

MICHIGAN'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993



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MARCH 3, 2016
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Here's To
Latrice!

'RuPaul's Drag Race' favorite coming to
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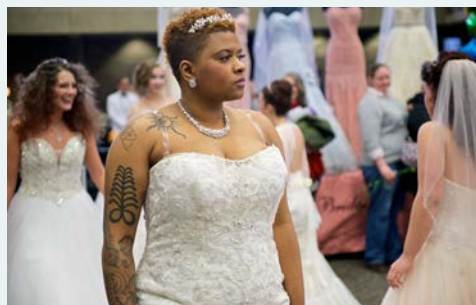
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NEWS

HELP OUT: Phone Bank For Flint Families

FERNDALE – Affirmations and Equality Michigan will host a phone bank March 3 to help families in Flint. The two organizations and those participating will be calling families in Flint to follow up on a community canvass, making sure that these families have the correct filters, supplies of bottled water and will help them with any additional resources or information.

Those interested can meet at 6 p.m. at Ferndale's Affirmations and are encouraged to bring a cell phone. All other supplies will be provided. Visit the Facebook event page at www.facebook.com/events/1560122744298594/.

Affirmations is located at 290 W. Nine Mile Road in Ferndale.

Interfaith Summit Will Look at Racial Discrimination and Economic Inequality

ANN ARBOR – An upcoming interfaith summit held on March 6 will look at how racial discrimination and economic inequality affect the larger society.

“Connect and Act: Building the Movement for Economic and Racial Justice” will offer an opportunity for faith communities and members of the LGBT and ally communities to gather and discuss how people of faith can come together and figure out how to best address the mechanisms through which racial discrimination and economic inequality are being reproduced in the society through areas like housing segregation, educational stratification, income inequality and the criminal justice system.

The event will feature three keynote speakers and a series of workshops focused on strengthening existing action campaigns and raising awareness between local groups and individuals working on these issues.

Keynote speakers will include Shane Claiborne, founding partner of The Simple Way; Dawud Walid, executive director of the Michigan chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations; and Jeannette Huezo, director of United for a Fair Economy.

Claiborne is a self-proclaimed “ordinary radical” from eastern Tennessee and is a founding member of the New Monasticism movement, which encourages a life of simplicity, nonviolence, community and prayer. He has written multiple books around his work in the faith community including “Jesus for President,” “Red Letter Revolution” and “Common Prayer.”

Walid is head of the Michigan chapter of America's largest advocacy and civil liberties organization for Muslims. CAIR has been actively involved in the national Black Lives Matter movement, seeking to challenge ingrained societal inequality and racism. At a recent conference in Detroit, Walid urged attendees to consider recent police shootings

as injustice that must be considered by the Muslim Community.

“We need to reframe and discuss how we think of it. The first Muslims here were African-American, about one third of the American Muslim community is black. Those who have been involved in the struggle for freedom, justice and equality – those names we don't know preceding Malcolm X, to Muhammad Ali, to people (of) Masjid Wali Muhammad, that used to be Temple Number One off of Linwood and Burlingame in Detroit – have always been part of the Muslim experience,” he said.

Huezo has coordinated UFE's popular education work and facilitated many workshops. Recently she became UFE's executive director after serving the company for 14 years, advocating for multilingual justice at the organizational and movement level.

Workshops to be offered at the Connect & Act Summit will focus on different ways people can connect with local groups and individuals working on these issues in the community and act either through existing action campaigns, raising awareness or through developing the various skills needed to make these efforts effective.

Dozens of community groups from across the state will attend and offer participants the opportunity to “get up to speed” with what's happening in communities across the state.

To register for the event, go to www.connectandact.org/register.

A coalition of congregations is organizing a breakfast with Shane Claiborne on March 7. To be included contact Joe Summers, Reverend at The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation at jsummers@wmich.edu.

The summit will be held from 1-8 p.m. on March 6 at the Vineyard Church. The Vineyard Church is located at 2275 Platt Road, Ann Arbor.



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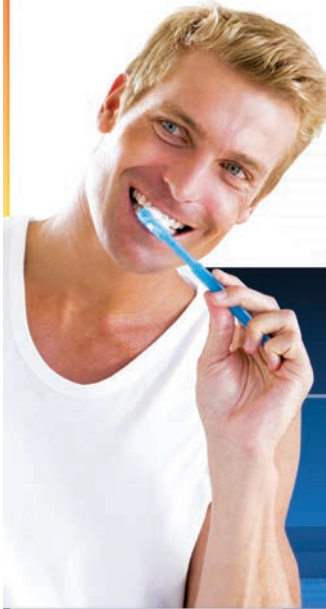
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Ph.D. candidate Courtney Caviness

Upcoming Talk: Inequality and Policing of LGBT Sexual and Gender Identities Post-DADT

YPSILANTI – An upcoming talk that is part of the Equality Knowledge Project of Eastern Michigan University's Equality Research Center will look at organizational inequality and policing of LGBT sexual and gender identities post-“Don't Ask, Don't Tell.”

Ph.D. candidate Courtney Caviness from the University of California-Davis will address military policies pertaining to LGBTQ individuals and the effects of military culture on sexual orientation and gender identity in the larger culture post-DADT.

Caviness, seeking a Ph.D. in sociology, has studied sex and gender, race, sexuality and work and occupations. She has been published in multiple journals including *Teaching Gender and Sex in Contemporary America*; the *Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*; and *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Psychology and Gender*. Her skills have been honored with multiple awards including a variety from UC Davis, Texas State University and the Alpha Kappa Delta Honor Society.

DADT prohibited service members from discriminating against or harassing closeted LGBT service members or applicants while barring openly LGBT people from service. DADT was the official U.S. policy on service by LGBT service members in the military. The program was instituted by the Clinton Administration in February of 1994 and lasted until Sept. 20, 2011.

Caviness will present her material at 5:30 p.m. March 8 in room 310A in the Student Center on EMU's campus. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information and to RSVP, visit the Facebook event page at www.facebook.com/events/474849042705074/.

State Notable Book Award in Hot Water

BY AJ TRAGER

In over 20 years of operation, the Notable Book Award, an annual award given out by the Library of Michigan for works focusing on strong Michigan themes or written by Michigan authors, has never presented an award to an out LGBT Michigan author.

The Notable Book Award is a program of the Library of Michigan and got its start in 1991 when it was called Read Michigan. According to the program's website, the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries took over the award in 2002; two years later it changed its name to the Notable Book Award and then in 2009 the Library of Michigan moved to the Michigan Department of Education, bringing the award with it.

Lev Raphael, an LGBT Michigan author who has published 25 books over the course of his career, recently wrote an op-ed about the award which was featured in BTL. In it he condemns the award as being discriminatory against LGBT authors and LGBT content.

Even though the Library of Michigan publicizes the awards as being “reflective of Michigan's diverse ethnic, historical, literary and cultural experience,” Raphael believes it has a “major blind spot” as it relates to diversity.

“...Since 1991 there hasn't been a single book with major LGBT content published by a Michigan press or written by a Michigan author worthy of recognition,” Raphael writes. “Think about it: No notable LGBT books by talented queer authors in Michigan in almost 25 years worthy of recognition by the judges of this program.”

The program is highly competitive. Every year 20 books are selected out of 150-400 submitted titles for the award. No cash award is granted for making the list; however, authors that find themselves among the selected few often find that the publicity leads to hundreds, possibly thousands, of copies sold.

Randy Riley, a state librarian who has been with the Library of Michigan for 26 years, has been involved with the Notable Book Award for 14 years. He says that books that are granted the award are chosen because the work features the state's rich cultural, historical and literary heritage. A team of 13 committee members from a range of backgrounds including booksellers, book reviewers, journalists, librarians, historians, archaeologists and more decide which titles will be given the award.

“In the past there have been gay authors

“We have a unique culture as LGBT citizens. To recognize that culture and recognize the depth of that culture could certainly have an effect not only for that author but also for readers who perhaps didn't know they were looking for something.”

– Keith Orr, owner Common Language Books, Ann Arbor

that have been on the list. I don't make a big point announcing that and outing who is gay on our list. I think that is up to the authors themselves. I don't know them to that level where that is even part of the criteria when we are rolling out who is on the list,” Riley told BTL.

Riley remembered one book in particular that was submitted and had a gay-theme: Dean Kuipers' 2006 book titled “Burning Rainbow Farm: How a Stoner Utopia Went Up in Smoke.”

“The gripping story of two marijuana advocates gunned down by the FBI after a five-day standoff,” the first line in the Amazon synopsis reads. The book follows the relationship of Tom Crosslin and his partner, Rollie Rohm, opening up an inclusive campground in southwest Michigan.

So, while Riley admits that books written by LGBT authors or books with LGBT content have been submitted and even quietly granted the award, there seems to be a lack of LGBT representation.

Selection Process

Due to a lack of extraneous funding, the book award committee only reviews books that are submitted to them. For many self published authors, printing upwards of 20 copies of their manuscript can get costly if there's no guarantee that they'll be reimbursed with either money or publicity. Riley admits that it is a possible hurdle for authors without a publisher.

The committee doesn't have a formula for which books they choose as it relates to various genres. Books for the 2016 Notable Book Award include titles such

as: “Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in Detroit” by Mark Rosenthal, “Great Girls in Michigan History” by Patricia Majher and “The Stone Circle Poems: The Collected Poems of Terry Wooten” by Terry Wooten, just to name a few. While Frida Kahlo, an out bisexual, and her partner Diego Rivera were famous for their polyamorous relationship, Rosenthal's book focuses almost exclusively on their time in Detroit and the controversy over Rivera's 27 fresco murals in the Detroit Institute of Arts where critics viewed Rivera's depiction of traditional images of the holy family as parody rather than homage, Wikipedia states.

“How is it that people get to know a community?” asked Keith Orr, owner of Common Language, the LGBT bookstore located in Ann Arbor. “One thing is to know a particular person. For gay marriage they used to say that the biggest factor for support is if they know somebody who is gay. We get to learn cultures through their works. If African-American works show up at the DIA, that makes a difference to the African-American community in Detroit when a major institution recognizes the cultural heritage and significance. We have a unique culture as LGBT citizens. To recognize that culture and recognize the depth of that culture could certainly have an effect not only for that author but also for readers who perhaps didn't know they were looking for something.”

Finding an Audience

While the Notable Book Award has very little to do with what he purchases for the bookstore, Orr said that a nomination of that magnitude would certainly have an impact on LGBT publicity in the state.

“Books will find their audience, but things like awards or notable reviews can help that book find its audience,” said Orr. “It (the award) speaks a lot to how the LGBT community is treated in Michigan.”

Orr provided BTL with a short list of LGBT authors living in the state who could be considered for the award: Salvatore Sapienza, who writes books on spirituality; Wade Rouse, a New York Times best selling author; Marianne Martin, a lesbian author and writer/co-owner of Bywater Books; Carol Popovich, who writes lesbian romance novels; and Lev Raphael.

“Lev Raphael is someone who could garner that type of award based on the quality of the writing and the impact nationally and internationally,” Orr said.

See Notable Books, next page

Michigan Delegation Split Across Party Lines When Caring for Environment

National Scorecard Show Low Scores for Republicans

ANN ARBOR – Michigan League of Conservation Voters today unveiled scores for Michigan’s Congressional Delegation that were released as part of the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) 2015 National Environmental Scorecard. The scorecard includes the most votes ever scored and records a Congress that has not been favorable to the environment. The scorecard is available in both English and Spanish at scorecard.lcv.org.

“As evidenced by the Flint water crisis, the health of our state’s residents depends on the quality of our natural resources,” said Lisa Wozniak, executive director for Michigan LCV. “Despite last year bringing major threats to our clean water and clean air, congressional leaders again have failed to prioritize protections for our natural resources or the Michiganders who depend on them.”

The 2015 scorecard includes votes cast during the first session of the 114th Congress. It includes 35 House votes and 25 votes in the Senate, covering issues ranging from clean air and water protections to land and wildlife conservation.

The good news is that the scorecard also includes many votes led by environmental allies who stood up for climate change science, clean energy, public lands and wildlife protections, among other issues. Fortunately, many of the worst threats to the environment and public health were defeated.

In Michigan, only five House members earned a score of 80 percent or more on the 2015 scorecard, while eight House members earned scores of 10 percent or less. Sen. Stabenow and Sen. Peters received an exemplary 100 percent.

“The 2015 scorecard shows that the radical leadership in the House and Senate wasted no time pursuing big polluters’ agenda last year, and their environmental assault is well underway in 2016,” said LCV President Gene Karpinski. “Fortunately, we have a growing force of environmental allies, including the president, as well as many in Congress, who are working tirelessly to combat climate change, transition to a clean energy economy and safeguard our air, water, lands and wildlife.”

Michigan Delegation Scores:

- (D) Senator Debbie Stabenow, 100
- (D) Senator Gary Peters, 100
- (R) Congressman Dan Benishek, 3
- (R) Congressman Bill Huizenga, 0
- (R) Congressman Justin Amash, 20
- (R) Congressman John Moolenaar, 3
- (D) Congressman Dan Kildee, 94
- (R) Congressman Fred Upton, 3
- (R) Congressman Tim Walberg, 0
- (R) Congressman Mike Bishop, 3
- (D) Congressman Sander Levin, 97
- (R) Congresswoman Candice Miller, 0
- (R) Congressman Trent Lott, 3
- (D) Congresswoman Debbie Dingell, 97
- (D) Congressman John Conyers, 94
- (D) Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence, 94

The National Environmental Scorecard issued by LCV has been the nationally accepted yardstick used to rate members of Congress on environmental, public health and energy issues for the past 40 years. For more information, visit <http://scorecard.lcv.org>.

► Notable Books

Continued from p. 6

“In my 13 years of doing this I have one regret, and that was not selecting ‘Middlesex’ (by Jeffrey Eugenides),” Riley said.

“Middlesex” sold over three million copies in 2011 and was loosely based on aspects of Eugenides’ life and observations of his Greek heritage. The main character for the novel is intersex and the work received praise from the intersex community, according to Olivia Banner, who peer reviewed the academic journal Signs that said “reviews of the novel in medical journals judge it favorably for what it reveals about the interior lives of the intersexed.”

Award recipients will be honored at “Night for Notables,” an event held April 2 in Lansing,

to showcase the state’s rich literary history and, through their compelling stories, the diverse experiences of life in the Great Lakes state.

Over the next year winners of the award will tour libraries across the state and give presentations about their work and their process. Not all libraries participate in the author workshops.

Anyone wishing to submit a book for the 2017 award can send a message to the committee at librarian@michigan.gov. The committee will start discussing 2017 nominations in June. Those submitting titles are encouraged to do so sooner rather than later.

To read more about the Notable Book Award and the committee, go to www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan.

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Study: 'Rare' Infection Found During PrEP

BY TODD A. HEYWOOD

Out of the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) held in Boston last week came news of a 43-year-old gay man who seroconverted despite being compliant with the drug taken for pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP.

But scientists were quick to point out the case was "rare" and an exception to the high efficacy of the drug. They noted that the patient in the case contracted a virus that had resistance to several drugs used to treat HIV, including both drugs in Truvada, the brand name of the drug that is used as PrEP. Studies on the virus the man contracted showed resistance to drugs in nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, and integrase inhibitors classes of drugs.

Drug resistance is linked to people living with HIV failing to continue to take their prescribed medicine properly – cited reasons for this include missing doses or not taking them on time. In Michigan, a study of newly diagnosed people living with HIV found 15.3 percent of cases of the virus contained resistance to at least one drug used to treat HIV. About 11 percent of the 422 cases studied had resistance to the two drug classes found in Truvada.

Angela Minicuci, a spokesperson for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, said the state data could not be parsed to determine how many of those viruses studied had resistance to both drugs in Truvada.

"We don't have a way to link up

genotypes with the data collected on the case report form either because those algorithms and software are only housed at CDC," Minicuci said in an email Friday. "We can watch if NRTI resistance is increasing in general, and perhaps correlate that to PrEP prescriptions. We will have a new MHS report coming out soon but because it is CDC data, there is a significant lag in the timing and the data would likely be a year behind."

Despite the heavy resistance to three of the seven classes of HIV medications, scientists reported the man was able to start treatment and has suppressed his viral load.

While the case was trumpeted as evidence of a need for caution related to PrEP as a prevention option by some, the scientists stressed that having resistance to both drugs found in Truvada is exceptionally rare, and very unlikely to happen on a regular basis. Scientists said testing and pharmacy records provided evidence to show the man was likely compliant with the drug regimen – taking it daily as prescribed.

Studies have put the efficacy of the drug when taken daily at over 92 percent effective. A model of efficacy from the National Institutes of Health put the efficacy at 99 percent. In addition to PrEP, those living with HIV who take their medications properly and suppress their virus to "undetectable" levels are significantly less likely to transmit the virus. That intervention is known as treatment as prevention, or TasP.

At the same conference, the CDC released a study showing that PrEP in

combination with TasP and increased testing could significantly reduce new HIV infections in the U.S.

"Reaching the nation's treatment goal of ensuring 80 percent of all of those diagnosed with HIV achieve viral suppression (that is, keeping their virus under control and at a level that dramatically reduces the risk of transmission) alone would prevent an estimated 168,000 infections over the next five years," the federal agency reported on its website. "Increasing the use of PrEP, a daily anti-HIV pill, among people who are uninfected but at high risk could prevent an additional 17,000 infections over the same time span."

"If we expand the use of our current prevention strategies today, we can significantly reduce new HIV infections tomorrow," said Dr. Jonathan Mermin, director of CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Prevention. The statement was made in the same press release. "This study confirms that we have the right tools to dramatically reduce new HIV infections, but we have a long way to go in order to make those reductions a reality."

There are currently an estimated 48,000 new HIV infections in the U.S. annually – with a significant number of those infections in men of color who have sex with men. Another study released by the CDC found that one in two black men who have sex with men could be infected with the virus in their lifetime.

Trump Tangles With White Supremacy Support

Donald Trump has been dogged for failing to immediately reject support from the KKK. In an interview with ABC's Jake Tapper Sunday, Trump was asked about David Duke, the former leader of the KKK, and his endorsement. He was also asked about the support he was receiving from white supremacist groups. Trump declined to condemn the groups, or reject Duke's endorsement, until he had more information. Later in the day he rejected Duke's endorsement and the KKK. But social and traditional news media ran with the story.

Meanwhile, Dennis Lennox, a former drain commissioner in northern Michigan, has announced – according to

Politico – that despite organizing for Ted Cruz in various U.S. territories last year, he is now backing Trump. Lennox used to lead the Central Michigan University Young Americans for Freedom student group which was closely associated with Michigan State University's student group of the same name. The MSU chapter was named a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2007, and its former leader, Kyle Bristow, has gone on to become a leading white nationalist voice. Lennox was often in attendance at anti-immigrant and other programs hosted by the MSU chapter.



Republican frontrunner Donald Trump

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Trans Woman Runs for Township Supervisor

SPARTA (AP) – A transgender woman is running for township supervisor in a rural community north of Grand Rapids.

Gidget Groendyk was the first person to get on the ballot for the township supervisor race in Sparta. The Grand Rapids Press reports that the ballot will note that Groendyk was formerly known as Scott Wade Langford.

Groendyk says she's running because she wants the township to enact a nondiscrimination ordinance with protections for LGBT residents.

State law doesn't provide housing or employment protections for LGBT residents, but some municipalities have passed ordinances regarding discrimination based on sexual orientation.

April 19 is the deadline to get on the ballot for the August primary elections.



Former State Reps. Cindy Gamrat and Todd Courser at the state capitol. AP file photo.

Former Michigan Lawmakers Charged

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING – Former Republican lawmakers Cindy Gamrat, R-Plainwell, and Todd Courser, R-Lapeer, have been charged with crimes stemming from the couple's sex and email scandal. Attorney General Bill Schuette, a Republican, has charged Courser with one count of perjury as well as two counts of misconduct in office. Gamrat has been charged with two counts of misconduct in office.

The two Tea Party and "family values" leaders fell from grace in August of 2015 when the Detroit News revealed audio recordings of Courser planning to "inoculate the herd" from revelations of his affair with Gamrat by sending a bizarre email alleging he had been caught having sex with a male prostitute behind a Lansing night club.

In mid-September, after a marathon session of the state House, Courser resigned from his post and Gamrat was expelled by a vote of the body. Both sought to receive their party's nomination to fill their own open seats following the resignation and expulsion, but failed to win the primary special election in November 2015.

Both former lawmakers were arraigned in Ingham County Circuit Court on Tuesday.

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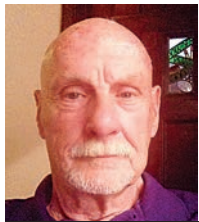
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Tears for Closet Gay Pioneer

Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

To diddle an old saying: You can't judge a gay author or his book by its – or by his – cover.

Case in point: Groundbreaking 1951 sociological expose, “The Homosexual in America.” Gay nom de plume: Donald Webster Cory. Real name: Edward Sagarin. Outed dramatically 24 closeted years later in 1975.

Cory’s “Homosexual” followed three years after Alfred Kinsey’s shelf-shocker, “Sexual Response in the Human Male.” Both books provided in-your-face facts, focus, insights on a previously little discussed, statistically undocumented subject. Homosexuality!

Kinsey, a biologist and an authority on gall wasps, turned his scientific cataloging to humans. His research institute colleagues interviewed 5,940 men about their sex lives. The result: 804 innovative pages of tables, charts, statistics.

Dull, but for the American public: titillating best-seller reading.

Data showed 37 percent of the male population had at least some overt gay experience to ejaculation; four percent of white males were exclusively homosexual following adolescence.

It’s safe to say of the time frame 65 years ago that your average Joe believed he had never met a homosexual; that fags, fairies, fruits were few, but even so: they were perverts, mentally unbalanced, to be incarcerated, punished if caught with their collective pants down, justifiably shunned by church, family, employers, military, government; to be dealt with by psychiatrists and/or police. (Sound just vaguely familiar?)

Those Americans living in large cities – Chicago, New York, San Francisco and Detroit – were likely to be aware of thriving gay subcultures gathered secretly in gay bars. (Detroit’s bar community dates to Prohibition, with earlier house parties in the ‘20s. Gay bars thrived during World War II.)

Sagarin, a married bisexual, sociologist and trained criminologist (and perfume authority), documented gay life as a social phenomenon and as a participating observer in his “The Homosexual in America.”

He provided a fair-minded understanding of gay persons, their subculture, slang, sexual acts, their basic proximity to the so-called heterosexual “norm.”

“As a minority homosexuals are caught in a particularly vicious circle,” said Sagarin, writing as Donald Webster Cory, a pen name name gleaned from Andre Gide’s 1924 gay novel “Corydon,” published in America in 1950.

“On the one hand, the shame of belonging and the social punishment of acknowledgement are so great that pretense is almost universal. On the other hand, only a leadership that would acknowledge (being homosexual) would be able to break down the barriers of shame and a resultant discrimination.

“Until we are willing to speak out openly and frankly in defense of our activities, and to identify ourselves with the millions pursuing these activities, we are unlikely to find the attitudes of the world undergoing any significant change.”

Nonetheless, for all his advocacy on the behalf of America’s gay population, Sagarin very cautiously, quietly, and only in 1962, joined the homophile Mattachine Society.

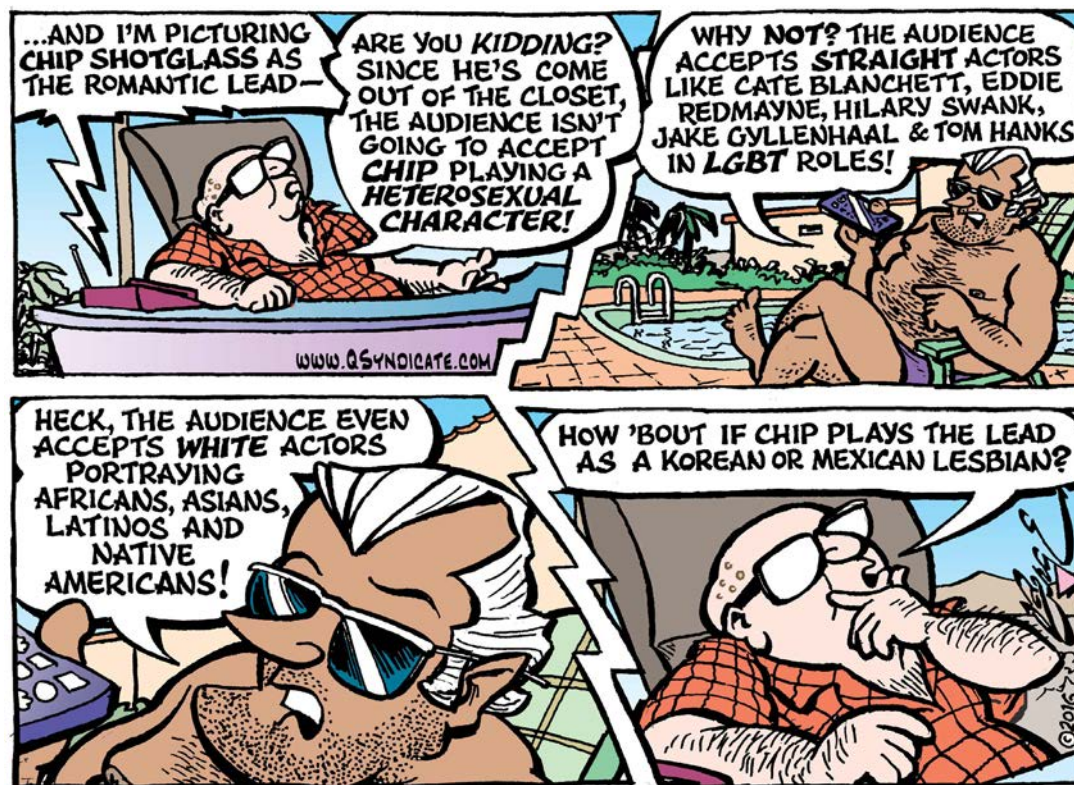
His participation was supportive but “don’t rock the boat”: no militant advocacy for civil rights.

As a sociologist, himself in psychotherapy, Sagarin believed that homosexuality was a pathology; that homosexuals should seek psychotherapy. Few of his gay friends or colleagues knew that he was the famous (at least in gay circles) Donald Webster Cory. (His second gay book is “21 Variations on a Theme.”)

Sagarin’s real identity remained secret until a 1974 American Sociological Society convention held in Montreal. He appeared on a panel, “Theoretical Perspectives on Homosexuality,” speaking strongly against liberationist scholarship.

A colleague, Laud Humphreys, took umbrage – and perhaps some polymorphous perverse delight – in exposing Sagarin by repeatedly calling him “Mr. Cory.”

Sagarin broke down in tears; withdrawing thereafter from all issues concerning homosexual discussion. He died in 1986, age 73.



Positive Thoughts



BY RICK GUASCO

Last October, I came out. Everyone who knows me was surprised. Although I’ve been openly gay most of my adult life, and I’ve been HIV-positive since 1992, I have only been on treatment for a very short time. Three years ago, I fell out of care completely and was no longer on meds.

You’d think I would know better. I’m a fairly intelligent person, even if also opinionated and stubborn. Plus, I work for Positively Aware, an HIV treatment magazine, so you’d think I would be more, well, *aware*, of the importance of HIV treatment.

Except that I had become tired and afraid. I think that as long as I have lived with HIV, I’ve always

Something More Important Than Fear

My Journey Back to HIV Treatment

lived with some measure of fear. It didn’t matter how healthy I was, or how sick I felt, fear has always lurked in the background.

In the summer of 1992, I developed blotches on my skin. The purplish spots continued to blossom, about five new ones a week. When the fear became too much, I got tested that December: I was HIV-positive, and the spots were likely Kaposi sarcoma (KS), an opportunistic infection that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had labeled as an “end-stage AIDS-defining illness.”

“Good luck,” my post-test counselor said as he handed me three publications.

Kaposi sarcoma is a disease in which malignant tumors can form in the skin, mucous membranes, lymph nodes and other organs.

Chemotherapy was the standard treatment for KS, but it often killed the weakest patients, and it seemed I was next.

The fear of KS was overwhelming. More than 100 lesions covered my body, 50 on my head alone. I looked like I had two black eyes and a swollen lip.

I began reading the three handouts I’d been given, all of which were published by Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN), an AIDS service organization in Chicago where I live. One of them was Positively Aware. The more I read, the more my fear subsided to a level where I could think. That’s when I realized information was the key to getting a grip on my situation.

I discovered a clinical trial

See HIV Treatment, next page

► HIV Treatment

Continued from p. 10

that used interferon, a known cancer-fighting drug, to treat KS. But I'm so afraid of needles, it took more than two weeks before I could bring myself to begin the daily course of a self-administered injection of interferon into my upper thigh. Whenever I jabbed myself, I would close my eyes and look the other way.

Imagine having the body aches of the flu – every day. That was the major side effect of interferon. At its worst, I would rock back and forth at my desk, like someone experiencing withdrawal. But the interferon worked. Within two years, nearly all the lesions were gone.

In 1997, protease inhibitors, the first class of effective HIV drugs, appeared. But soon afterward, HIV patients began to report side effects from the long-term use of these medications and from having lived so long with the virus. Some people experienced a redistribution of body fat, giving them gaunt-looking faces, or swollen bellies, or the appearance of a slight hunchback.

So, quite frankly, I was grateful for my interferon side effects. Having had a disfiguring disease, I have become self-conscious about my appearance. My KS treatment was apparently keeping me healthy enough that I thought I could justify skipping HIV treatment.

After my insurance no longer covered interferon, I stopped taking it. For a few years, I coasted. I “felt healthy enough” to refrain from HIV treatment. Then in 2011, a familiar purplish spot appeared, just below my left ankle.

My KS was back. Once again, fear took hold. As months went by, I looked on as the spot slowly grew. It was only the fear that another spot might soon appear that made me see a doctor. A biopsy confirmed the diagnosis.

These days, the only treatment for KS is to go on HIV medication. Reluctantly, I did, going on one of the first single-tablet regimens. The spot began to shrink, then disappear, and my viral load and T-cell count improved.

The side effects came with almost the first pill. Repetitive dreams nearly as bad as those from interferon. And during the day, a depression was beginning to settle in. I was

My fears led me back to when I first faced KS. I'd made it this far; I was damned if I was going to die like it was 1985. That's when I decided to get back onto treatment.

afraid that this was my new normal.

I struggled for 11 months. My meds had been covered by the state ADAP program, and my job's insurance was about to kick in. However, the paperwork transitioning me from ADAP to private insurance had gotten lost, and I now had no way to pay for my refill. This only seemed to add insult to injury, so I walked away from treatment.

I was afraid, however, of being called irresponsible – or a hypocrite. I told myself that my healthcare (or lack of it) was a personal decision. After all, I still “felt healthy enough.” But old fears lingered. Once, I had been afraid I wouldn't live to see 30; having passed 50, I was starting to fear what might lie ahead.

My fears led me back to when I first faced KS. I'd made it this far; I was damned if I was going to die like it was 1985.

That's when I decided to get back onto treatment. Four weeks later, my numbers had already significantly improved. And this time, the side effects have been negligible.

No one wants to admit to being afraid. Fear can make you feel helpless and isolated. But the truth is, you are not alone. If you learn how to use it, fear can be a good thing. It can remind you that there is something more important than fear.

Rick Guasco has been creative director of Positively Aware since 2010. He occasionally posts on Facebook about his return to HIV treatment. Positive Thoughts is a project of Plus, Positively Aware, POZ, The Body and Q Syndicate, the LGBT wire service. Visit their websites – <http://hivplusmag.com>, <http://positivelyaware.com>, <http://poz.com> and <http://thebody.com> – for the latest updates on HIV/AIDS.

Creep of the Week

Pat McCrory

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

I'm tired of talking about toilets, everybody. I don't love using public restrooms, mostly because of the ick factor and lack of total privacy. But I sure am glad that public restrooms exist. And if you, too, are a Peeing American, then you likely share my appreciation for the public restroom.



North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory

Most likely the “state legislative intervention” that McCrory is promising is one of those “religious freedom” laws that make it safe to discriminate against people if Jesus tells you so.

Unfortunately, the public restroom is under attack. What was once a place of personal relief has now become a place for evil-doers to lurk. A place that was once a mostly private necessity has become a public symbol of doom.

And those evil-doers are, duh and obviously, Republicans. Did you think I was going to say transgender people? Because Republicans think it's transgender people. And boy are they obsessed with where transgender people go to the bathroom.

Case in point: the city of Charlotte, North Carolina just passed an anti-discrimination ordinance that includes protections for LGBT people. I'd say thank you, but I really think “it's about time” is more appropriate.

Not surprisingly, the anti-gay right is aghast at Charlotte's new homo-lovers status, and this includes North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory.

According to the Charlotte Observer, in an email to two Republican City Council members, McCrory wrote, “It is not only the citizens of Charlotte that will be impacted by changing basic restroom and locker room norms but also citizens from across our state and nation who visit and work in Charlotte.”

In other words, if you let trannies into restrooms and locker rooms, ain't nobody safe no how. Also, the tourists! Won't someone think of the tourists?

I should point out that support for anti-discrimination ordinances like the one Charlotte just adopted are pretty high and more and more common across the country. So I guess tourists who are concerned about running into LGBT people in Charlotte bathrooms could take shelter in McCrory's office in Raleigh about 170 miles away.

Warning that the ordinance would put “citizens in possible danger from deviant actions by individuals taking improper advantage of a bad policy,” McCrory's email continued, “Also, this action of allowing a person with male anatomy, for example, to use a female restroom or locker room will most likely cause immediate state legislative intervention which I would support as governor.”

Okay, so if someone with a penis uses a ladies' room anywhere in the state, then the Legislature and governor will spring to action. Total state response necessary here, folks. Bring out the National Guard! We must inspect the genitals of all public restroom users for the safety of the state! Also women will be required to wear long sleeve tent dresses that hit just above the knees so that they match the symbol on the restroom door because women wearing pants is just too confusing.

Most likely the “state legislative intervention” that McCrory is promising is one of those “religious freedom” laws that make it safe to discriminate against people if Jesus tells you so.

Then again, perhaps the Legislature is planning a bill that would designate McCrory's office a safe space for hate. What a tourist attraction that would be! The symbol on the ladies' room could be just like the common “No Smoking” symbol, only using a penis instead of a cigarette.

North Carolina's state motto, by the way, is “Esse quam videri,” which means, “To be, rather than to seem.” It sounds like McCrory is taking that quite literally.

Michigan Non Profit Resource

Have You Experienced Discrimination?

If you or someone you know has experienced discrimination, intimidation, harassment or violence because of sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity,

contact Equality Michigan's Department of Victim Services at :

report@equalitymi.org or call 1-866-962-1147

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.

Hundreds more resources can be found at
www.PrideSource.com

Italy Senate OKs Civil Unions, but LGBT Groups Are Unhappy

ROME (AP) – Italy’s Senate voted Feb. 25 to grant legal recognition to civil unions, as the last holdout in Western Europe took a compromise step to give some rights to gay couples after a bitter, years-long debate.

Premier Matteo Renzi described the passage of the bill Thursday as “historic.” But gay and lesbian groups denounced the watered-down legislation as a betrayal because Renzi’s Democratic Party sacrificed a provision to allow gay adoption in order to ensure passage.

The legislation, which must still pass the lower Chamber of Deputies, is nevertheless significant for an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country where the Vatican holds sway in politics and society, although Pope Francis remained conspicuously silent as debate raged in recent months.

The bill passed 173-71, well over the threshold necessary.

After being stalled in parliament for years, the legislation was spurred on after the European Court of Human Rights condemned Italy last year for discriminating against gays. Ruling in favor of three homosexual couples, the court found that Italy had failed to provide gays with even the most basic rights owed to couples in stable relationships, including inheritance rights, and recommended civil union recognition.

The law grants same-sex couples many of the same rights as married couples: the possibility of having the same last name, inheritance rights, hospital visitation rights and decision-making rights about medical care.

But it stops far short of authorizing gay marriage, which was passed last year in predominantly Catholic Ireland and was legalized as well across the United States. Last-minute changes removed references to the obligation of “faithfulness” in the relationship lest it be construed as equivalent to marriage, which the Catholic Church insists is a lifelong union between a man and woman.

More painful for the LGBT community was Renzi’s decision earlier in the week to scrap the provision allowing gays to adopt the biological children of their partners. It was sacrificed to ensure support within Renzi’s own Democratic Party and other necessary supporters, and even then Renzi put the bill up to a confidence vote -- a common tactic in Italian politics to ensure that the majority closes ranks.

“We are outraged, angry, disappointed,” said Marilena Grassadonia, president of Rainbow Families, the Italian association of homosexual parents. “We can’t believe that



A gay couple was photographed during a sit-in to request a law for registered partnerships including also couples of the same sex in Milan, Italy. Photo: G.dallorto/Wikimedia/CC

in 2016 ... in a country like Italy which is so proud to be part of this Europe, that it’s possible to make a law on civil unions without considering children who should be protected as Italian citizens and discriminated minors,” she told The Associated Press.

Defenders of the bill insisted that the legislation preserved the right of Italian judges to grant adoptions to gay partners on a case-by-case basis, as has been the practice to date.

“Thanks to this text, the magistrates can still interpret the law on adoptions in the interest of the child to have a stable and continual relationship” with the non-biological partner, said Anna Finocchiaro, the head of the Democrats in the Senate.

Given the risk that the whole law on civil unions might have failed had the so-called stepchild adoption provision remained, “this was a wise choice,” she said.

The center-right claimed a victory for having whittled down the original text.

“We prevented an anthropological revolution against nature,” exulted Angelino Alfano, the interior minister and head of the New Center-Right party.

Avvenire, the newspaper of the Italian bishops’ conference, lamented in an editorial Thursday that Renzi had forced senators to choose between their consciences and the government in imposing the confidence vote.

“It would have been better to not so heavily condition the freedom of conscience of the senators who will vote (with a few announced exceptions) not because of their intimate conviction of the quality of the law but out of loyalty or not to a political judgment of Renzi’s executive,” Avvenire said.

Texas to Use Birth Certificate to Determine Athlete’s Gender

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) – School superintendents in Texas have overwhelmingly approved a change that requires public school officials to use a birth certificate to determine a student-athlete’s gender.

A referendum ballot submitted to superintendents last month shows they voted 586 to 32 to amend University Interscholastic League rules when it comes to transgender athletes.

The UIL is the state’s governing body for high school sports. Its Policy Director, Jamey Harrison, told The Dallas Morning News (<http://bit.ly/1VKmwZ8>) that the change codifies the advice the league has been giving to superintendents.

“When we were asked by a school for guidance, that was the recommendation we gave them,” Harrison said, “although we told them to work through their own process and own legal counsel as well.”

The amendment goes into effect Aug. 1. It does allow other government documents to be used for the purpose of identification if a birth certificate is unavailable.

The Texas Observer first obtained the list of superintendents and their votes.

Transgender advocates condemned the

move, saying it will force transgender students to amend their birth certificate, a laborious and costly process, in order to play. Chris Mosier, the founder of TransAthlete.com, told the newspaper that the policy would deny transgender athletes an “equal opportunity to sports.”

Texas becomes one of seven states that require high school students to provide either a birth certificate, gender-reassignment surgery or documentation of hormone therapy, according to TransAthlete.com. It says other states like California and Florida have more inclusive rules.

“At the high school level, we should be encouraging participation for all students,” Mosier said. “Texas school leaders have a responsibility to ensure that transgender athletes can participate in a way that is safe, comfortable and affirming of their identity.”

The NCAA does not have a mandatory policy for transgender athletes, but it did release a list of inclusion recommendations in 2011, stating the issue was “an emerging endeavor” and that “policies may need to be re-evaluated to ensure that they reflect the most current research-based information.”

What We Know: ‘Bathroom Bills’ Assert Transgender Rights

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) – The city council in Charlotte, North Carolina, has expanded its anti-discrimination ordinance to include sexual orientation, gender identity and marital status. The law has many aspects, but public debate has focused on how it legalizes the ability of transgender people to choose men’s or women’s bathrooms according to where they feel most comfortable. Gov. Pat McCrory says he will work with state lawmakers to overturn it. Here’s what we know:

National Debate

LGBT activists have pushed to expand anti-discrimination laws as sweeping changes take hold in the wake of the Supreme Court’s legalization of gay marriage. LGBT advocates say nearly all of the nation’s 20 largest cities fall under local or state nondiscrimination laws that allow transgender people to use whatever bathroom they identify with. As conservatives push back, they’re finding success by raising concerns about bathroom safety.

Broader Implications

The anti-discrimination laws typically deal with much broader protections. The ordinance Charlotte approved Monday adds sexual orientation, gender identity and marital status as attributes protected from discrimination in public accommodations including restaurants, retail stores and other businesses. Public schools would not be affected by the law, which takes effect April 1.

What’s Next

North Carolina cities and counties are creations of the state, which means the General Assembly can pass legislation cancelling the Charlotte ordinance or preempting any similar or regulations statewide. Legislators could also require such ordinances to be approved by voter referenda before they are enforced. The governor and leaders of the house and senate, all Republicans, said they will intervene. McCrory told the Associated Press that the Charlotte ordinance is “an extreme regulation that changes the basic norms of society.”

Utah Senate Approves Adding LGBT Protections to Hate Crime Law

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) – Utah state senators backed a proposal on Feb. 26 that would beef up the state's hate crime law and add protections for gay and transgender people.

Lawmakers voted 17-12 to give preliminary approval of the plan after debating it. They must still cast a final vote on the measure sometime in the next two weeks.

The proposal would increase the penalties for crimes against a person or their property if the action was motivated by factors such as the victim's sexual orientation, race, or religion.

Bill sponsor Sen. Steve Urquhart, R-St. George, said he feels fantastic that the plan advanced.

He said he is wary about its chances advancing further given that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints released a statement last week urging legislators not to upset a balance between religious and LGBT rights. Most lawmakers are members of the faith.

"I would need to perform some serious magic to get it through the process now that the church has spoken against it," said Urquhart.

Mormon church spokesman Dale Jones said in the statement that lawmakers struck a balance last year with an anti-discrimination law that protected religious rights and LGBT rights. Jones said that balance should be maintained despite efforts on both ends of the political spectrum to upset it. Jones declined to elaborate.

Urquhart, a Mormon, said his proposal is balanced and would protect religious groups, including members of the LDS Church.

Some lawmakers spoke in support of the

proposal during the debate, saying it protects many groups of people that are not currently protected in the state.

"Painting a smiley face on a synagogue is a very, very different action than painting a swastika," said Sen. Daniel Thatcher, R-West Valley City.

A number of community and religious groups have also endorsed the plan.

Utah is one of over a dozen states with hate crime laws that lack protections for sexual orientation and gender identity, according to the Human Rights Campaign. The current law doesn't include specific protected groups but instead speaks generally about crimes that cause a person to fear they cannot freely exercise their constitutional rights.

Some lawmakers criticized the proposal, saying it gives special protection for certain groups of people over others.

"How is this equal?" said Republican Sen. Todd Weiler of Woods Cross. "If someone attacks me if I'm obese, there's no protection for me."

"We don't have a big history of people saying, 'let's roll up on a fatty,'" Urquhart later said. "The reality is certain groups are attacked because they belong to that group."

Lawmakers also voted in support of Urquhart's accompanying proposal on Feb. 26, which would clarify that a person's membership in a specific group or hate speech alone cannot serve as evidence that something was a hate crime. The person's comments or actions must be specifically related to the crime – such as stating an intent to attack a specific person because of their race, not past statements against members of a race.

Bill Allowing Companies to Deny Services to Gays Advances

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) – Kentucky businesses could refuse services to LGBT clients in the name of protecting religious beliefs under a bill advancing in the state Senate.

The bill comes after the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission ordered a Christian T-shirt company to get diversity training for refusing to print shirts for a gay pride festival. A state judge overturned the order, but an appeals court is

reviewing the case.

The bill is the latest effort of lawmakers in some states to react to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling last summer that effectively legalized same-sex marriage nationwide. The Georgia legislature is considering similar legislation, and the Missouri legislature is considering amending its state constitution to protect businesses that decline to provide goods or services for same-sex marriage ceremonies or celebrations.

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Motor City ComedyFest Celebrates its 20th Year

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

DEARBORN – The 20th annual Motor City ComedyFest is coming to the Dearborn Ford Community & Performing Arts Center on Saturday, March 12. The event is sponsored by Equality Michigan and features four top comedians from across the country. Here’s a quick Q&A with each of them.

Poppy Champlin

What is funny to you?

PC: A lot of things. I can make anything funny really. I hear things funny. I say things funny. If I am not in a good mood though, not a lot is funny. It is my mood. I can see funny in most things.

What don't you joke about?

PC: I don't joke about domestic violence, misogyny, rape – anything anti-women.

Who are your comedic influences?

PC: I was influenced by Lucille Ball. Seeing a strong woman be funny, independent, mischievous, ambitious, defiant, can take a pie in the face, loving, generous ... She had it all. I was also into “The Three Stooges,” and I was also very, very influenced by Joan Rivers. As I was becoming a comedian I seemed to be tracking with her. I was on her late night show as a contestant in a Joan Rivers-for-a-day contest and came in first runner up. Years later in New York I won an America’s Funniest Real Woman contest on her morning show.

What can folks expect from your act at the ComedyFest?

PC: I will be delivering some new, high paced, upbeat material and hopefully a couple of new song parodies that I always come up with.

Karinda Dobbins

What is funny to you?

KD: I love various types of humor including political satire and ‘70s variety shows (“The Carol Burnett Show,” “The Richard Pryor Show,” “The Flip Wilson Show”).

What don't you joke about?

KD: There is nothing I won't joke about, but I would say that I try very hard not to make fun of already marginalized groups or people. I am not here to reinforce the status quo. My jokes or stories will make fun of the system or situations that put people on the margins. An integral part of my comedy is opening the portal to my life which includes almost daily encounters of racism, sexism and homophobia and making people think of those things from the perspective of which I am forced to live them; we can then laugh at the absurdity of it.

Who are your comedic influences?

KD: Moms Mabley and Richard Pryor

What can folks expect from your act at the ComedyFest?

KD: Folks can expect to have a really good time!

Jaye McBride

What is funny to you?

JM: Anything dark. I love dark, “Addams Family” type stuff. I try not to go too far in my act. When I start to hear people whispering, “How horrible!” I know I’ve gone too far.

What don't you joke about?

JM: I don't like to take easy jokes. If it's about stereotypes or easy punchlines, I don't bother. If I'm at a roast, I'll go after everyone and everything, but I'd like to leave it there.

Who are your comedic influences?

JM: Anthony Jeselnik, Mitch Hedberg, Sarah Silverman and of course, Joan Rivers!

What can folks expect from your act at the ComedyFest?

JM: At ComedyFest, I expect I'll be different than almost any other comic they've seen before. I also expect them to each bring me a homemade pie and/or cupcake. I expect to put on a lot of weight this weekend.

Sampson McCormick

What is funny to you?

SM: My point of view and the way that I say things about them. I've always had a way of being so lighthearted about things that no



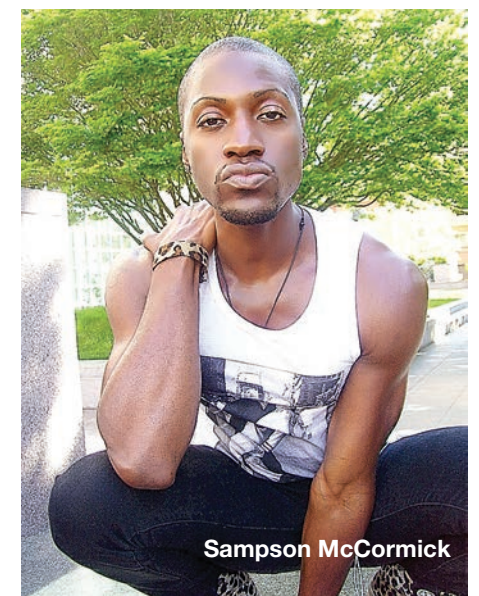
Poppy Champlin



Karinda Dobbins



Jaye McBride



Sampson McCormick

matter how serious it is, I've gotten away with making it funny. ... I think it's just the way I do things, say things, think things ... it can be mischievous but sweet. And above just being funny, I think having the ability to relate, to find things in common with folks. I've always had the ability to connect with people, no matter who they are, that allows them to open up and let me get to that funny bone, and we end up having a great time together.

What don't you joke about?

SM: I'm pretty old school. I grew up in the '80s playing “The Dozens” (verbal sparring matches that include “Yo Mama” jokes and making fun of flaws with oneself and other people) in the hood, and of course, being a gay man, throwing shade and reading (humorous trash talks and put downs), so I know how to crack a joke and take one. I'm not politically correct, but I'm not an asshole, either. So, nothing is really off the table. But I don't make fun of the handicapped, or do rape jokes, or any of that, or attack groups – unless its FOX News, then that's no holds barred.

Who are your comedic influences?

SM: Without a doubt, Moms Mabley, Redd Foxx, Whoopi Goldberg, Joan Rivers, and folks that I saw growing up, like the old black women who would sit on the front porch with a cigarette flapping in the corner of their mouth, eating crackers and tuna fish, talking shit about people, and hollering at people who walked past the yard, “Hey baby! How you doin'”? How your mama and ‘nem?” They were hilarious and I picked up a lot of their habits and attitude. They were amazing women.

What can folks expect from your act at the ComedyFest?

SM: Honesty, a very personal point of view about life, and where we are right now. And, of course, I share a lot of stories. That's my style: make folks who've never had a black or gay best friend feel like they finally have one.

To purchase tickets for the ComedyFest visit www.comedyfest.org or pick them up at Five 15 in Royal Oak or Common Language book store in Ann Arbor.

Strengthening Gay/Straight Alliances

Program Reaches Out Across Michigan to Build Network

BY AJ TRAGER

FLINT – BAMM GSAs, a program of the Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health, is in its second year of operation. Over the last two years, BAMM GSAs has worked with schools and administrations across the state to strengthen gay/straight alliances' opportunities and spread knowledge and awareness on the benefits of establishing GSAs in schools.

"Every successful GSA has a purpose," Erin Busbee, GSA organizational development specialist from MOASH, said in a January presentation about the program.

Every year more and more young Americans are coming out as LGBT. And it's no secret that GSAs improve the health of LGBT youth through social support, group affirmation and advocacy for supportive politics. LGBT youth with GSAs in their school are less likely to miss school due to feeling unsafe, less likely to be verbally harassed, more likely to have higher GPAs than their LGBT counterparts with no GSA, and feel a greater sense of belonging.

In Michigan, there is no current strategy, network or resource for the promotion, implementation and development of GSAs. Only 44 percent of Michigan schools have active GSAs. MOASH is currently working across the state to help bridge the gap and help more schools implement a GSA. However, the progress is "under-utilized, inconsistently funded and done in isolated pockets throughout the state," MOASH representatives said at the SOGI Conference held in January.

According to 2013 GLSEN statistics, 56 percent of LGBT students are still experiencing discriminatory school practices and policies, 65 percent heard homophobic remarks, 30 percent do not feel safe attending schools, and 85 percent still experience verbal harassment.

LGBT youth across the country are twice as likely than heterosexual, cisgender counterparts to not attend school over a 30 day period, be physically injured, become depressed, consider or attempt suicide, use substances and engage in risky sexual behavior. LGBT youth in Michigan report being victimized, excluded and physically, sexually and verbally harassed.

"There's a lot of transphobia in our schools. While schools are not actively doing it, they are perpetuating by allowing it to happen. It shows students that they aren't supported," Busbee said.

MOASH received a three-year federal grant through the Mobilization for Health: National Prevention Partnership Awards from the Department of Health and Human Service of the Assistant Secretary for Health in 2014. The project brings together working



professionals to improve the social and health outcomes of LGBT youth by increasing the number and improving the capacity of GSAs in the state.

Two years into the program, MOASH has conducted a multi-tiered situational assessment of GSAs and the climate in Michigan. The team interviewed 10 students, 10 teachers and five advisers from schools across the state. The team will develop a model program – a guideline – from the interview results.

Statewide Strategy

MOASH is working with Equality Michigan, GLSEN Southeast Michigan and West Michigan Chapters, Kent Intermediate School District, Michigan Department of Education and the Neutral Zone to enact more inclusive changes to Michigan schools. The next steps that the organization and partners will take will include collaboration on the development of a statewide GSA strategy based on best practices, creation of a model program for organizational development of GSAs, and creation of the first ever working summit on GSAs. In the next year and a half the group will place trained organizational development advisers on-site in schools with community GSAs, monitor and evaluate progress and continue to put on its annual working summit.

Summit

The organization will host the Second Annual Bamm GSAs Working Summit at 9:30 a.m. March 18 at the Harding Mott University Center at the University of Michigan-Flint campus. The event is open to all students, adult advisers and parents who are affiliated in any way with a gay/straight alliance.

The one day summit will include workshops and seminars dedicated to developing new and strengthening existing GSAs in the state, with presentations by GLSEN Southeast Michigan and MOASH. The campus building is located at 400 Mill St. in Flint.

While registration for the annual summit is currently closed after reaching capacity, those interested are encouraged to email the director of programs at MOASH, Taryn Gal, at taryn.gal@moash.org. Interested students can obtain an official letter to provide school administration for their excused absence.



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Here's To
Latrice!

'RuPaul's Drag Race' Favorite Coming To Royal Oak With New One-Woman Show

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

She is large and in charge, chunky yet funky. Yes, the one and only Latrice “Mother Fucking” Royale is coming to town. The drag diva – “RuPaul’s Drag Race” favorite – will be starring in a one-woman show called “Here’s To Life” at the Baldwin Theatre in Royal Oak on March 10. The show chronicles Royale’s early years, the period she refers to as her “unfortunate incarceration,” and her heady days on “Drag Race” and beyond. Royale sings live in the show and will be signing CDs afterward.

That’s right – Royale has branched out. Since becoming a break-out star on “Drag Race” – she appeared on the show’s fourth season, as well as “RuPaul’s Drag Race All Stars” and the spin off series “RuPaul’s Drag U” – Royale has bloomed. In February alone she crisscrossed the country to perform shows in San Francisco, Atlanta, Mexico City and a few points in between. She’s also performed internationally, appeared in a documentary (“South Beach on Heels”), released a few dance tracks (including the smash hit “Weight” in 2014) and even become an ordained minister and begun officiating at wedding ceremonies.

Yes, chile, Ms. Royale does it all. But she’s never too busy for her fans and graciously took time out to speak to Between The Lines from Hollywood, Florida, her home base, between rehearsals for her new show.

Royale was born in California and grew up on the mean streets of Compton. “It was very tough,” Royale recalled. “It was very hard, and I endured a lot of things that no kid should have to endure. But I got through it the best way I knew how and I kept moving.”

After being unexpectedly outed to her family by her brother, Royale moved east. She stopped first in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where she studied dance and color guard, before moving on to Florida. Drag was a natural extension of Royale’s love of performing. Her career as a female impersonator, however, got off to a rocky start. Royale entered her first drag contest, which took place at the Copa in Ft. Lauderdale, as a dare. Needless to say, she wasn’t among the winners at the end of the night.

“They gave me a fashion citation and a drink ticket,” said Royale with a laugh. “It was horrible. Horrible.”

But it ignited a spark in Royale, and she didn’t let her early disappointment discourage her from pressing on and perfecting her craft. Fast forward 15 years and Royale had become so successful she landed herself a spot on a television show.

“Going on ‘RuPaul’s Drag Race’ was a whim,” Royale said. “I just sent them an email talking shit and I got a response. I wrote them on a Tuesday and got a call on

Thursday and they wanted my video in by Monday. So I did it. I made it happen and I got picked the first go 'round."

Royale had been a fan the show. But soon enough she found out how different being on the show was from simply viewing it.

"Watching it, you don't get the whole story," Royale explained. "You get a slice-and-dice version of what we actually go through and endure. So it looks very effortless on television when you're sitting at home. But in reality, oh my god, it was the most stressful, mentally challenging and exhausting experience that I've ever gone through.

"No one can prepare you for what you're going to go through," Royale continued. "There's a lot of soul-searching that goes on because you have nobody there but you to rely on. So if you go in there scared, it's going to chew you up and spit you out. And it's going to show up on camera. Everybody's going to see it. But if you're confident and you know who you are and you're strong, that's also going to show. So it's up to you how it's going to play out."

Despite the challenges and stress of the show, including those vicious critiques by the judges, Royale began to hit her stride.

"I understood what the purpose was, and what my purpose was, and I was able to share my story and everything that I had gone through in my life basically all made sense," said Royale. "I had that 'aha' moment when you realize you're in the right place at the right time and this is what your purpose is, to inspire and to let people know what you've gone through and to hopefully help somebody. So once I got my head around that I was really ready to go. I was ready to fly."

After her run on the show – Royale made the top four – an opportunity arose for the entertainer to cash in on her newly found fame. And Royale wasted no time in seizing it.

"I've always been a business woman first and foremost," she said. "I've always been business-minded when it came to my career. I just knew that I needed a platform because I already had a plan ... and 'RuPaul's Drag Race' was that platform."

Still, not all the contestants who appear on

the show manage to morph their exposure into a successful career. "It really is all on you to find out what you're going to do," said Royale. "Some girls flourish and others fall by the wayside. You have to have a big picture in mind in order to be successful. If you don't have a bigger picture and goals, then you're just going to fly by the seat of your pants. You always have to be ahead of yourself because that's the only way you're going to stay relevant."

And you best believe, Royale plans to stay relevant. Her motto? "Diversity is the key to capturing an audience."

"If you don't have something different and fresh, you can take something old and give it a new spin," Royale said. "But you've got to change up the gig to fit into any situation given. I can go from the White House to the whore house, baby, but either which way you're going to be fully entertained and you're going to get a professional. So that really is the key: to change it up and keep people interested in what you're going to do next."

Luckily for Royale, she has help in keeping her show fresh in the form of her personal assistant and romantic partner, Christopher Hamblin. "My love life is amazing with a capital 'A'-mazing," said Royale. "I am with the love of my life. He's absolutely wonderful and supportive. I'm very grateful. I've finally found my partner, someone that I can grow with. And that has been my lifelong dream. So I'm kind of living my dream right now, and it's really amazing. It's kind of like putting all the dots together and making it a full circle."

INFO

Latrice Royale

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Mombian: Two Books Tell the Stories of LGBTQ Families

BY DANA RUDOLPH

Stories have power. Two new collections of stories about the creation of LGBTQ families reinforce that point with two very different approaches.

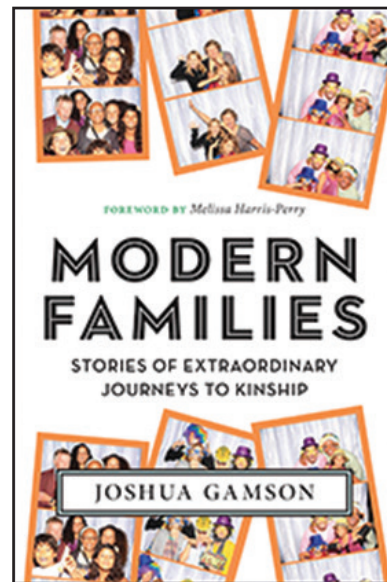
“Modern Families: Stories of Extraordinary Journeys to Kinship,” by Joshua Gamson (NYU Press: 2015) is a collection of creation tales about Gamson’s own family and several other LGBTQ families that he knows, woven together by insights on the meaning of families today and the intersecting and sometimes conflicting social, legal and economic contexts in which we create them.

Gamson, a professor of sociology at the University of San Francisco, was motivated to write, he says, by people inquiring about his own family. Gamson, White and Jewish, and his biracial (black and white) husband Richard had one child with a friend of Gamson’s as their surrogate, and eggs from another friend. For their second child, they used a surrogate from an agency and eggs donated by a friend. While he sometimes bristled at questions about his family, he realized, “People really just wanted to know about origins: how a life and a family started when not everything was easy and scripted.”

He was surrounded by such stories. In his immediate social circle were a single mother by choice who adopted a child from Ethiopia; a lesbian couple who used one woman’s eggs while the other carried the fetus, fertilized from donor sperm; another lesbian couple co-parenting two adopted children (from Nepal and India) with a gay male couple; and a couple consisting of a woman and a transgender man, who started a family through private adoption.

He shares their tales with an engaging, gently humorous, and at times poetic style. At the same time, he also teases out the connections between individual family stories and the social systems in which they are immersed. “There is no separation between the ways we make our families and the various social hierarchies in which we all find ourselves,” he says. His goal is not a systematic study, but rather an exploration of how these hierarchies – of gender, ethnicity, race and class – may affect our family-making and are illuminated by it in turn. Often-expensive assisted reproduction, for example, “facilitates the creation of some queer families even as it reinforces the distance between haves and have-nots.”

This is not an “academic” book, however, despite Gamson’s credentials.

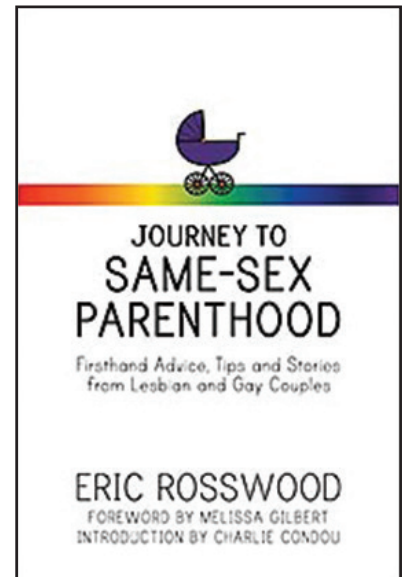


(It should not be confused with “Modern Families: Parents and Children in New Family Forms,” by Susan Golombok, also published last year and a worthwhile overview of current academic research.) Gamson places his book between what he calls “repro lit” – personal, honest accounts of starting families – and “repro crit,” often critical academic analyses of the institutional structures of family creation. The stories of the parents in his book, he says, cannot be understood outside their structural context but also cannot be understood apart from the personal, intense, creative drive that motivated them to become parents in the first place. His deft blending of the two makes his book a must-read for anyone interested in families today.

In their own words

This brings us to “Journey to Same-Sex Parenthood: Firsthand Advice, Tips and Stories from Lesbian and Gay Couples,” by Eric Rosswood (New Horizon Press: 2016) which lies more towards the “repro lit” end of the spectrum. It features stories of 19 couples (and co-parenting units of more than two) telling us in their own words about the obstacles and triumphs of forming their families. A list of legal tips and questions to ask in choosing a parenting path add to its practical, how-to feel.

We meet parents from around the U.S., as well as the U.K., Ireland and South Africa. Their conversational and candid essays are grouped by type of family formation: Open Adoption, Foster Parenting and Adopting from Foster Care, Surrogacy and Assisted Reproduction. Rosswood explains that he wanted to include all these approaches in one volume to help others who are starting their parenting journeys but



unsure which way to go. After reading through these stories, prospective parents should indeed have a better sense of what’s involved with each method and be better prepared to make their own decisions.

For each section, Rosswood provides a brief overview of what each path to parenthood involves. The section on “Open Adoption,” however, is misleading. His introduction there implies that all open adoptions begin with the birth of the child. All of the stories in that section do involve parents who adopted newborns, but the fact is, open adoptions – which allow some form of association among the adoptive parent(s), birth parent(s) and child – can occur with children adopted at any age, as well as with those adopted from foster care (whom Rosswood puts in a different section). The section would have been better titled “Infant Adoption.”

Nevertheless, many same-sex couples considering parenthood will find the firsthand stories in this book immediately useful, both for their practical tips and for the comforting sense they convey that others have been there before.

Those seeking insight on how we LGBTQ families fit into larger social systems, however, but who want something more personable than an academic study, should turn to Gamson, who gives us thoughtful proof that the personal is indeed political.



“Hyperintentional, inventive and obstinate, the families wrote their own scripts,” he says. The stories in both books help us to better understand – and to be part of – that creative process.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.

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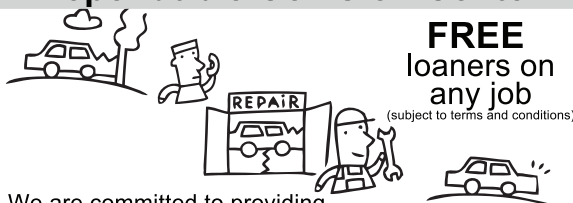
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Ann Arbor Gears Up For Film Festival With Featured Filmmaker

BY BTL STAFF

As part of AAFF 54, the Ann Arbor Film Festival's upcoming Penny Stamps Distinguished Speaker series will feature filmmaker David O'Reilly. Come hear O'Reilly speak about his past works beginning at 5:10 p.m., Thursday, March 17 at the Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor.

Irish-born and Los Angeles-based, David O'Reilly is one of the most adventuresome and innovative independent animation filmmakers working today. A darling of the festival circuit — O'Reilly's film, "Please Say Something," won the Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film at AAFF 48. O'Reilly directed "Alien Child," the unforgettably funny and touching faux-animated video game in Spike Jonze's "Her" (2013), as well as live visuals for M.I.A. at Coachella (2009) and the U2 animated music video "I'll Go Crazy If I Don't Go Crazy Tonight" (2009). He was the first guest director in Cartoon Network's 20-year history, creating the "Adventure Time" episode "A Glitch Is a Glitch."

O'Reilly is resolutely independent, moving freely among television network, feature film and music video commissions; metaphysical, otherworldly video games and interactive projects that question ideas of the self and the nature of role-playing (Mountain and Character Mirror); Tumblr games, iPhone hologram apps and Twitter-based comic strips; and virtual reality environments.

This rare opportunity to see such a renowned filmmaker comes on the



"Alien Child" (2013)

coattails of AAFF being awarded three times over from the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs. The Program for Operational and Project Support will provide \$22,500 towards general operating costs. A \$450 Minigrant will support the first known AAFF board retreat which will take place later this month. A Capital Improvements Grant of \$7,500 will enable the AAFF to obtain a new digital playback system.

The MCACA peer review process allows 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.

The Ann Arbor Film Festival now seeks to raise \$7,500 in matching funds necessary to activate the MCACA

Capital Improvements Grant.

The digital playback system occupies a crucial role in the AAFF's ability to deliver its high-quality, world-renowned programs to its community of local, regional, national and international attendees. The current system, which has been in place since the 48th Festival in 2008, is reaching its end-of-life. Used during the week of the Ann Arbor Film Festival to exhibit approximately 200 films in 40 programs at the historic Michigan Theater, it consists of two systems, one for each of the auditoriums.

Approximately half of the AAFF materials for playback exist in a format outside the realm of what the Michigan Theater is capable of handling. Additionally, the Theater is not able to expand its closed system and has clearly indicated that the AAFF must maintain its own ability to playback digital movies outside of the commercial standard DCP format.

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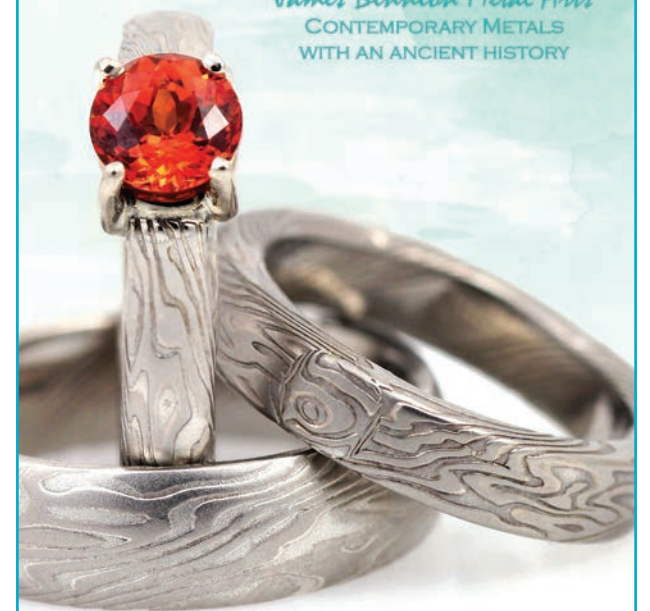
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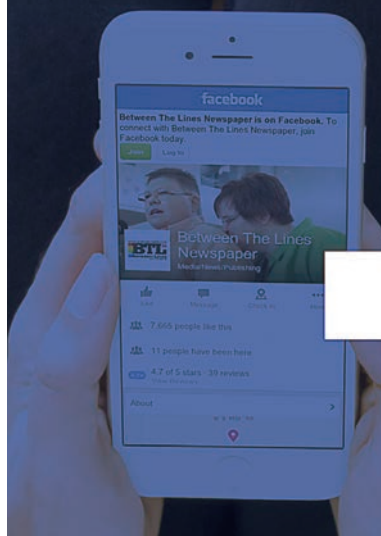
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Editor's Pick

Start planning your trip "out west" for Gilda's LaughFest, the nation's only community-wide festival of comedy, March 10-20. Featuring comedic acts such as Emmy Award winner David Cross and YouTube sensation Miranda Sings, the festival will include more than 200 free and ticketed shows with over 100 artists at more than 40 venues in Grand Rapids and Lowell during the 10 days of the festival.

Gilda's LaughFest was created by a team at Gilda's Club Grand Rapids in 2011. Designed to celebrate laughter for the health of it, LaughFest features free

and ticketed events including stand-up, improv, film, authors, community showcases and a variety of seriously funny stuff. Past LaughFest headliners have included George Lopez, Wanda Sykes, Billy Gardell, Jay Leno, Lily Tomlin, Mike Birbiglia, Margaret Cho, Betty White, Whoopi Goldberg, Rodney Carrington, Martin Short, Kevin Nealon, Wayne Brady, Joel McHale, Lewis Black and Brian Regan.

Individual tickets range from \$7-80, excluding the Signature Event, and are available through ticketmaster.com. For more information on the festival or the organizers, visit www.gildasclubgr.org.

Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, March 3

Flint Phone Bank 6 p.m. Bring a cell phone. Equality Michigan and Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.Goaffirmations.org/programs-services/community-events-activities

LGBT Chamber and Michigan Employee Resource Group Social Event 6:30 p.m. LGBT Chamber and Michigan Employee Resource Group Social Event, 2462 Riopelle, **Detroit**.

Bobby Jo Valentine 7 p.m. Free. All ages. Openly gay Christian singer. First United Methodist Church of Ferndale, 22331 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**.

Throwback Thursday 7:30 p.m. Different movie each time. Tickets: \$12. The Berman, 6600 W. Maple Road, **West Bloomfield**. 248-661-1900. www.Theberman.org

Saturday, March 5

Name Change Clinic 1 p.m. The Queer Legal Project, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.Goaffirmations.org

A Night with Janis Joplin 8 p.m. Tickets: \$35.50-79.50.

Olympia Entertainment, 2211 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 313-471-6611. www.Olympiaentertainment.com

Sunday, March 6

The Trans Day of Artivism All day event celebrating trans artists. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.Goaffirmations.org/programs-services/community-events-activities

2016 Artistry of Hair & Fashion Show 2 p.m. 2016 Artistry of Hair & Fashion Show Sunday, March 6th Experience the 2016 Artistry of Hair & Fashion Show! See exotic Hair, Fashion & Avant Garde through the eyes of Kevin Carter and his team as they prepare to compete in the Hair Olympics OMC Hairworld in Seoul, South Korea. Experience VIP - Tickets @ \$55 General Admission - Tickets \$35 Artistry of Hair Salon 248-442-9560 Brushed Beautiful, LLC 586-580-1706 Kevin Carter Artistry of Hair, 22001 Northwestern Hwy, **Southfield**. 586-580-1706. edwina@brushedbeautiful.com Website

Tuesday, March 8

Equality Knowledge Project Speaker Series 5:30 p.m. Different speaker

and presentation each time. Equality Research Center, 329 King Hall, **Ypsilanti**. 734-487-3032. equality.emu@gmail.com

Wednesday, March 9

Brackets For Good Online Tournament Starting Feb. 26, online donations to help your favorite nonprofit organization advance in Brackets For Good and get one step closer to \$10,000 can be made by visiting annarbor.bfg.org. \$1 equals 1 point. Brackets For Good, **Ann Arbor**. www.Annarbor.bfg.org

JCC of Metro Detroit Hosting Child Development Center Open House

9:30 a.m. The JCC of Metro Detroit is opening its doors and welcoming families to come and learn more about the people and programs at its Sarah and Irving Pitt Child Development Center (CDC). The open house will give families a chance to meet CDC staff and teachers. Tour the CDC facility. Learn about early childhood programs for children ages 2 months to Kindergarten. Experience first-hand CDC learning and growth activities. The Sarah and Irving Pitt Child Development Center has earned a 4-star rating from the statewide program, Great Start to Quality. This rating ensures

that Michigan's youngest children have high quality early learning experiences. Flexible scheduling allows for half-day, full-day and extended day care options. 2016 JCC Child Development Center Open House Details When March 9th and 10th from 9:30-11 a.m. Where JCC of Metro Detroit (6600 W. Maple Rd. West Bloomfield, MI 48322) Who Can Attend Anyone looking for a quality childhood developmental program that includes age appropriate educational and Judaic experiences and family involvement in a safe, warm and loving environment. More information www.jccdet.org/cdcopenhouse JCC of Metro Detroit, 6600 W. Maple Rd., **West Bloomfield**. 248-432-5582. pittcdc@jccdet.org www.jccdet.org/pittcdc

Saturday, March 12

Michigan LGBT ComedyFest 8 p.m. Tickets: \$35+. Equality Michigan, 15801 Michigan Ave., **Dearborn**. 313-537-7000. info@equalitymi.org www.Comedyfest.org

Monday, March 14

Happy Hour 4 p.m. Come join us for happy hour and Man Crush Monday. Grenadier Club, 3101 McDougall, **Detroit**. 313-910-6867.

MUSIC & MORE

Comedy

Gilda's Club "LaughFest". Multiple, Grand Rapids. March 10 - March 20. www.gildasclubgr.org

Concerts

The Fillmore Detroit "Hoodie Allen" Tickets: \$20-45. The Fillmore Detroit, 2115 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. March 4. www.Livenation.com

UMS "The Chieftains" Tickets: \$10-\$60. Hill Auditorium, 825 North University Avenue, **Ann Arbor**. 8 p.m. March 5. 734-764-2538. <http://ums.org/performance/the-chieftains/>

Dance

Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit "Dance to the Music" Tickets: \$15-24. The Music Hall Center for Performing

See Happenings, page 25

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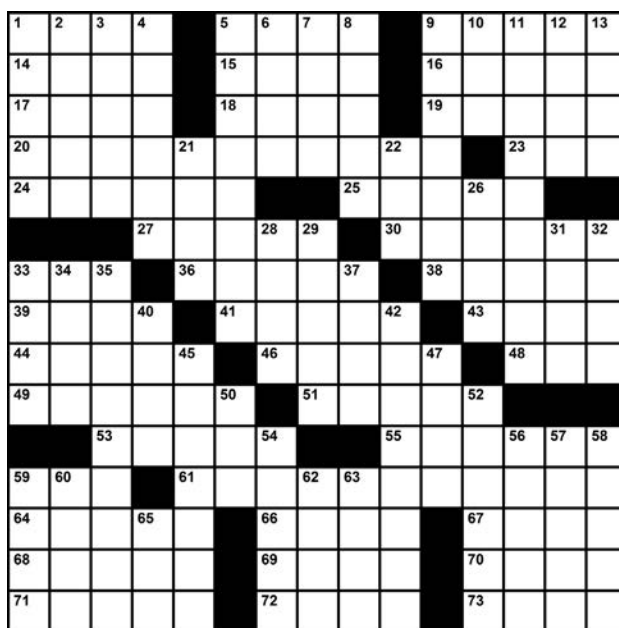
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Q Puzzle



Gay Things You Do Playing Football

Across

- 1 "The Unicorn" author Murdoch
5 Famed Loch
9 Sits for 63-Across
14 "Queen of Country" McEntire
15 Prefix with potent
16 Give the slip to
17 Give relief to a thief
18 One of Bernstein's strings
19 Beat off
- 20 He reaches between the center's legs
23 Aunt in a Disney film
24 Merchant of films
25 Less likely to come out
27 Computer command
30 Make possible
33 Christopher, to Madonna
36 Former NFL player Tuaoilo
38 Seat at the Stonewall Inn
39 Where boxers are visible
41 Sound from guitarist

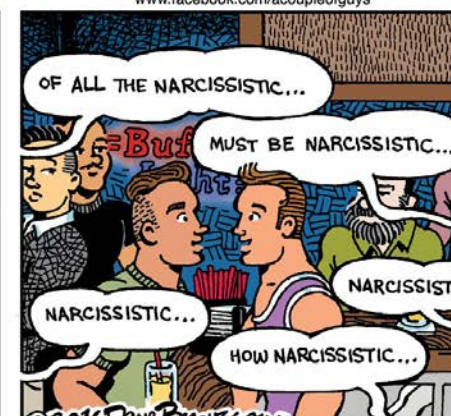
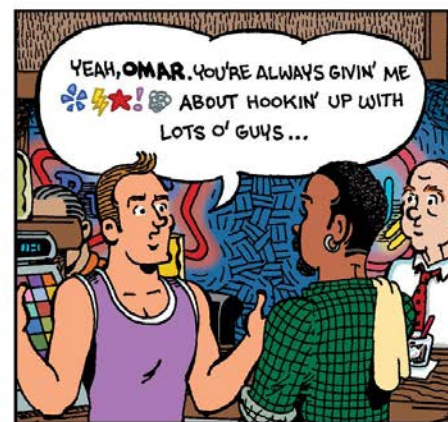
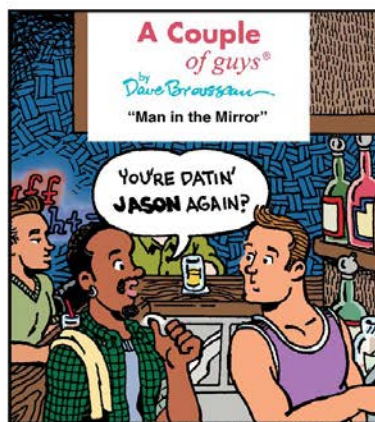
- Townsend
43 Engage in some watersports
44 One who gets screwed by an agent?
46 Triangle-shaped peninsula
48 "___ Miz"
49 "Gulliver's Travels" brutes
51 Philippines island
53 The Gay Nineties, for example
55 Alexander conquered it
59 "Gone With the Wind" extra
61 Where football players get naked together
64 Video category for porn
66 Royal threesome
67 Go down
68 Release from bondage
69 "How queer!"
70 Sea eagle
71 "See ya"
72 Actor Auberjonois
73 Cannon of Hollywood

Down

- 1 Persian Gulf figure
2 [ELK] - [K] + [LEND] - [D]
3 Erection supporter
4 Governor of 55-Across
5 Stein, for one
6 Arab head
7 Stuck-up sort
8 Nancy's older son, on "Weeds"
9 Tony of Hollywood
10 Cheer for Lorca
11 Winners of this wear matching rings

- 12 Rosie O'Donnell's "Exit to ___"
13 Ward of "Once and Again"
21 Wear down
22 "Evita" narrator
26 Chows down
28 Randy Shilts' area
29 Chase behind
31 Dance legend Fuller
32 Shade trees
33 Noise of an ass
34 Costa ___
35 Where football players pat each other
37 Shakespeare's Hathaway
40 Sticky stuff
42 A pink triangle symbolizes this
45 Alarm cock?
47 Cicero's way
50 U. of San Francisco, e.g.
52 Wore away
54 Score for Billy Bean
56 "Pardon me"
57 "___ roll!"
58 Navratilova's winter home
59 Male actor named Julia
60 John Travolta's "Hairspray" role
62 Hourly pay
63 Actor Richard
65 Hwy. to the Hamptons

Find solution to this puzzle at www.pridesource.com





Editor's Pick

Hip-hop artist Hoodie Allen will play the Fillmore Detroit with Figure and Bear Grillz this week. The New York-based artist is known for his mixtapes and expert music sampling. Bear Grillz will bring their Electronic Dance Music (EDM) to the stage, as will Figure, known for his DJing of the sounds.

The artist, who has publicly stated he "wholeheartedly" supports the LGBT community, began his career as part of the duo Steve

Markowitz and Obey City (he was Markowitz). He created the stage name of Hoodie Allen based in part off of his childhood nickname of "Hoodie" and a play off of Woody Allen's name.

The all ages show will be March 4. Doors are 7 p.m. Tickets are \$20-45. Visit <http://concerts.livenation.com/event/08004F6823073B0A> for tickets and more information.

▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 22

Arts, 350 Madison St., Detroit. March 4 - March 6. 313-872-6910. mosaicdetroit.org/our-season/singers/

Film & Video

Michigan Theater
"CineManga Film Series"
Different anime or Japanese

film each Wednesday night. State Theater, 233 State St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 13 - April 27. 734-668-8397. www.michtheater.org

Shows

UMS "Nufonia Must Fall"
Tickets: \$24-\$54. Power Center, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. March 11 - March 12. 734-764-2538. <http://ums.org/multiperformance/>

nufonia-must-fall/

THEATER

Butler Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through March 13. 313-868-1347.

The Odd Couple Tickets: \$19-43. The Purple Rose Theatre, Purple Rose Theatre, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through March 30. 734-433-7673. www.Purplerosetheatre.org

Civic/Community Theater

A2CT Presents Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead
Ann Arbor Civic Theatre presents Tom Stoppard's tale of Hamlet's hapless duo, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, directed by David Widmayer, March 10-13, 2016, at the University of Michigan's Arthur Miller Theatre. Shows 3/10 @ 7:30 pm, 3/11 - 3/12 @ 8 pm, 3/13 @ 2 pm. Ticket prices \$17 on 3/10, 3/11-3/13 adults \$22, \$20 for seniors, students all shows \$11. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre, Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin Ave, Ann Arbor. March 10 - March 13. 734-971-2228. www.a2ct.org/shows/rosencrantz-and-guildenstern-are-dead

Auditions for Disney's The Jungle Book Free. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre, A2CT Studio Theatre, 322 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor. March 1 - March 3. 734-971-2228. www.A2ct.org/junior-theatre/junior-theatre-auditions

College/University Theater

Love's Labour's Lost By William Shakespeare. Hilberry, Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through March 13. 313-577-2972. www.Hilberry.com

Low Hanging Fruit The Theatre Company of University of Detroit Mercy and Matrix Theatre Company, The Marlene Boll Theatre, Boll Family Y.M.C.A., Detroit. March 3 - March 20. www.TheTheatreCo.com

Professional

agua de luna (psalms for the rouge) 18+. Matrix Theatre, Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley, Detroit. Through March 20. 313-967-0999. www.Matrixtheatre.org

ART 'N' AROUND

Cranbrook Art Museum
"Empire by Andy Warhol" The presentation at Cranbrook Art Museum is shown in relation to "Lou Reed, Metal

Machine Trio: The Creation of the Universe." Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Dec. 1 - March 13. 877-462-7262. www.Cranbrookart.edu

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

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"From Heart to Hand: African American Quilts from the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts" Throughout history, quilts have held an important and cherished place in our culture, particularly in the American South. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 24 - April 10. 810-234-1695. www.Flintarts.org

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ANNOUNCEMENTS - COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Paul Rudd and Steve Coogan move into 'Ideal Home'

A long time ago, in the very bad old days, Richard Burton and Rex Harrison portrayed a dimly unhappy gay couple in a wretched little movie called "Staircase" (watch on TCM some day if you dare). One problem: their characters were unhappy mostly because they were gay. A neat little trick to play on gay audiences, don't you think? Well, we've come a long way, and now we get to be unhappy for all the same reasons heterosexuals enjoy, which seems to be the plot of "An Ideal Home," the new film from queer director Andrew Fleming (who worked with Coogan before on "Hamlet 2"). The story involves Paul Rudd and Steve Coogan as a married couple whose relationship is on the rocks. The situation is further complicated when Coogan's surprise grandchild shows up at their door. Wild – and somewhat jaded – guess: the adorable child reminds them what family is really about. Whatever the typical tropes may be, we love Coogan and Rudd and, so, yeah, we're in.



Paul Rudd. Photo: KathClick

weird, public spectacles like that on a regular basis, especially ones where lots of celebs get pranked. We need all of them we can get.

Guy Pearce, still flaming

More than 20 years have passed since Guy Pearce appeared on screen as a larger-than-life drag queen in "The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of The Desert." Now, that film's writer-director, Stephan Elliott, has recruited Pearce for another round of sexual nonconformity. Their upcoming film together, also written and directed by Elliott, is titled "Flammable Children," and it co-stars Radha Mitchell. Telling the story of three families on the beaches of Australia in the mid-1970s, the comedy explores the sexual revolution of that era and the changes it effects on everyone. There's also a 200-ton whale involved in the story, but we're not sure what role it plays or if it's a speaking part. If none of that sounds especially "Priscilla"-esque, then we have two words for you: Lizzy Gardiner. She's the Academy Award-winning costume designer responsible for the "Priscilla" outfits. You'll want to see this movie for her work, if nothing else. Cameras roll early this fall, the beginning of Australia's summer.

James Franco, Kristen Stewart and Helena Bonham Carter resurrect 'JT Leroy'

JT Leroy is back again. First there was a documentary, then another documentary, and now a narrative feature that has attracted the attention of James Franco, Kristen Stewart and Helena Bonham Carter. Who's JT Leroy, you ask? OK, you only ask if you don't read books, ever, but that's fine, no judgments here. JT Leroy was actually nobody, a staggeringly far-reaching literary hoax sensation of the early '00s, one concocted by a female author posing as a teenage literary wunderkind who identified as transgender. Novels were written, literary acclaim followed, public appearances were made by a young woman in a wig and sunglasses, celebrities lined up to sing Leroy's praises, a few even participated in the lie. And then it all came to a screeching halt when the truth was revealed. Fascinating, right? Justin Kelly, who has already directed Franco in the ex-gay biopic "I Am Michael," is at the helm of this one. It's early days yet, and no ink has met a contract, but here's hoping it all comes to pass. They just don't make cool,

'I Love Dick' is coming

When you're hot, you're hot, and Jill Soloway is hot. On the strength of the critical and audience love of "Transparent" (those awards don't hurt, either), Amazon has ordered a second pilot from the show's creator. It's called "I Love Dick," but it's probably not exactly what you have in mind. The comedy comes from playwright Sarah Gubbins, based on Chris Kraus' 1997 novel, set in the rural art community of Marfa in Southwest Texas, and the story revolves around an unhappily married couple who become mutually obsessed with a difficult, magnetic professor named Dick. Charting the dissolution of the marriage, it will be told from various points of view, much like Showtime's "The Affair," or, you know, "Rashomon." Pilots don't necessarily become series, but this one seems a pretty safe bet for Amazon's biggest success story. Step up your game, network TV, they're killing it out there.

Romeo San Vicente will keep this space free for you to write your own "I Love Dick" joke. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

Hello? I've got a question.

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