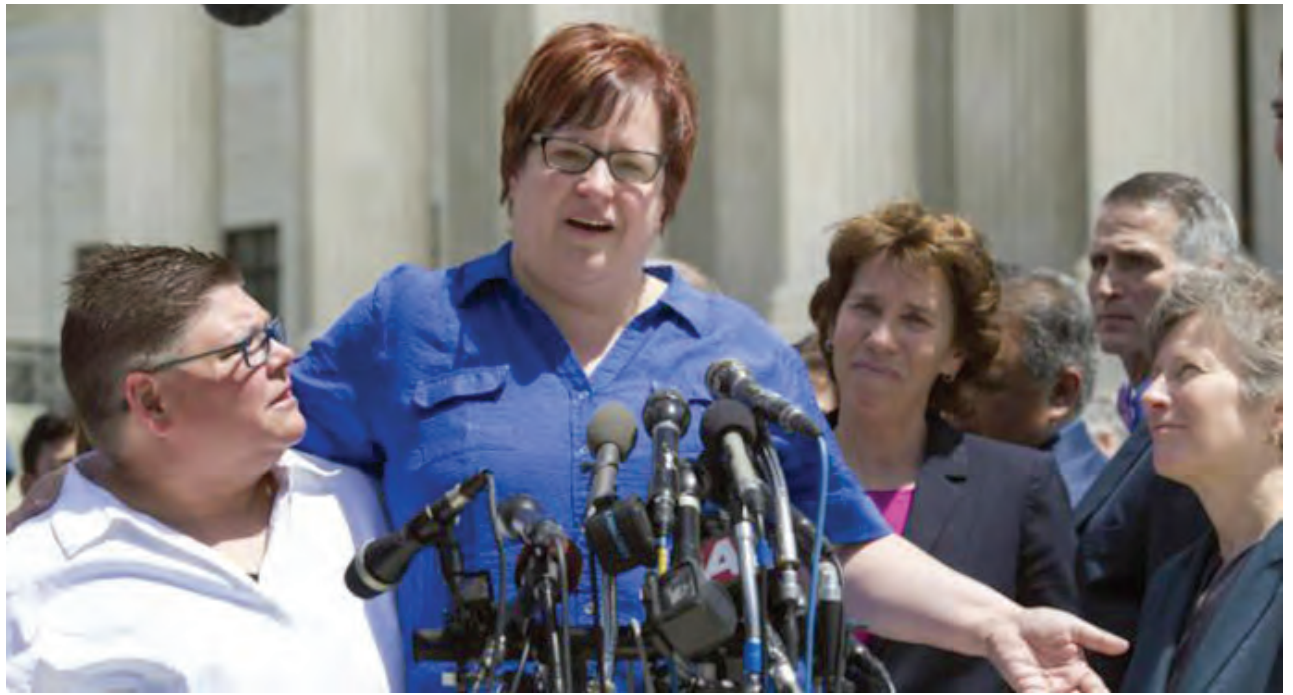
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## YEAR IN REVIEW



Michigan plaintiffs April DeBoer, center, and Jayne Rowse, left, accompanied by attorney Carole Stanyar, second from right, and civil rights lawyer Mary Bonauto, right, speak to reporters outside the Supreme Court in Washington, Tuesday, April 28, 2015, following the court's hearing on same-sex marriage. AP Photo/Cliff Owen

## Marriage Equality Wrap Up

BY AJ TRAGER

The LGBT community started 2015 with 60 percent of the country (30 states) affirming the love of same-sex couples, and by July marriage equality had swept over the entire U.S. But how did we get here?

After climbing through the court system in 2014, the Michigan case *DeBoer v. Snyder* was heard before the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals along with marriage equality cases from Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee in August of 2014. The 6th Circuit court ruled in favor of the states Nov. 6, 2014 in a 2-1 decision, which found that state marriage bans do not violate the U.S. Constitution.

The 6th Circuit decision was the first time a federal appeals court ruled against the freedom to marry. That decision created a legal conflict with four other federal appeals courts that have ruled in similar state marriage bans last year, declaring them unconstitutional.

Michigan plaintiffs April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse, two nurses who sued Michigan requesting that the state recognize their right to jointly adopt their children, and therefore legally marry, filed their petition with SCOTUS Nov.



As soon as the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality celebrations like the one above in Detroit took place all across the state. Photo: Courtesy LGBT Detroit.

17 following the 6th Circuit decision. The Ohio legal team filed their petition first and therefore the official name for the consolidated case was deemed *Obergefell v. Hodges*.

The U.S. Supreme Court granted review of the 6th Circuit cases Jan. 16, 2015 and decided to hear arguments from four states arguing against states' bans on same-sex marriage. Not long after on March 5, SCOTUS set the day in court for April 28.

Cases from Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee were consolidated and two questions were to be argued before the

high court: Does the 14th Amendment require a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex, and does the 14th Amendment require a state to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-state?

The legal teams from the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals presented their cases to SCOTUS in two sections; Michigan and Kentucky shared a 45-minute slot to argue for the constitutionality of same-sex marriage, and Tennessee, Ohio and Kentucky shared a 30-minute window

# Michigan

to argue for the recognition of same-sex marriages performed out-of-state. States' attorneys had the same amount of time to argue in favor of withholding the bans on same-sex marriage.

GLAD's Mary Bonauto, described by former U.S. Rep. Barney Frank as "our Thurgood Marshall" for the LGBT equality movement, joined with DeBoer attorneys to help organize arguments for SCOTUS, and was later assigned as the attorney to argue before SCOTUS in favor of marriage equality. Bonauto has been an LGBT defender since 1987 and has worked on cases such as civil union recognition in Connecticut and the passing of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts. She is also known for being called "the legal architect of the DOMA repeal," as reported by Slate magazine.

Dozens of people camped out in front of the U.S. Supreme Court, enduring cold temperatures and rain, in order to ensure that they got a seat in the room when the high court heard testimony from supporters and opponents of marriage equality. They began lining up at 6 a.m. April 24, four days before the historic hearing.

Frank Colasonti Jr. and his husband Jim Ryder joined the queue of dedicated individuals in front of the courthouse. Colasonti and Ryder were 17th and 18th in line at SCOTUS, but in March of 2014 they were the first couple in Oakland County to get married, following a court ruling that struck down Michigan's voter-approved ban on same-sex marriage. Over 300 couples were legally married in the state before a stay was placed on the decision by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals.

During the next few months, very little happened in the way of marriage equality. The marriage equality momentum had stopped in the anticipation of the simmering SCOTUS ruling.

On May 4, two new polls showed historic advances in support of marriage equality. A Williams Institute report showed that support for marriage equality only increased in states after same-sex couples were granted that right and a Public Religious Research Institute poll showed that for the first time ever, more religious Americans supported marriage equality than opposed it.

At 10 a.m. on June 26, SCOTUS released their 5-4 decision which determined that the thousands of LGBT couples living in Michigan waiting to get married or who had already been married in another state were just as equal as their heterosexual counterparts.

"I really don't know what to say right now. It's been a long, long road - 4.5 years in the making - that we sought protection for our children. We would not be here if it weren't for so many of you," DeBoer said at the press conference held in Ann Arbor's Braun Court following the decision.

"My last comment is to my beautiful children: we did this for you," she tearfully added.



Frank Colasonti Jr. and his husband Jim Ryder joined the queue of dedicated individuals in front of the courthouse. Colasonti and Ryder were 17th and 18th in line at SCOTUS, but in March of 2014 they were the first couple in Oakland County to get married, following a court ruling that struck down Michigan's voter-approved ban on same-sex marriage.

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## Queering The State House 2015

BY AJ TRAGER

State Reps. Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo, and Jeremy Moss, D-Southfield, have made quite a mark since their election at the end of 2014 into Michigan's House of Representatives. Hoadley won his election with 70 percent of the vote and Moss with 83 percent of the vote, and they have spent the last year as the first openly gay members elect of the House bringing their expertise and inclusive reasoning to the desks of many in Lansing.

They have introduced proposals to help end gerrymandering by creating a nonpartisan commission that would oversee the drawing of political boundaries; introduced legislation that would modify the adoption discrimination bills signed into law earlier this year; introduced a package of bills that would have made Michigan the 38th state to recognize same-sex marriages before the U.S. Supreme Court made its decision in June; called for an expansion of the Freedom of Information Act to include the state Legislature and the governor's office; and introduced legislation that would extend the Commercial Rehabilitation Act to

help eliminate the commercial blight in communities across the state.

"Having Jon and Jeremy is a huge boost to the LGBT community here in Michigan. I've watched them since they've taken office and I believe they both are, first and foremost, state reps for their districts and the entire constituency. But they certainly are openly gay and a touchstone for our community to look at and be proud of," Mark LaChey, chair of the LGBT Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party, told BTL in June. "Their elections were on the short list of success stories for last November's election."

Hoadley and Moss provide more than just LGBT representation on the House floor. Moss serves as assistant floor leader and Hoadley is deputy finance chair. These leadership positions allow them to have a strong voice on intersectional topics.

"Separately, they are both smart as a whip," LaChey said. "They don't just have a seat at the table, but (also) a seat in leadership, which is big for our community, Democrats and for progressives."

Moss and Hoadley are part of a unique group of 10 openly gay elected officials in the state, according to the Victory Fund,

a D.C. based organization dedicated to the training and supporting of out LGBT candidates for campaigns and elected offices.

Out of the 500,000 elected officials serving the nation, there are 466 openly LGBT elected officials serving in some capacity in the U.S. – less than one thousandth of a percent. The Williams Institute, located in California, reports that about 9 million American adults identify as LGBT – about the population of New Jersey.

Aside from working in Lansing to strengthen protections for LGBT people, the state representatives are also still very much engaged in groundwork activity in the pursuit of LGBT equality.

In the early stages of a ballot initiative that was launched Oct. 30, Moss and Hoadley were two of 17 signatories on a letter addressed to the Fair Michigan ballot committee, requesting that the trans community be included in any discussion that includes adding LGBT protections to the state constitution or amending Elliott-Larsen, the state's civil rights act.



Openly gay State Reps. Jeremy Moss, D-Southfield, and Jon Hoadley, D-Kalamazoo

## LGBT Older Adult Coalition Forms Into SAGE Metro Detroit

BY AJ TRAGER

This year the LGBT community welcomed the transition of the LGBT Older Adult Coalition to form SAGE Metro Detroit, the area's newest organization focused on the needs of LGBT older adults.

The new Metro Detroit chapter is just one of 29 chapters serving 21 states across the country. SAGE – Services & Advocacy For Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders – is the country's largest and longest serving organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBT older adults and offers innovative services and programs to LGBT older adults nationwide.

For LGBT seniors living in Metro Detroit, SAGE Metro Detroit will provide premier LGBT cultural competency training, help create safe spaces and provide a framework for many programs and services that are lacking for LGBT older adults in the area.

"We have a lot more to do," said Kathleen LaTosch, chair of the board. "The reason we became the SAGE Metro Detroit affiliate was because we wanted to pull everything that was being done together under one umbrella and make it really clean, simple and pull all our



SAGE Metro Detroit board members, pictured L-R: Mary Sexton, Pat Baldwin, Kathleen LaTosch, Agustin Arbulu, Jay Kaplan, Andrea Mulheisen, Judy Lewis, Karen Love and Cornelius Wilson. Not pictured: Kathryn Bartz, Maceo Coleman, Shelby Patterson, Angie Perone, Jim Sechelski and Carl Weiler. BTL Photo: AJ Trager

resources together to make it more effective and more efficient."

The coalition partnered with the State of

Michigan Offices of Services to the Aging to launch the first ever statewide needs assessment for LGBT older adults in the

nation and captured the responses of over 750 individuals. The Michigan assessment remains the only survey conducted focusing entirely on the needs of LGBT older adults.

The coalition also launched a cultural competency project with all three of the area agencies on aging that, with the aid of two certified trainers from the National Resource on LGBT Aging, was able to train hundreds of service providers in the area over the past five years on LGBT cultural competency. The three area agencies on aging collectively serve seven counties in Metro Detroit and receive 350 calls a year from older adults seeking services.

Judy Lewis serves as volunteer manager of SAGE Metro Detroit. Kathleen LaTosch serves as chair of the board with Jay Kaplan as volunteer vice chair. Those looking to donate to the organization can do so by contacting Lewis at [judithwlewis@gmail.com](mailto:judithwlewis@gmail.com).

SAGE Metro Detroit will have two offices to better serve the community and meet people where they are: one north of 8 Mile at Affirmations Community Center in Ferndale and one south of 8 Mile at The Luella Hannan Memorial Foundation located near Warren on Woodward.

## ► HIV 2015

Continued from p. 14

This has been referred to as Treatment as Prevention, or TasP.

State health officials said this year was the first time in years they could report a plateau in new infections.

“The recent five-year trends coincide with the launch of the first National HIV/AIDS Strategy and – now that the investment in high-impact prevention approaches has increased – offer promise for further progress,” said Dr. Eugene McCray, director of CDC’s Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention. “We have the tools to stop HIV right now. We urgently need to accelerate access to testing, treatment and new biomedical prevention strategies so that everyone can protect themselves and their partners.”

While TasP is having an impact in some risk groups, the CDC is also pushing the new prevention intervention of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). This is the use of the anti-HIV combination pill Truvada. It contains two anti-HIV drugs and when taken daily has been shown to be at least 92 percent effective

in preventing an HIV-negative person from contracting the virus. The drug was approved for PrEP in 2012 by the FDA, and in 2014 the CDC released a broad new clinical guidance recommending a significant increase in the prescription of the drug to prevent HIV.

Earlier this month a new report from the CDC recommended that 1 in 4 gay, bisexual or other men who have sex with men take the drug. But the same report found that only 21,000 people nationwide are currently taking the drug – less than 1 percent of the at-risk population. Complicating it, a study found that only 34 percent of physicians and nurses had heard of the intervention.

“We need to get our infectious disease doctors out in the community doing grand rounds,” said Linda Vail, Ingham County’s Health Officer. “They are key to informing other doctors about PrEP. And I think they will be doing that.”

Vail reports that Ingham County Community Health Center doctors have prescribed PrEP to “about 50 people.”

The combination of Treatment as Prevention and PrEP is working in San Francisco. That city saw only 302 new HIV infections last year. A study of 657 men who have sex with men using the drug PrEP as a prevention tool found

**Earlier this month a new report from the CDC recommended that 1 in 4 gay, bisexual or other men who have sex with men take Truvada.**

zero new infections among those men. That model has won praise by national HIV experts.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Disease, told the New York Times earlier this year that he “loved” the model.

“If it keeps doing what it is doing, I have a strong feeling that they will be successful at ending the epidemic as we know it. Not every last case – we’ll never get there – but the overall epidemic. And then there’s no excuse for everyone not doing it,” he said.

That model is not without critics, however. The study of PrEP use saw half of the participants diagnosed with another sexually transmitted infection – an indication those men were not using condoms. But Vail said that is

likely an “artifact” of the PrEP protocol which requires quarterly STI testing.

The San Francisco model may not be fully achievable in Michigan. Treating HIV is expensive – the cost of drugs alone runs tens of thousands of dollars a month. PrEP costs \$12,000 a year, or \$1,000 a month.

“ACA implementation has expanded insurance options for thousands of People Living With HIV (PLWH),” said Dawn Lukowski, acting manager of HIV care and prevention for the state of Michigan. “However, premiums, deductibles, co-insurances and co-pays can still be prohibitive and present a barrier for low-income PLWH who cannot afford even the reduced costs. Therefore, services like ADAP, health insurance premiums and cost-sharing assistance, targeted testing, emergency financial assistance, etc. are all still essential to filling financial gaps left by ACA.”

State officials also announced in October they have received a three year grant to develop a pilot project to promote PrEP in Detroit. The first payment for the grant was nearly a half a million dollars. If successful, state health officials believe the lessons learned, and the educational outreach programs developed in Detroit, can and will be rolled out statewide.



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# The Frivolist Awards: 2015's Biggest Dicks

BY MIKEY ROX

Despite our continued march toward complete LGBT equality, we're still faced with haters trying to hold us back – and some people work harder than others. This retrospective of the year that almost was recognizes the vilest of the vile for their anti-accomplishments in the first-ever Frivolist Awards. Behold my picks for the biggest dicks of 2015, then make your own nominations by reaching out on Twitter @mikeyrox.

## And the sinners are...

### Dolce & Gabbana

Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana – gay designers and former lovers – don't mind rolling around their Milan villas in the truckloads of cash they earn from the LGBT community who buy their line of high-priced goods, but they're totally against us raising children. In the March 2015 issue of Italian magazine Panorama, the fashion has-beens said they opposed gay adoption because "the only family is the traditional one" – who have expensive taste, of course.

### Kim Davis

The Rowan County, Kentucky clerk became the face of a movement opposed to same-sex marriage despite the repeal of DOMA by the Supreme Court when she defied law-of-the-land orders to issue licenses to gay



Kim Davis



Caitlyn Jenner

and lesbian couples. For weeks she dominated the national news headlines for her antics – which landed her a five-day stint in the clink – before reversing course and allowing her office to issue the licenses so long as they didn't include her signature. Time magazine considered Davis for its 2015 Person of the Year before remembering it had a reputation to uphold.

### The Duggars

TLC's disgraced reality family The Duggars have a sordid history of anti-LGBT campaigning, including matriarch Michelle's transphobic robocalling against a 2014 Arkansas LGBT rights ordinance. But poetic justice was served this year when proper perv Josh Duggar – former executive director of FRC, sponsored by gay hate group Family Research Council – shattered the clan's chaste

façade when a bombshell dropped that he molested several young girls, including two of his sisters, and cheated on his wife with the help of the hacked adultery site AshleyMadison.com.

### Martin Shkreli

In September, Martin Shkreli – the 32-year-old entrepreneur with an alleged net worth of \$100 million – went from "boy genius" to the "most-hated man in America," according to CNN Money, when he raised the price of Daraprim, a drug used by some AIDS and cancer patients, from \$13.50 a pill to \$750 overnight. Social media vilified the Turing Pharmaceuticals AG CEO, who, in response to the public outcry, said he would lower the list price to something more affordable, but in November decided to offer hospitals volume discounts instead.



Ben Carson

### Ben Carson

Celebrated neurosurgeon and presidential candidate Ben Carson, who, as of press time, ranked fourth among Republican primary voters nationwide with 11 percent backing, has compared same-sex marriage to bestiality, said that LGBT parents are not of "equal value" to those in traditional marriages, and believes that LGBT rights are not the same as civil rights. Too bad he can't give himself a lobotomy.

### Caitlyn Jenner

"Republican hypocrite" Caitlyn Jenner – who plans to vote for whatever anti-LGBT A-hole gets the go-ahead by the GOP to take equality a few steps back next year – revealed herself to be as out of touch with reality as the "reality"-juggernaut Kardashians from whom she escaped – and you know momma Kris' claws dig deep – when she went on "Ellen" earlier this year to discuss her misaligned political views.

The former Olympian continues to stick her stilettos in her mouth when representing the LGBT community, most recently when she urged her trans brothers and sisters to work harder when trying to "look the part" as to not make other people feel uncomfortable. Ya know, because everybody has a hair and makeup team on call.

### Radical 'Christians'

If it weren't for the current election cycle, we might not have any idea just how much America's so-called "Christian" faction – the radical portion, anyway – really, really want us to burn in hell. Take Pastor Kevin Swanson, for instance, whose supporters include Republican presidential candidates Sen. Ted Cruz, Gov. Mike Huckabee and Gov. Bobby Jindal, and who regularly calls for the return of "biblical punishment" for homosexuality – death to both participants – because it's the "in" thing to do when you live in glass houses.

### ISIS

For as much vitriol Christians spew about top-dog terror organization ISIS (ironic, isn't it?), at least they're not *actually* following through on their plans to execute us gays – unlike these mass murderers as well known for their savage beheadings of humanitarians and journalists as they are for executing suspected homosexuals by tossing them off buildings onto



Bristol Palin





Jim Bob & Michelle Duggar

piles of cement blocks. The jihadist group has claimed responsibility for killing at least 30 gay men.

#### The Bigots of Oak Lawn, Dallas

Hate crimes in the Dallas “gayborhood” of Oak Lawn became such a common occurrence this year

– at least a dozen incidents were reported – that local police had to put it on “lockdown.” “Survivors have been beaten with bats, stabbed with box cutters, pistol whipped and pummeled with fists,” according to Rally for Change, a local org who petitioned for the increased police presence to combat the rampant violence, as reported by Queerty. The

bloody attacks became so frequent, in fact, that Mayor Mike Rawlings went door-to-door to assure residents that his administration was doing its best to address the issue.

#### Bristol Palin

When still-single mother-of-the-decade Bristol Palin (whose second



Dr. John Wolf

“trying to cater to the gay agenda in the country” with their “awful red color.” May God have mercy on her spawn.

#### Dr. John Wolf

Dr. John Wolf, a dentist in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York City, was arrested for allegedly providing drug dealers free root canals in exchange for meth. The FBI and DEA, which had been watching Wolf for several months, released a complaint that also revealed his penchant for kiddie porn and the time he told an undercover agent about how he had a nasty habit – as if smoking ice and diddling himself to sex vids of children weren’t enough – of poking holes in condoms to deliberately spread HIV to his sexual partners. Swipe left on this loser.

*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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Jane Fonda was so moved by a question she cried. Josh Groban recalled the moment he learned about his big bear following – and how he mistook them for a sports team. And Sarah Paulson opened up in a candid conversation about her sexuality. Here’s a look back at 2015’s most memorable quotes, from some of Hollywood’s hottest gay-adored celebs:

*“You always have to take their stories with a grain of salt. It’s like when there’s a traffic accident and you ask five witnesses and they tell you five different stories.”*

– director Roland Emmerich on the “Stonewall” film controversy



*“For me, having kids and being married, it was important to maintain the integrity of those relationships and not teach my kids that this is a shameful secret and that my husband (Simon Halls) has to be waiting in the wings all the time.”*

– Matt Bomer reflecting on coming out



*“I just hope she finds love. It took me a while, man. And there was a lot of heartache throughout those years. You know, as long as she’s happy, I don’t care either way, and neither does my husband. And we have two other kids as well, and we don’t care either way for all of them.”*

– Kelly Clarkson on how she’d feel if one of her kids were gay

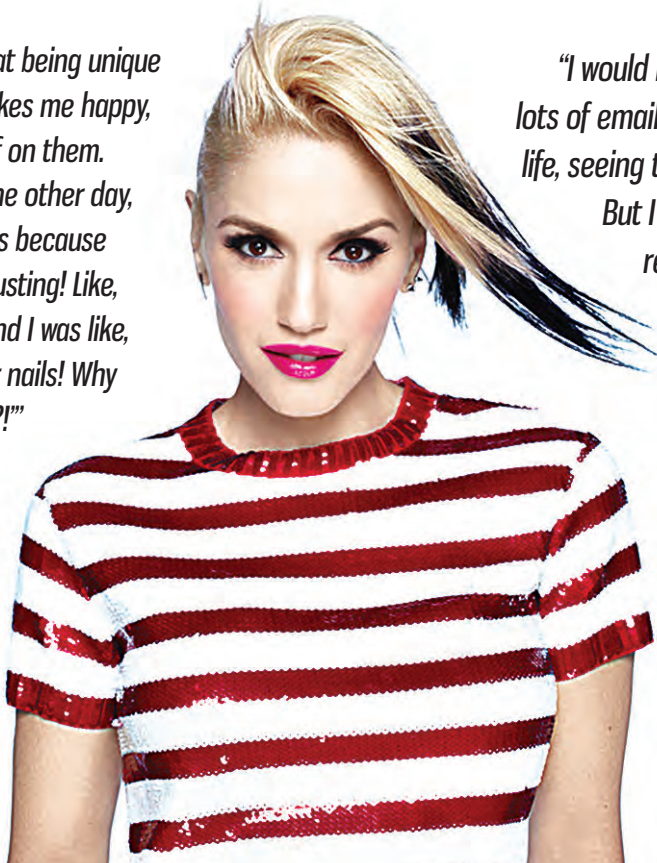
*“I do feel like I occupy – not in any self-aggrandizing way – a space where I have looked to my peers and looked around me and said, ‘Well, who else can I look to?’ And there isn’t anybody else. That to me is significant and personally gratifying.”*

– Zachary Quinto on the lack of LGBT action heroes

# A YEAR IN REVIEW...

*“What I like to say is that being unique and original is what makes me happy, and I think that rubs off on them. My sons did nails just the other day, and the only reason was because their nails were so disgusting! Like, they were in the mud and I was like, ‘We have got to do your nails! Why don’t we do ‘Nail Salon?!’”*

– Gwen Stefani



*“I would like to think I changed lives – I mean, I get lots of emails saying, ‘Seeing ‘Torch Song’ changed my life, seeing this changed my life,’ and that’s wonderful. But I don’t need to worry about if I’m gonna be remembered. I ain’t gonna be here to know if I’m being remembered or forgotten!”*

– Harvey Fierstein



*“All I can say is, I’ve done both, and I don’t let either experience define me. I don’t let having been with a man make me think I am heterosexual, or make me want to call myself that, because I know I have been attracted to women – and have lived with women. So, for me, I’m not looking to define myself, and I’m sorry if that is something that is seen as a rejection of or an unwillingness to embrace (my sexuality) in a public way, but it’s simply not. It’s simply what’s true for me, and that’s all I can speak to.”*

– Sarah Paulson



*“What a child needs when they’re growing up is support and love, mainly love. . . . And if they do happen to be gay, that’s going to be a harder hurdle to get over. What a parent needs to do more than anything is jump in there with love and support. You made ‘em. They’re a gift from God. Love ‘em as they are.”*

– Reba McEntire



*“When I sent that tweet a few years ago just letting people know that I am gay it was the most amazing day of my life after the birth of my kids.”*

– Ricky Martin

*“I find the question so moving that it makes me cry. I had never thought of it before, and it makes me so moved.”*

– Jane Fonda when asked why there’s always been a place for older women in the gay community

Gwen Stefani: Photo by Daniel Sannwald. Harvey Fierstein: Photo by Bruce Glikas. Hilary Duff: Photo by KathClick. Josh Groban: Photo by KathClick. Kelly Clarkson: Photo courtesy of RCA Records. Matt Bomer: Photo by KathClick. Reba McEntire: Photo courtesy of Big Machine. Ricky Martin: Photo by Nino Munoz. Sarah Paulson: Photo courtesy of Weinstein Co. Selena Gomez: Photo courtesy of Interscope Records. Zachary Quinto: Photo courtesy of Shelter PR.

# WHAT THE CELEBS SAID

*“I was at some kind of shop, and I was walking around with someone – it was probably my girlfriend. And this guy comes up to me and goes, ‘Hey, I just want you to know, the bears love you.’ I’m like, ‘Excuse me? What?’ And I didn’t know what that meant! I’m like, ‘Are you a baseball team?’”*

– Josh Groban

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

– Hilary Duff, on June 26, the day the Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality



*“I think everybody does, no matter who they are. I do, yeah, of course. Absolutely. I think it’s healthy to gain a perspective on who you are deep down, question yourself and challenge yourself; it’s important to do that.”*

– Selena Gomez on questioning her sexuality

*“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.”* – Judith Light

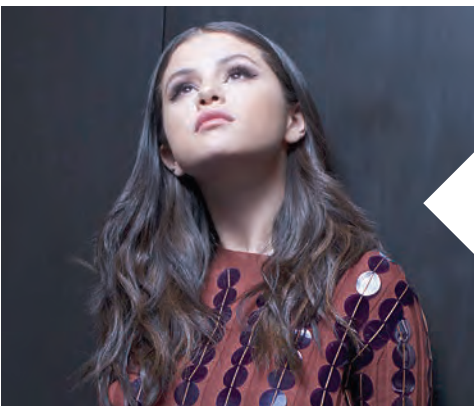




Photo: Denis Makarenko

## Isabella Rossellini On Discovering ‘Death Becomes Her’ Is A Gay Film, Drag Queens & Madonna’s ‘Sex’ Book

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Isabella Rossellini is leading me into the light. There, in front of an almost full-wall window in a hotel suite at the Mandarin Oriental hotel in New York City, we stand, beaming, as her assistant snaps a pic. Good lighting is everything, as Rossellini notes in her thick Swedish-Italian accent – otherwise, “it’ll get all black.”

She should know. Rossellini embarked on a career in front of the camera when, at the age of 28, the classic Rome-born beauty fell into modeling, hawking Lancôme as the company’s spokeswoman for 14 years and posing for an array of eminent celeb photographers, including Annie Leibovitz and Robert Mapplethorpe.

“When I worked with him, he was quite sick with AIDS,” Rossellini recalls. “I remember

how sad I felt, because he was very handsome and he celebrated in his photos the male body, the human body, and to see him paying such a toll, not even just physically. But he seemed to be in good spirits. I wondered... of course he knew he was dying. It was a very difficult time, the ’80s. And it was the last book that he made. They wanted him to photograph women and he did beautiful portraits of several women.” (Also featuring Yoko Ono and Susan

Sarandon, “Some Women” was published in 1989, the same year Mapplethorpe succumbed to AIDS-related illness.)

Rossellini’s striking appeal wasn’t only dark room-worthy, however.

While modeling in the ’70s, Rossellini also began mirroring the career of her iconic mother, Ingrid Bergman (Rossellini’s father is Italian director Roberto Rossellini), reaching beyond the glossy pages of *Vogue* to become a

film star. As abused nightclub vocalist Dorothy Vallens in David Lynch's 1986 trippy thriller "Blue Velvet," a role that required Rossellini to sing, Mapplethorpe's muse demonstrated more than a pretty face – she could really act.

Rossellini also happens to know a lot about animal sex. In 2008, she directed, produced, wrote and starred in a series of short films for Sundance titled "Green Porno," illustrating the various mating acts of insects and other non-humans with, of course, cardboard and foam rubber. And if you ever wondered how dolphins do it (who hasn't?), the actress also created the 2014 web series "Seduce Me," wherein she discusses "blowhole sex" as she pseudo swims in a diorama-inspired scene among some very frisky Flippers.

Rossellini's latest is certainly less niche. In director David O. Russell's "Joy," Rossellini is back on the big screen as Jennifer Lawrence's affluent, finger-wagging stepmom, Trudy, a tough-love foil to the based-on-real-life titular character.

"It's empowering to women," Rossellini says, nuzzled into the corner of a sofa, "and it's also about the struggle of success. Generally when a person is successful people imagine, 'Oh, overnight success, luck,' instead of how arduous it is. The film portrays it very well. Family encourages you and discourages you because they are protective."

Though Rossellini recognizes Joy's unwavering ambition to seize businesswoman status – a path she blazes after inventing a fancy mop – her own life, she says, has been "completely different," a truth she attributes to her European background as well as her famous film-industry family.

"You know, I was more successful than I thought I'd be," she reveals. "I'm old enough to have belonged to a group of women who thought, 'I'm gonna get married and be a housewife.' Instead, a career came, and it was really modeling – modeling is almost like winning the lottery."

Rossellini's modeling career continued to blossom in the '80s, when she graced the covers of countless women fashion mags: Marie Claire, Harper's Bazaar, Vanity Fair and Elle. She could've been a stay-at-home mom. She could've cleaned and cooked and called it a day. And she thought, for many years, she would. But in her 30s, she changed her mind.

Rossellini says, "I understood that being financially independent meant also to be independent."

"You don't really do anything to become a good model," she adds. "You're either chosen or not chosen, liked or not liked. If you are a bitch, they're not gonna hire you anymore. And modeling really teaches you the discipline of work. So modeling for me was a wonderful revelation. Though my mother worked – my mother was Ingrid Bergman, had a big career – it was seen as she had a gift, she had a talent, that it was extraordinary. It was a kind of a call

for her, but it wasn't percolating down to the family that all the women should have a career, no."

In 1976, Rossellini shot her movie debut, playing a minor role in her mother's film "A Matter of Time." Ten years later, Rossellini became an icon in her right, achieving cult status after starring in "Blue Velvet."

It was "Death Becomes Her" in 1992, though, that secured the actresses' queer cred. And god bless that film – it featured a dream trifecta: Rossellini, Meryl Streep and Goldie Hawn, an ensemble cast who punched up the film's camp

commentary on pre-Botox-fad superficiality. "Now, a warning," her potion-touting character, Lisle Von Rhoman, cautioned Meryl's Madeline Ashton to the delight of supremely geeked gays everywhere.

Rossellini reveals that "Death Becomes Her" was always meant to be one of the gayest films about beauty you've ever seen – even if she, and director Robert Zemeckis, didn't know it at first.

"Robert Zemeckis told me," Rossellini says about discovering that she was, in fact, starring in a "gay film." "When the film came out, Robert Zemeckis was so successful after 'Roger Rabbit' and the films that he did at the time were big, big, big. Also, they were family films, so when he did 'Death Becomes Her' he also thought it was going to be a family film, but then they did all this marketing research and said" – Rossellini unleashes a whooping laugh – "'Oh, it's a gay film!'"

It took almost no time for Zemeckis and the cast to realize they weren't making the next "Roger Rabbit." (Sorry, kids.) "Within three, four months he said, 'You know, our audience

*“When (director Robert Zemeckis) did ‘Death Becomes Her’ he thought it was going to be a family film, but then they did all this marketing research and said, ‘Oh, it’s a gay film!’”*

Continued on next page

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Third Sunday of Advent Theme: Setting the Table

Sun Dec 20 11 am

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Isabella Rossellini, right, stars in "Joy" with Robert De Niro. Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

### ► Isabella Rossellini

Continued from p. 29

is a gay audience," Rossellini recalls.

Rossellini has become accustomed to swooning gay adoration. She's inspired drag queens, and not just with that vampy nip-hiding-necklace coverup she wore in "Death Becomes Her."

"They do me in drag in 'Blue Velvet,'" she admits, heartedly amused. "I had a friend who was gay who died, unfortunately, and he would go out on Halloween and dress up like me. I had a 'Blue Velvet' robe, and I had my wig for a while, and he would borrow it every year."

Rossellini is smitten with the idea of men resurrecting her most iconic screen characters in drag. She calls it a "compliment."

"Oh, it's fun," she adds. "I know there are certain women like Judy Garland and Barbra Streisand who are particularly liked by the gay culture. I know that strong women are liked, and I wonder why strong women and not weak women." She pops a laugh. "I don't know what it is in the gay culture! What is it that makes the gay culture to be so supportive of Barbra Streisand, Judy Garland, images of these iconic women? Why did you like so much stronger women instead of, like, a housewife?"

I explain that, when it comes to empowered female icons, young gay men like myself aspire to their strength and power. Naturally, Madonna is mentioned.

Rossellini famously appeared in the *Material Girl*'s "Erotica" video, and also photographed for her controversial "Sex" book, both out in 1992. The latter, she says, was not what she had hoped.

"I didn't like it totally," Rossellini says of "Sex."

"In a way, I found it a bit moralistic in the sense that Madonna is playing the sadomasochistic, Madonna playing the gay. It was teaching us to be open-minded, and she didn't really reveal anything about herself. It wasn't vulnerable. Vulnerability is not what she exudes, and what she did was powerful and unique. There was something about the book that was not erotic, and not moving either. It was aesthetic. It was guarded. It wasn't empowering."

She goes on: "But she is an incredible lady. I'm looking at her, because she's now in her 50s and I'm 63, and I would like to have a role model of a woman who is older. I want to see these powerful women. How do they fight ageism? What do they propose to fight ageism?"

Regarding Hollywood ageism, not much has changed, she admits. "I see that, at 40 now, you're still considered beautiful, but I don't see it defeated. They stretch the younger age longer, but I haven't seen acceptance."

Rossellini celebrates Streep and Helen Mirren, actresses who have "given old age an energy that is beyond that" without sucking down an age-defying potion. At the same time, she notes, "there are fewer roles (for older women), and they go to them."

It's a reality she's come to terms with,

and instead of sulking over Streep and Mirren's lock on roles for women over 60, she's blazed her own quirky path. The titles alone are telling (and this is not counting her horny dolphin doc): "The Saddest Music in the World," "My Dog Tulip" and 2011's "Chicken with Plums."

It's no surprise, then, that she's also voiced a hamster. In the gay-themed coming-of-age drama "Closet Monster" – from out producer Niv Fichman and first-time director Stephen Dunn, who's also gay – Rossellini takes on a rodent. Her involvement, she says, is partly due to the fact that she's friends with Fichman, and also, she says, "maybe because I study animals, or maybe just because I have a foreign voice."

For the film's protagonist, a sexually confused boy named Oscar, the hamster is an illusion, his muse for comprehending life tropes like "mortality, lying... that life is tough," Rossellini says, laughing.

Though it won Best Canadian Feature Film at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival, the indie isn't meant for mainstream consumption, like "Joy," and that's just fine by Rossellini.

"Since I was always interested in animals, I went back to university to study animals and then I made my own film and I do monologues," she says, regarding her peculiar one-offs. "The work that I have done doesn't have the exposure of "Joy." I am still working and doing a lot of work but more in an artisanal way."

After all, someone has to enlighten the world on the sexual habits of sea animals.

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## 'RuPaul's Drag Race' Contestants Celebrate Christmas In Warren

Murray & Peter present a holiday spectacular with contestants from "RuPaul's Drag Race" (Logo TV) singing songs from their new CD "Christmas Queens." The pre-Christmas Eve event is billed under the tagline, "The holidays were never this naughty or fun. Get ready for a night of drag like you've never seen before – live on stage!" Hosted by Season 4 Contestant Willam, the featured queens for the night include Katya Zamolodchikova and Ginger Minj (Season 7), Jinx Monsoon and Alaska (Winner and runner up respectively of Season 5) and Sharon Needles (Winner Season 4).

The show is 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 23 at Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren.

General admission seats are \$25 at [www.neptix.com](http://www.neptix.com). Limited \$75 VIP reserved seats, including a meet and greet with all the queens, are available by calling 248-268-2840. \$50 Reserved seats on the main floor are also available for \$50. This is an all-ages show. Tickets are available at [www.neptix.com](http://www.neptix.com) and more information can be found at [www.andiamoitalia.com](http://www.andiamoitalia.com).

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

To get involved in the movement for better hate crimes law, contact policy@equalitymi.org.

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# Riverwalk Theatre Awarded Two MCACA Grants

Community Circle Players, Inc., doing business as Riverwalk Theatre, has been awarded two grants by the State of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), including a Capital Development grant for \$5,215 and an Operational Support grant for \$18,750. The Capital Development award will be used to purchase collapsible risers and replace the carpet leading from the back stage entrance to the theater lobby.



supporting and promoting community arts programs and activities that provide art demonstrations, discussions and engagement opportunities to help educate members of our community.”

The Operational Support grant, which includes \$2,020 provided to the Council by the National Endowment for the Arts, is intended to cover administrative costs, marketing, publicity and promotion during the period from Oct. 1-Sep. 30, 2016. The grants were awarded through the MCACA peer review process and selected from over 400 applications for 2016 funding.

Riverwalk Theatre was congratulated by State Rep. Andy Schor “for

Organizations receiving MCACA grant awards are required to match those funds with other public and private dollars. Local support of the projects mentioned include Riverwalk Theatre Members, IBM Corporation, Mariel Foundation, LBWL, Joe D. Pentecost Foundation, Jackson National Community Fund, Consumer’s Energy, and other local businesses. The MCACA peer review

process allows for each grant application to be competitively considered by a panel of in-state and out-of-state arts and culture professionals. This ensures the taxpayers, who support this project through legislative appropriations, and all other visitors or residents in Michigan will have access to the highest quality arts and cultural experiences.

A complete list of grant awards around the state is available by contacting MCACA at 517-241-4011, or by visiting the MCACA website at [www.michiganbusiness.org](http://www.michiganbusiness.org).

For additional information on Riverwalk Theatre productions and ticket information, please call 517-482-5700 or visit the website at [www.riverwalktheatre.com](http://www.riverwalktheatre.com). The theater is located at 228 Museum Dr., Lansing.

Check out Riverwalk Theatre shows and other theatrical productions in 2016 at [www.pridesource.com/calendar.html](http://www.pridesource.com/calendar.html).

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## ► Happenings

Continued from p. 32

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

**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](http://www.Flintarts.org)

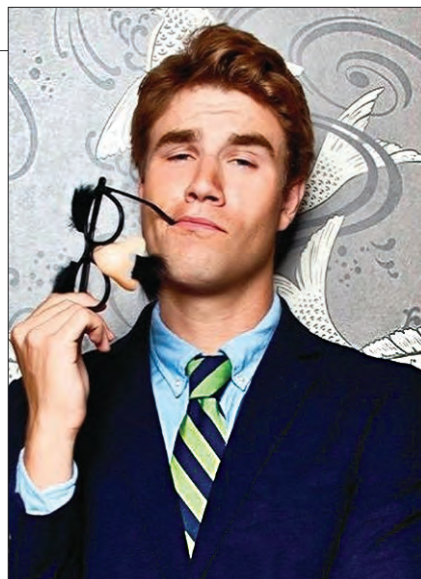
**MOCAD** "The Sick Man of Europe" Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 27 - Jan. 3. 313-832-6622. [www.Mocadetroit.org](http://www.Mocadetroit.org)

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

**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.

**South Oakland Art Association** "South Oakland Art Association Monthly Meeting" Learn about carving hard shell gourds from award-winning artist Chris Pawlik at SOAA's January meeting. Not a member? No worries. We like guests. Paint Party Royal Oak, 2554 Crooks Road (at Webster), Royal Oak. 7 p.m. Jan. 4. 248-288-0146. [www.Southoaklandart.com](http://www.Southoaklandart.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](http://www.Umma.umich.edu)



## Editor's Pick

In what Ann Arbor's Comedy Showcase is calling "another hot debut you can't afford to miss," the long-time comedy joint will present Matthew Broussard as one of its first comedy shows of the new year. Broussard will perform at the Showcase Jan. 7-9, 2016.

Born in New Jersey, raised in Atlanta, Georgia and, in 2012, winner of Houston's Funniest Person, Matthew Broussard is not exactly sure where he's from. Broussard got a degree in Mathematics to launch a career in finance before moving to West Hollywood to make comedy his full time pursuit. His brand of playful humor ranges from physics and grammar to the hardships of looking like a villain from an '80s movie. He can be seen on episodes of "The Mindy Project" and "The League," Comedy Central's "Adam DeVine's House Party," "Last Call with Carson Daly," El's "Worst Thing I Ever," and in the upcoming film

"Intramural." His Cajun father and Jewish mother still hope he finishes his MBA.

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase is one of Ann Arbor's most unique entertainment establishments. Opening in 1984, the Showcase prides itself on "providing the best in comedy entertainment and to enhance the shows with a courteous, friendly and efficient staff. We want our customers to feel taken care of from the moment they come in, till they laugh their way out the door."

Showtimes are 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, with 10:30 p.m. shows on Friday and Saturday. Tickets range from \$13-15.

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase is located at 212 S. Fourth Ave. in Ann Arbor. Shows are open for those 18 years and older. For tickets or more information, call 734-996-9080 or visit [www.aacomedy.com](http://www.aacomedy.com). For those still looking for holiday gifts, gift cards are available through the box office.

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# Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## Seeing 'Other People' at Sundance

Maybe you've been watching " Fargo." You should have been, anyway. And maybe you caught Jesse Plemons as Kirsten Dunst's husband. He's one of our new favorite character actors and now you know his name. But there's more. It turns out he's an ambitious sort, and he has written and directed a queer-themed film in which he stars. It's also the opening night film at Sundance. It's called "Other People" and it co-stars Molly Shannon, Bradley Whitford, Maude Apatow and June Squibb in a story of a comedy writer (Plemons), recently broken up with his boyfriend, who moves home to Sacramento to help his sick mother. Once again living with his younger sisters and very conservative father, he has to sort out what it means to come home, navigate family expectations, and possibly witness the death of a parent. In other words, it's a Sundance movie that sounds like a Sundance movie. But so what? We're in for queer characters whose lives intersect with everyday drudgery. It's sexy.

## Queen Latifah jumps on The Lee Daniels Train

There's no slowing down Lee Daniels, now that "Empire" has established Taraji P. Henson as this generation's Joan Collins. And with every black actor in Hollywood clamoring to be part of that show's wildly expanding world, it's no surprise that his next project attracted an A-lister like Queen Latifah. Fresh off "The



Wiz," she's signed on for his next TV project, tentatively called "Star." Like "Empire" it's a musical, and like "Dreamgirls" and "Sparkle," it's the story of three young women who form a group and dream of being as big as Beyonce. Co-written and co-created by Daniels and Tom Donaghy, the pilot has cast up-and-comers Jude Demorest ("Dallas"), Ryan Destiny ("Low Winter Sun") and Brittany O'Grady ("The Messengers") as the young ladies with the voices and the moves. Latifah will star as a beauty salon owner who becomes a kind of surrogate

mother to the girls. Disapproving at first, you know she's going to come around. And sing. And sing some more. After that, she'll probably sing.

## The little movies that could

Sure, fine, "Star Wars" and all that. We know. We're soaking in it. But for us, it's the small films that keep the experience of moviegoing worth being excited about, especially when small, LGBT-themed films of quality find their way into theaters. Then it's as exciting as when we encountered the New Queer Cinema of the early 1990s. So it's nice to know that more are on the way, thanks to early 2016 premieres at the Sundance (yes, more Sundance news, it's that time of year) Film Festival. "Suited," the Lena Dunham-produced documentary about New York tailors Bindle & Keep, the business that custom-makes clothes for gender-nonconforming clients, will take its bow. So will "Uncle Howard," a doc about Howard Brookner, a filmmaker whose "Burroughs: The Movie" captured a slice of downtown Manhattan in the early 1980s, and whose career was silenced by his death from AIDS. Directed by his nephew, "Uncle Howard" explores the unfinished, unseen work of a director whose talents were stolen from us. Finally, there's "Spa Night," from director Andrew Ahn, about a young Korean-American man whose duties to his immigrant family, as they struggle in Los Angeles, come into conflict with his secret sexual habits and the realization that he's gay.

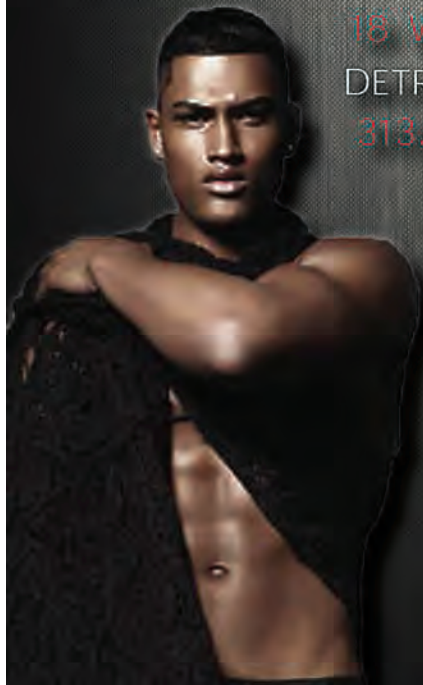
## Gloria Vanderbilt and Anderson Cooper leave 'Nothing Left Unsaid'

The very, very, very rich Vanderbilts, one of those old-money families that are as close to American aristocracy as it gets, have always been among the noisier mega-wealthy clans (see also: The Kennedys). But their more well-known members – famous-from-childhood heiress and fashion designer Gloria, and her superstar journalist son Anderson Cooper – have done rich the right way, by being both entertaining, endearing and not plagued by bad behavior, scandal or awful political leanings. So expect a bit of a lovefest when "Nothing Left Unsaid," the new doc from Liz Garbus, hits Sundance and, then, eventually, arthouses. It's a film of personal and cultural history, all wrapped up in the kind of home movies only people who take ski vacations in Switzerland can make. And it will feature in-depth, candid conversations with the devoted mother and son (secret that's not so secret: mom is a pistol, so that's really the draw). Pro-tip: Before viewing, go find your old pair of vintage jeans with Gloria's swan on the pocket and see if you can still fit into them. Then wear them while watching.

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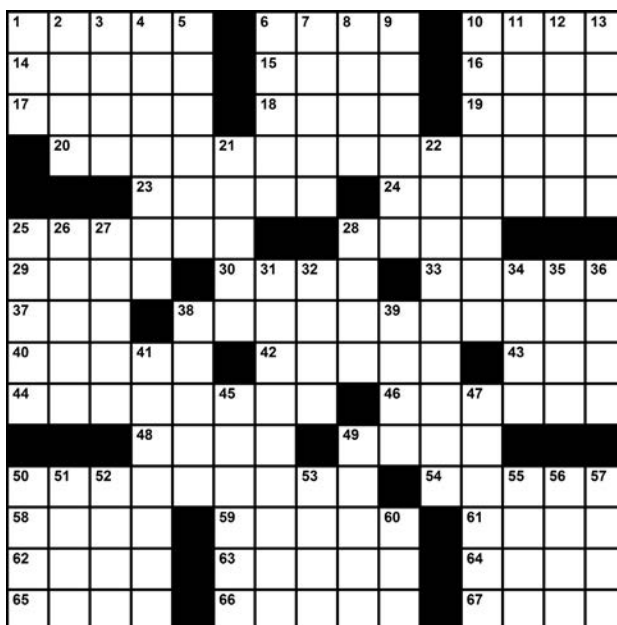
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## Q Puzzle



## In Gay Colors

### Across

- 1 Brown's "Cat on the \_\_\_\_"
- 6 Cicero's singular
- 10 Asks from one's knees
- 14 "After Delores" author Schulman
- 15 Big ones in porn films, sometimes
- 16 Focused on one's work
- 17 Not novel
- 18 Lesbos love
- 19 Delany of "Desperate Housewives"
- 20 Obsession with facial hair
- 23 Almost ready for the tooth fairy
- 24 Make airtight
- 25 Charades, basically
- 28 Prick
- 29 Peace Nobelist Wiesel
- 30 Eurythmics' "Would \_\_\_\_ to You?"
- 33 Pub round
- 37 Kind of man, in Oz
- 38 Life style of hairy gay guys

- 40 One to ten, e.g.
- 42 Saltine brand
- 43 DeLaria of "Orange Is the New Black"
- 44 Journeys like a post-Trojan War epic
- 46 Buck feature
- 48 "Lady Sings the Blues" star
- 49 Queens ballpark
- 50 Sci-fi that uses technology and aesthetic designs
- 54 Artist Aaron, who's style has been described as a combination of 20-, 38-, and 50-Across
- 58 Do road work
- 59 "Let me repeat ..."
- 61 160 square rods
- 62 Disney's "\_\_\_\_ and the Detectives"
- 63 Lets up
- 64 Bear's den
- 65 Where you can eat a hero
- 66 Bitchy warning
- 67 Mireille of "World War Z"

### Down

- 1 One that comes quickly
- 2 Eat pasta, with "up"
- 3 Buffalo's lake
- 4 Barney, who romanced Romaine
- 5 Aileen Wuornos portrayer Charlize
- 6 Boat bottom bumpers
- 7 Be in harmony
- 8 What an athletic supporter might do?
- 9 Help out
- 10 Whoopi's ill-fitting garb in "Sister Act"?
- 11 Online prostitution?
- 12 Big name in cutters
- 13 Terence of "Billy Budd"
- 21 Stray on the range
- 22 Earhart's "Friendship" and others
- 25 Gide's subway
- 26 Homer-erotic tale?
- 27 Of a coin factory?
- 28 Brief moments in the "Kama Sutra"
- 31 Turning tray for Anthony?
- 32 Incenses
- 34 Void's partner
- 35 It can bear fruit
- 36 Brown quickly
- 38 It's a bust
- 39 Place for Young men?
- 41 One from the land of the circumcised
- 45 Lays eyes on
- 47 Some like it hot
- 49 Biathlete, for one
- 50 Went lickety-split
- 51 Meek and mild
- 52 Apt anagram for vile
- 53 Org. that could help you see Uranus
- 55 "\_\_\_\_ do anything better than you?"
- 56 Dixie Chicks, e.g.
- 57 Word on either bride's towel
- 60 Data transmission letters

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



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