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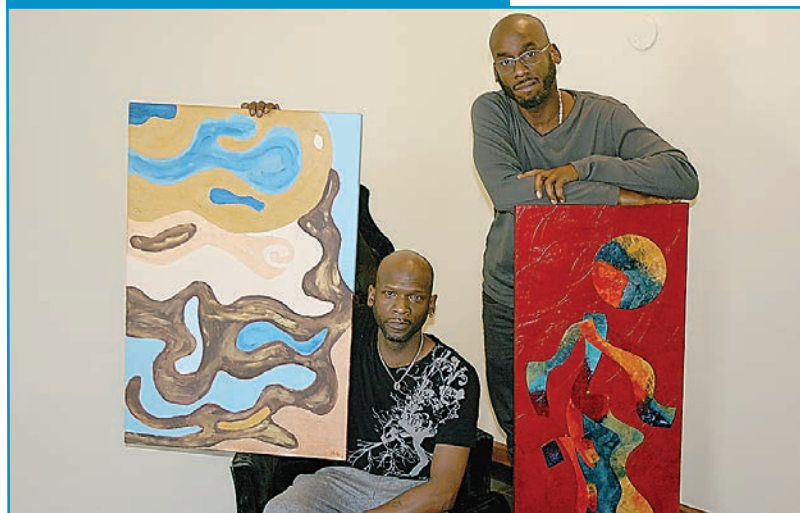
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NEWS

Pugh Extradited, Headed Home to Face Molestation Charges

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

NEWYORK - Former Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh appeared in court last Thursday and, waiving extradition, was ordered back to Detroit to face criminal sexual conduct charges. The charges stem from what authorities are calling an inappropriate relationship Pugh had with a member of the Mosaic Youth Theatre who met Pugh when the group appeared on the weekend morning show Pugh was hosting for Fox 2.

The accuser, who authorities are not naming, is now 27 years old. He says he spoke to Pugh about an internship and the two exchanged numbers. Though an internship never materialized, Pugh did have the young man over to his apartment several times over the next few months where authorities are saying an improper relationship between the two occurred. The accuser was at the time 14 and 15 years old.

Pugh was arrested without incident at his apartment in Harlem last month. Last week stunning video of a weary looking Pugh materialized on the internet showing him being led from a New York court room in shackles.

No arraignment date has been set for Pugh in Detroit at this time and the Wayne County

Prosecutor's Office sent out a statement saying they were unsure exactly when he would arrive back in Michigan. A private security company has been hired to transport Pugh back to his home state.

"We will be contacted by authorities when he is available for video arraignment and a release will be sent out," the statement from the Prosecutor's Office read.

Though Pugh was ordered to pay a whopping \$250,000 after a civil trial wherein his first accuser, Khody Sanford, said Pugh pressured him into making an X-rated video in exchange for pay, the newest charges leveled against the former Fox 2 reporter and anchor are far more damning and carry far greater consequences. Pugh is charged with six counts of criminal sexual conduct. Three of those counts are in the first degree, which carry life sentences. The last three are third degree charges, which carry a prison term of up to 15 years.

At press time Pugh had just been arraigned in Detroit's 36th District Court. Pugh entered a plea of not guilty. District Magistrate Millicent Sherman set bond at \$500,000 despite requests from the prosecution that bail be denied. Pugh's next court appearance will be a probable cause hearing set for July 19.

Equitable Parenthood Still Penalizing LGBT Parents

BY AJ TRAGER

DETROIT - A unanimous vote July 5 by the Michigan Court of Appeals found that a lesbian co-parent lacked standing to seek parenting time or custody rights over the biological child of her ex-girlfriend who she helped raise.

The court reversed a decision by the Washtenaw Circuit Court and held that the co-parent was a "third party" and didn't fit the standing requirements of the Michigan Child Custody Act.

Michelle Lake and Kerri Putnam were a cohabiting couple from 2001 to 2014. After Putnam was artificially inseminated they raised the child together for five years until their breakup in 2014, after which Putnam refused Lake any parenting time with the child she helped raise.

Due to Michigan law at the time, Putnam and Lake were unable to marry in the state and did not seek marriage elsewhere. As a result, Lake was rendered a legal stranger and fought to gain parenting rights.

The Michigan equitable parenthood doctrine allows non-biological parents to petition for custody and visitation when they have a parenting relationship with a child. Lower courts in the state have found that the doctrine can exist only when the non-biological parent is legally married to the biological parent.

"While we acknowledge that the issue

presented in this case is complex, we simply do not believe it is within courts' discretion to retroactively transform an unmarried couples' past relationship into marriage for custody proceedings in light of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Obergefell v Hodges, at the request of one party," Judge Colleen A. O'Brien wrote for the court. "Stated differently, it is, in our view, improper for a court to impose, several years later, a marriage upon a same-sex unmarried couple simply because one party desires that we do so."

Prior to the marriage ruling last year, lesbian and gay couples could not legally co-adopt children because Michigan law requires the parties be married. The state neither granted in-state nor recognized out-of-state same-sex marriages. Once the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage, LGBT couples could legally co-adopt.

"What I find so disheartening is that in the opinion there isn't a single mention of the child," Jay Kaplan, LGBT special projects attorney for the ACLU of Michigan said. "The loser in all of this is the little boy."

"We need legislation. We need a law that spells out equitable parenthood and doesn't tie it to the marriage status and talks about the bond that is fostered between the co-parent and the child, that is encouraged by the other legal parent and is in the best interest of the child. We need a law that makes that clear," Kaplan said.



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AG Schuette Joins 10 State Anti-LGBT Lawsuit

Snyder Declines to Participate

BY AJ TRAGER

LANSING – Attorney General Bill Schuette, long believed to be a Republican candidate for governor in 2018, joined a coalition of 10 states July 8 fighting the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice's recent federal directive extending protections to LGBT youth in schools.

The lawsuit, filed by Nebraska Attorney General Douglas Peterson and joined by Arkansas, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota and Wyoming, requests that the federal guidance is unlawful and seeks permanent injunction prohibiting the federal government from implementation or enforcement.

Anna Heaton, spokesperson for Gov. Rick Snyder, said the State of Michigan itself is not a party to the lawsuit and that Snyder has declined to participate. Schuette sued for the "people" of Michigan when Snyder did not bless the suit on the state's behalf. "Our time and attention is focused elsewhere right now," Heaton said.

This is the latest in a series of clashes between Snyder and Schuette.

"The Obama administration's unilateral directive on education policy and Title IX funding is yet another example of federal overreach," Schuette said in a statement. "The manner in which this directive was made ignored the essential role of parents in making decisions about their children, omitted participation of local schools, violated the Administrative Procedures Act and bypassed Congress' constitutional responsibilities."

On May 13 the federal government issued an LGBT guidance to school districts requiring them to allow students to use restrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender identity; allow students to participate in sex-segregated activities and provide access to sex-segregated facilities consistent with their gender identity; and protect students' privacy related to their transgender status.

According to the "Dear colleague" letter sent to school districts in the spring, the Department of Education maintains that requiring trans students to use the facilities that align with their gender assigned at birth violates the Family Educational Rights and

See Schuette, page 14

Kickstarter Campaign Raises Over \$11K to Renovate New LGBT Detroit Building

Agency bills future headquarters as a 'safe, brave space'

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

DETROIT – It's a milestone for Detroit's black LGBT community. LGBT Detroit recently purchased a building of its own on Greenfield Road on the city's west side. The 3,100 square foot building is nearly three times the size of the space the agency currently rents on Burroughs Street in midtown. The purchase makes LGBT Detroit one of the first black LGBT non-profits in the country to operate within its own space.

"We're the first in this kind of work," said Curtis Lipscomb, executive director of LGBT Detroit.

"We're the first that is not a health agency or a faith organization [to own our own building]. I'm very proud of that. We already lead with Hotter Than July being the second oldest black gay pride celebration in the nation. People look favorably upon what we have to offer and I'm very grateful for that. It's something we can't take lightly."

Though Lipscomb estimates the purchase and renovation of the new space will cost approximately \$500,000, LGBT Detroit just completed a Kickstarter campaign for \$10,000 and actually raised over \$1,000 more than they had sought.

"There are some immediate priorities that must be met in order for us to be compliant and to have a safe space for anyone to walk into," Lipscomb explained. "The Kickstarter campaign helps handle those issues immediately. However, as we look forward to really making this facility optimal we'll be looking for additional support to transform this indoor/outdoor space so it's enjoyable for all the people we serve."

As part of the Kickstarter campaign, and on social media, LGBT Detroit repeatedly referred to the new building as a "safe, brave space."

"That's a hashtag," said Lipscomb. "We thought about some kind of hashtag, a call to action, a rally call that will get people to understand immediately our goal. So it was really simple when we thought about it. A 'safe, brave space' is really needed to organize around our mission, our goals and our aims. For those of us who are LGBT people we



"I really love it because it gives us a safe place for just us. We've been working on this for close to 15 years."

– Antonio Johnson-Seals, LGBT Detroit's board president.

are oppressed, particularly in the state of Michigan, where we are not safe around so many issues. We need a space to be safe to really organize around our issues. And it's brave because so many people feel that you can't organize in Detroit. We've been doing it for so many years in our work ... we are bravely moving challenges out of the way and knocking down barriers and confronting obstacles and looking at our opponents and saying, 'listen, we want to move collectively forward.' So you have to be brave to do all of that."

Lipscomb said the new building will provide the agency with financial flexibility.

"We are currently housed in midtown Detroit and that has diminished a lot of flexibility to provide services," he said. "With the rising costs of what has happened

in midtown and downtown it has truly hindered us. So the new space will truly give us flexibility. That might not be the first thing that someone who comes to the center sees but that's the first thing that the board sees.

"We can provide multiple spaces indoors and outdoors and provide an opportunity for those coming in to seek more services," Lipscomb continued.

Others at the agency shared Lipscomb's enthusiasm for the new space.

"I really love it because it gives us a safe place for just us," said Antonio Johnson-Seals, LGBT Detroit's board president. "We've been working on this for close to 15 years."

Johnson said the building will be multi-purpose.

"It provides a space not just for us, but also the community at large to have meetings and come together as one, to discuss openly what's going on in Detroit."

LGBT Detroit Youth Advisory Board Member Rhiannon Chester said the purchase of the new building is huge.

"I think that LGBT Detroit getting its own building is monumental," Chester said. "Because it's our building we'll be able to openly express ourselves and be very visible in the community. We want to show that the LGBT community is a part of the resurgence and rebuilding of Detroit."

The agency hopes to move into their new building in early fall. A ribbon cutting ceremony will take place then.

Two More Michigan Cities Pass Nondiscrimination Ordinances

BY AJ TRAGER

In the last week two cities in the state have added LGBT protections to their nondiscrimination ordinances.

Howell and Portage become the 39th and 40th city to step up and protect their LGBT residents and visitors by adding full protections for LGBT individuals.

A growing list of 45 local government agencies have adopted nondiscrimination ordinances since East Lansing adopted its ordinance in 1972. Of the 45 ordinances passed in the state, five are not comprehensive and exclude either gender identity and expression or only extend protections to housing and public accommodations and don't include employment protections.

Howell

"Howell and Portage are to be commended for standing up for equality and fairness and against discrimination," said Equality Michigan Executive Director Stephanie White. "These cities recognize that building communities in Michigan that are inclusive and welcoming to all is not only the right thing to do, but also an economic imperative for our state."

Howell unanimously passed its ordinance June 25. According to the Livingston Daily, Councilman Steve Manor told the council that the city's business community has reacted in strong favor of the ordinance. Manor and fellow councilman Robert Ellis were tasked with reaching out to employers and landlords.

The Howell ordinance is based on the Battle Creek ordinance enacted three years ago and is designed to supplement federal anti-discrimination law.

Portage

The Portage City Council adopted its nondiscrimination ordinance June 28 following a 6-1 vote that would extend protections in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations. Forty people spoke in the lengthy City Council meeting that garnered over 175 attendees.

"Portage chose to do the right thing last night by ensuring Portage is a safe place to work, live, and build community for all its residents," said Jay Maddock, executive director of the KGLRC. "All hard-working people in our state, including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, should have the chance to earn a living and provide for themselves and their families. Michigan should be helping people keep their jobs and

homes, not firing them because of who they love or evicting them because of their gender identity."

Supporters of the measure said that it is needed because LGBT individuals deserve the same civil rights as their heterosexual counterparts and should have the same protection as other communities including the city of Kalamazoo and Oshtemo Twp.

"All of the Michigan local ordinances were looked at to model our ordinance," Councilman Terry Urban told BTL weeks before the vote. "It doesn't match completely any of them because of evolving definitions of transgender and other things, but we've tried to take the best parts and evolving language and situations to come up with the best ordinance."

The ordinance was proposed by Urban to the Human Services Board months ago, but told MLive that he's "18 years too late. That's how long I've been sitting here (as a council member)."

The Portage nondiscrimination ordinance received strong support from the area's largest employers, the Kellogg Co. and Pfizer Inc.

The Michigan legislature has yet to amend the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, the state's nondiscrimination act that offers protections in housing, employment and public accommodations for an individuals age, weight, race, disability status ect. but does not extend protections for sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Pretty much every year representatives in the house and senate issue bills to amend ELCRA but the legislature has yet to take it to a vote.

"Our leaders in Lansing should look to the example being set by their local government colleagues and business leaders across Michigan," urged White. "Action on Elliott-Larsen is long overdue."

Two million Michiganders are now protected by local nondiscrimination ordinances, but millions remain unprotected. The adoption of ordinances by Howell and Portage is a stark reminder of state inaction on legislation to amend the ELCRA to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

Comprehensive List of Michigan Communities with Nondiscrimination Ordinances

Courtesy of Equality Michigan. Arranged alphabetically and not chronologically by date issued.

1. Canton Township
2. City of Adrian
3. City of Albion
4. City of Ann Arbor
5. City of Battle Creek

See Michigan Cities, page 14

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State Sen. Rick Jones Breaks with Caucus, Co-Sponsors Hate Crimes Amendment

Bill Would Add Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity to Ethnic Intimidation Act

BY TODD HEYWOOD

In the month since the Orlando massacre, much has changed for the LGBT community. Spaces once thought safe, have suddenly become guarded by men wearing side arms. Police have stepped up patrols around the bars where the community converges for recreation, social connection and safety.

It has also led to a leading state Republican senator causing a “seismic” shift in Michigan’s political landscape

State Sen. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge) has become the lead co-sponsor – along with Warren Democrat Steve Bieda – to amend the 1988 Ethnic Intimidation Act law to include sexual orientation and gender identity with SB 1035. Republican Sen. Tory Rocca of Sterling Heights and Meridian Township Democratic Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr., have also signed onto SB 1035 as sponsors, according to Bieda. Jones has been in the legislature since 2004, and has previously voted “pass” on hate crimes legislation – essentially an abstention.

But on June 12, the former Eaton County Sheriff had to face up to reality: members of the LGBT community are the targets of hate violence. This realization hit him as he watched the horror of the Orlando massacre in a gay nightclub unfold on television. He even attended an impromptu event to honor the dead of Orlando on the steps of the Capitol that evening – one hosted by the Lansing Association for Human Rights, an LGBT rights organization.

Two weeks later, the violence many in the LGBT community experience came to his front door. Two men were sentenced by Ingham County Circuit Court Judge Rosemarie Aqualina to 17 to 55 years for a series of hook-up robberies targeting gay men in the county. During their spree, the men bound – with ropes or handcuffs – at least two victims, and beat them. Then stole the men’s electronics. They met the men through Craigslist by posing as gay men interested in a sexual liaison.

“I have not been real supportive of adding more things to the law in the past because I didn’t feel there was a big problem,” he said during an interview at a Grand Ledge eatery where he meets with seniors every weekday morning. “The shock of what happened in Orlando, and then to find out here in mid-



State Sen. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge) listens as the LGBT community mourned the loss of lives in Orlando June 12. He joined the crowd of over 100 people at the steps of the Capitol. BTL photo: Todd Heywood

Michigan something similar happening – a hatred – really made me think about this. And I’m sold. I’m sold on adding this to a hate crime definition.”

Jones is not alone in failing to see anti-gay violence as a problem until now. Nathan Triplett, political director at Equality Michigan, said it is not surprising Jones was unaware of the problems. He said trying to educate the media and lawmakers about bias crimes has been a “struggle.”

The Movement Advancement Project reports that 17 states and the District of Columbia have hate crimes laws which cover both sexual orientation and gender identity. Another 13 states have laws which only cover sexual orientation. Michigan is in neither category as the current law only criminalizes targeting based on a “person’s race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.”

Interestingly however, despite their not being a law to criminalize hate crimes targeting people in other at risk populations, Michigan State Police are required by law to compile an annual report of bias related crimes in the state of Michigan. Contained in those reports are local law enforcement reports on anti-gay bias. The reporting law still does not cover anti-trans bias crimes.

In 2014, the MSP report found that 60 bias

“The shock of what happened in Orlando, and then to find out here in mid-Michigan something similar happening – a hatred – really made me think about this. And I’m sold. I’m sold on adding this to a hate crime definition.”

- State Sen. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge)

crimes reported to the department were anti-gay. That was out of 532 victims and 441 incidents. In 2015, the number of victims and incidents had dropped (399 incidents and 495 victims). The MSP reports that 12 percent of the cases in 2015 were bias crimes motivated by anti-gay bias – or 61 cases.

But those numbers could be off. For example, police reports from the Lansing Police Department obtained in late June related to the Craigslist predators showed LPD officials had not identified the crimes as bias motivated. This was despite an admission by the perpetrators they were targeting gay men because they were “sick” and “not likely to

report it to the police.” This changed on June 23 when it was brought to the LPD’s attention, a full six months after the incident.

“This report is still within the window to send updated information to the State of Michigan, so it will not be underreported,” wrote Lansing Police Chief Michael Yankowski in a June 23 email. “We have made the necessary adjustments to the report. However, you are correct and it should have been updated back on 11/30/2015.”

Yankowski said determining bias motivation often takes time and investigation and initial reports of crimes may not be identified as bias related until further investigation. The Michigan Incident Crime Reporting requires bias motivation be determined by “sufficient objective facts” that would “lead a reasonable and prudent person to conclude the offender’s actions were motivated, in whole or in part, by bias.”

The original Ethnic Intimidation legislation, passed in 1988, did include sexual orientation but it was removed before the final vote. In 1998, a decade later, and in the shadow of a national debate over the brutal beating death and robbery of Wyoming college student Matthew Shepard, the Michigan legislature came very close to passing legislation which would have added sexual orientation to the law. It passed the House, but died in the state Senate.

Similar legislation was taken up and considered in the House in 2008, and while it moved out of the House Judiciary Committee, it did not move in the House.

This is the first time the legislation has a potential to move in the Senate since that 1998 session. Political observers say this is in large part because Jones has broken from his caucus.

“There’s no question Sen. Jones support advances a strategy to move this forward,” said Triplett.

For his part, Jones says his move could cost him politically in the future. But he is doing it because it is the right thing to do.

The legislation – SB 1035 – won’t be officially introduced for Senate consideration until lawmakers return to session on September after their summer recess. Once it is read into the record, it is formally introduced and is then referred to a committee. This bill will be referred to the Judiciary Committee and will see a hearing sometime after the referral.

Beaten and Robbed

'I was a hate-crime victim'

BY TODD HEYWOOD

"This is how I'm going to die."

That was all I could think as I lay face down, my hands cuffed behind my back while the two men rained blows down on the back and side of my head. While one of them kept me face down on the corner of my bed, the other ransacked my apartment, stealing laptops, my digital audio recorder, a television and cameras. If it was electronic, it was taken. Also stolen, thousands of dollars worth of HIV medications.

When the ransacking ended, I was pushed into the kitchen, ordered to kneel. I don't know why, but my "guard" stepped outside to talk to his conspirator. As they did — my hands still secured behind my back by police-issue handcuffs — I dashed to the door, slamming it shut. Then I turned my back to the door and fumbled with the deadbolt until it was locked.

I looked out a window into the parking lot. I could see the two assailants. They look confused, then they jumped into their getaway

Like millions of Americans, I arranged a hookup online. Like thousands of gay Americans, I became a hookup victim.

van and left.

Like millions of Americans, I arranged a hookup online. Like thousands of gay Americans, I became a hookup victim.

In late November, a week after the attack, both men were arrested. In late June, they were sentenced to 17 to 55 years in prison after accepting a plea deal involving multiple criminal actions. In my case, they were charged with unarmed robbery, unlawful imprisonment and conspiracy to commit unarmed robbery and unlawful imprisonment. For these alone they could have faced as much as 60 years in prison.

But I was not the only victim. A Lansing Township man was bound, beaten, threatened with a knife and his belongings stolen from his home on Nov. 28, five days after my assault. The two men faced armed robbery and conspiracy to commit armed robbery charges in that case, both life offenses.

According to the Lansing Police Department report on my attack, Adrian James Tupper and Aaron Christopher Spyker would tell Lansing Police Detective Joel Johnson that they targeted gay men because such men were "sick" and "they would not report it to police."

I knew as it happened that I was a hate-crime victim. Police labeled it as such six months later, after the two were sentenced.

To some, meeting complete strangers from the Internet may seem reckless, but this is part of gay and straight dating in 2016. There are digital platforms for those seeking relationships — whether one-time hookups or marriage — targeting every imaginable demographic in America. The Internet has become a communal meeting space — a giant bar, if you will.

As a reporter I have covered antigay crimes for nearly three decades. They included the hookup murder in 1996 of Lansing State Journal sportswriter Bob Gross, who had met a man at a Michigan Avenue bar and was subsequently stabbed to death and his body set on fire, or the execution style murder of Alden Judge in Lansing in 1999.

As a result, I am particularly aware of the risk in meeting strangers. That's why I got pictures of my assailants' faces and a cell phone number. That's why I talked to them on the phone. That's why there was an email trail.

And it's the reason that within three days of my attack I had identified both assailants through a photo lineup. My photos were key

in the police work that went into identifying them. The cell-phone number? It was used to tie my attack to the one in Lansing Township.

Violent predators are stalking Internet sites, using a variety of ploys to connect with — and harm — their victims. Just as in real life. Sometimes the attacker pretends to be gay, to lure a victim in order to rob him, as happened with me. Sometimes the criminal pretends to have something for sale or an interest in purchasing something from the victim.

How extensive are Internet-related crimes like these in America is unclear. No law enforcement agency, local, state or federal, tracks them. Law Street Media, a news website aimed at millennials, reported that 58 prosecuted murders from 2009 to 2014 involved victims contacted through Craigslist.

Sue Yacka, the communications director for the New York City Anti-Violence Project, told me it documented 27 "pick-up" crimes last year involving the Internet in NYC alone. That was nearly double what the agency documented in 2014, which was 15 incidents.

"I think the low number reflects a reluctance to report," she told me by email. "Or when reporting hate violence, folks don't always divulge how they met their attacker(s)."

See Beaten, page 14



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A Parade to Affirm 49 Times

Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

CHICAGO: This is my tenth trip to the Windy City to take part in its Annual Pride Parade gathering. Since I first started to visit the city in 1959, I've seen its LGBT rainbow community change, gradually move north, and struggle for full human rights recognition.

Chicago is my Second City, a home away from home, with intense memories of the promiscuous Sexual Revolution 70s and its horrific aftermath - the AIDS epidemic years.

Today the temperature is 90. The four-mile route along street arteries, Halstead, Broadway, Belmont, Diversey is lined with an estimated one million celebrants.

Celebrants is not an exact description. Yes, it's a celebration -- the city's 47th parade since 1970 -- of LGBT rainbow pride. But it's also a display of heart-touching sympathy for the 49 victims who were brutally murdered two weeks earlier, miles, miles away in Florida.

There helpless patrons, dancers, bystanders were trapped -- wounded -- terrorized -- at Orlando's Pulse during the gay club's Saturday Hispanic Night gathering. Ninety percent of attendees were Latino. Twenty-three were Puerto Rican.

I've arrived early by cab -- \$20 ride with many traffic bottlenecks -- about an hour before the parade's noon kickoff. Because of closed-off streets, I have several blocks to walk to the Halstead \$10 million LGBT Center, offering, I hope, an ideal vantage spot for watching the three-hour-long festivities. (165 registered entries. Down from last year's 215.)

Because of the intense heat, even for a Chicago morning, and a troublesome knee, I take my time, moving leisurely among the assembling marchers, arriving floats, rainbow flag and souvenir vendors, affirming church clergy and congregants, and see many, many enlarged photos of the murdered Pulse victims.

There is understandably a large Hispanic presence visible. We Are Orlando t-shirts are worn by dozens of participants, both Hispanic and non-Hispanic.

There is also a very visible police presence. Cops on foot. Cops on bikes. Cops in squad cars. Cops informally chatting with parade participants. Present are 160 off-duty officers. Up from 90 the year before.

(Open alcohol containers are prohibited. Bags are checked. Bars along the route are responsible for customers who wander reveling outside. Violators are subject to \$1000 fines.)

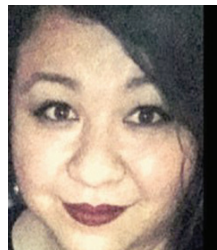
I take many iPhone pictures of Asian American gays in gold traditional dragon embellished costumes; parents who have brought children happily waving rainbow flags; softly revving dykes on bikes; Gold Coast drag queens; poster carrying supporters of election candidates; leather dudes; major TV station floats and interviewing staff with microphones.

it occurs to me: thousands and thousands are also using their Smart Phones to record this parade 2016. Here in Chicago. In New York. In San Francisco. In other cities and small towns as well. Perhaps shared images will create awareness, provoke changes for the better for LGBT persons.

As I expected, the Halstead LGBT Center is triple-line-crowded outside. It's rooftop alive with full capacity, banner waving celebrants. As silent marchers carrying 49 selfie Never Forget! portraits of once-happy, once-young, once-carefree, LGBT murder victims . . .

I bow my head, touch my heart and affirm that I too am Orlando . . .

Charles@pridesource.com



After Orlando

BY JENNY SUIDAN

Just before Pride in 2004, I received a phone call from Between The Lines, telling me that I had been selected as a rising star for being an ally to the LGBT community. I remember this day, because I was trying to schedule my interview over the sounds of friends one room over playing drinking games. I was 19 and on my college summer break. The next day, I was answering a list of questions, and the last, "what made you become an ally?" stuck with me because it always seemed strange to be asked. What made me become an ally? At the time, I said it was my obligation -- as a woman, as biracial woman, if this was any other time in history, it would be my fight and I would want someone from the majority to help me fight for my rights. Given this moment in time, where I find myself in the majority, I have always felt obligated to fight. Staying on the sidelines was never an option.

I've grown up from this time and generally this sentiment remains true. I think what has always drawn me to the LGBTQ community has been the premium in the community to become self-aware, of learning to love yourself and to be and live your own truth. The community is full of love and acceptance and I have never felt anything less than that, always embraced fully (and usually literally) with wide open arms.

What happened in Orlando has absolutely shattered my heart. For anyone who else who has "grown up in a gay bar" as a friend once told me can attest, gay bars are so much more than a club - which is no surprise to

Viewpoint

It is the task of our elected leaders to hear the voices of the many Americans who support common sense gun reform. It is time for our elected leaders to work for progress, rather than moving our country backwards fighting ignorant battles based on some misunderstanding of who the people of the LGBTQ community are.

anyone who has lived this truth. For someone to walk in and cause so much damage, destruction and death in what should always be a safe space is truly disgusting, especially for this open, accepting and loving community.

And why? Because the kind of military grade weapon that the killer used was easily accessible to - let's face it - someone who should have never had access to any kind of weapon, let alone this kind. Or was it because it is a part of our regular political dialogue to denigrate members of the LGBTQ community, to treat them as the boogie man, to minimize their humanity to advance some backwards agendas by legislators and special interests that are full of hate? The tragic truth is both. And yes we can talk about terrorism and its role that it played in this attack. This kind of domestic terrorism is fostered in a world where a presidential candidate can suggest building a wall to keep people out or ban an entire religion of people from entering. It is fostered in a world that wastes its time in state legislatures across about access to bathrooms. This is the hatred that builds like a fire being fanned with oxygen.



Fluidity for All

BY HEATHER AYMER

The dichotomy of either/or, male this, female that, is so built into our society we readily assume it a natural course, a categorical imperative designed expressly, therefore, immutable.

It's a lie.

Yeah, it's been around a long time. Many a language has masculine and feminine articles. Just consider the lie traveled a long way through eons in our culture, our ethnocentrism and tendency to take over everyone we met, well, it's what lies are built on.

LBGTQ youth I frequently interact with as an Adult Ally with Affirmations think this whole dichotomy thing a legacy they refuse to pass on. In their eschewing of labels, embracing gender fluidity and advocating the truth of intersectionality, they feel let down by their elders a bit.

I've been told by some transgender youth that they often don't interact with older transgender individuals because the adults, as it were, tend to think in strict binary terms. The youth don't think about 'passing,' but about liberty and self-expression. The elders discuss the need for surgery. Many a youth would like surgery, others feel it is unnecessary, and others posit that transgender is about identity as well as expression, but that the expression doesn't require a strict adherence to socially constructed gender normative dress and manner. Expression and strict adherence to binary is oft discussed by others in the alphabet as a hindrance to self as well.

Primped hair, makeup and stylish nails do not

To many youth mean nothing. Queer as a derogatory identifier thrown in the war of generations past no longer holds sway in our youth, instead they captured it and changed its semiotic tune.

make a woman, nor does a beard, short hair and pants make a man. Society has built strict ideas of how a man is gender expressed, and how a woman is presented and objectified. The youth want nothing to do with this.

No, there is no complaint in how the elders choose their expressions for expression is freedom, however, to suggest that the elders' expression is the example a youth should follow is not what the youth want. Nor should they.

It is not intended here to deny the elder generation credit for the great work they have done. We live amidst progress. The youth, grateful for the freedom bought them through death and struggle merely would like to point out that they are growing a new paradigm of expression.

For many youth, the word Queer has been recaptured as an empowering label, the one label many only use. The categorization of previous generations, gay, lesbian, femme, dyke, butch, fairy, bottom, top . . . To many youth mean nothing. Queer as a derogatory identifier thrown in the war of generations past no longer holds

See Fluidity, page 14

► After Orlando

Continued from previous page

It is the task of our elected leaders to hear the voices of the many Americans who support common sense gun reform. It is time for our elected leaders to work for progress, rather than moving our country backwards fighting ignorant battles based on some misunderstanding of who the people of the LGBTQ community are. Our country is better than this and we all deserve to see that manifest. And failing our legislators' ability to hear these cries and implement real change, we do have the power to vote them out this fall.

My heart continues to ache. The straight community owes you better. And for that

know that you will always have my sincerest sympathies and my ongoing commitment to be the unapologetic, unflinching ally that you identified all those years ago.

Jenny Suidan currently works as an assistant to former Michigan Democratic Party Chair Mark Brewer at the law firm of Goodman Acker, P.C. doing political consulting and election law work. Their clients include Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner, Progress Michigan and Planned Parenthood. She served as treasurer for the Oakland County Democratic Party from 2008 to 2010 and was a trustee on the White Lake Township Library Board from 2010 to 2012. Jenny has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Psychology from Central Michigan University.

Creep of the Week

Raul Labrador

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

With the massacre of men and women at a gay club in Orlando barely behind us, one could perhaps be forgiven for thinking



Raul Labrador

that this horrific hate crime had inspired some soul searching for members of the United States House. You know, "We are Orlando" and all that. But you would be wrong. The House is one of the most dysfunctional and unproductive in history, which is no surprise considering their primary focus has been on hating President Obama and giving reach-arounds to the rich.

But they've always got time for discrimination against LGBT people. Right now the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is kicking around the "First Amendment Defense Act" (FADA) which, you guessed it, uses "freedom of religion" as a shield for anti LGBT bias.

According to the House summary, FADA "prohibits the federal government from taking discriminatory action against a person on the basis that such person believes or acts in accordance with a religious belief or moral conviction that: (1) marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman, or (2) sexual relations are properly reserved to such a marriage."

By "discriminatory action" they mean that the federal government can't fine, revoke tax-exempt status, deny grants or contracts, or deny any federal benefits to a person who is blatantly discriminating against LGBT people as long as that person claims that Jesus made them do it. (I know it says "regardless of religious affiliation," but I have my doubts that FADA's supporters are totally embracing Muslims here).

It's not hard to see why "flail and panic" bills like FADA (and like the laws we've seen pass in states like North Carolina) are popping up at all levels of government. Conservatives are hella pissed about marriage equality and this is their way of stomping their feet and gnashing their teeth. In other words, it's a legislative temper tantrum.

FADA's sponsor, Raul Labrador

Right now the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is kicking around the "First Amendment Defense Act" (FADA) which, you guessed it, uses "freedom of religion" as a shield for anti LGBT bias.

(R-Idaho), has a storied anti-equality voting record. In fact, the Conservative Review gives him a "Liberty Score" of 95, which means he's an A student on the right. Conversely, he has a zero on the Human Rights Campaign's Congressional Scorecard.

Back in April, Labrador told News Radio 1310's Bill Colley, "We're just trying to protect the individual from punishment by the federal government for believing in a particular belief system."

This is not exactly accurate. FADA defines "person" as "any person regardless of religious affiliation, including corporations and other entities regardless of for-profit or nonprofit status." Well, that about covers it.

In the interview Labrador referred to marriage equality as "something that our culture up to recently did not accept, and frankly I still don't believe that it accepts because it was five robed justices that made that decision, it wasn't the states that made the decision."

Mind you, if the case had gone the other way I have no doubt he'd be singing the praises of those robed justices.

In a press release from last year (injustice and justice alike often move slowly) Labrador said, "Our bill ensures that the federal government does not penalize Americans for following their religious beliefs or moral convictions on traditional marriage. Our bill shields against federal intrusion without taking anything away from anyone."

Without taking anything away from anyone? Well, I suppose if you don't consider civil rights a something and don't consider LGBT people, well, people. It's convenient to present this bill as if it's just maintaining some harmless status quo, but in reality it provides sweeping protections for anti LGBT bigotry. Bigotry that taxpayers would essentially be subsidizing.

GOP Convention Preview: What LGBT Viewers Can Watch For

BY LISA KEEN

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump is an unattractive political choice for many voters because of his unabashed hostility toward Muslims, Mexicans, and media scrutiny. But, oddly enough, he is still the most LGBT friendly Republican presidential candidate in history.

He accepted GOProud's invitation to speak at a CPAC conference in 2011 when many conservatives attending the conference raised objections to the gay conservative group's participation. He eliminated a beauty pageant rule requiring contestants be "naturally born female." He said he has "many fabulous friends who happen to be gay." He accepted gay actor George Takei's invitation to lunch to discuss same-sex marriage and he attended the wedding of a gay couple. And last year, when asked on Meet the Press whether private companies should be able to fire people for being gay, he said, "I don't think it should be a reason, no."

Trump was quick to speak out against the shooting at an LGBT nightclub in Orlando, and he has repeatedly expressed "our nation stands in solidarity" with the LGBT community.

Among LGBT voters who evaluate candidates on a range of issues – in addition to their positions relative to LGBT-specific concerns – some will find Trump attractive. He promises to "put America first," "grow the American economy," and "reclaim millions of American jobs" from foreign countries.

Gregory Angelo, president of the national Log Cabin Republicans group, has described Trump as "the most pro-gay nominee that the (Republican) party has ever had for president." And, given LGBT voting patterns in the past, there's a prospect for Trump earning significant support this year.

Gay Republicans by the Numbers

In 2008, 19 percent of self-identified gay, lesbian, or bisexual voters said they voted for Republican presidential nominee John McCain over Democrat Barack Obama. In 2012, 22 percent voted for Republican Mitt Romney over incumbent Democrat Obama, who was already establishing himself as the most pro-LGBT president in history.

Trump seems to be aware of the prospect for winning LGBT votes. He's careful to word his disagreements with the LGBT community very delicately. For instance, rather than say he's opposed to allowing same-sex couples to marry, Trump says, "I'm for traditional marriage."



But nearly every statement by Trump – with the exception of his desire to "build a wall" between the U.S. and Mexico – seems subject to revision by the candidate. After the U.S. Supreme Court struck down state bans on same-sex marriage, Trump's response was: "I don't say anything. I'm for traditional marriage," and he said he accepted the decision is the "law of the land." But a few months later, he said he would "strongly consider" appointing justices who would overturn that decision.

North Carolina

After North Carolina passed a law to ban transgender people from using public restrooms that correspond to their gender identity, Trump said he thought people should be able to use "the bathroom they feel is appropriate." Then later, he said the issue should be left to state law, and he criticized the Obama administration's guidelines for helping transgender students.

Trump takes frequent swings against "political correctness," a term many in the LGBT community associate with basic respect for people despite their differences. He was reluctant to disavow former KKK leader David Duke and white supremacy because he knew "nothing" about them.

Visible support in the LGBT community for Trump is small.

LGBTrump

One gay political activist, Chris Barron, is organizing an LGBTrump group that will host an event in Cleveland during the convention.

Barron declined to say how many people have expressed interest in the group, but said he speaks with the Trump campaign "regularly" on LGBT issues.

"I haven't asked them for anything in reference to (Trump's) speech" at the convention, but added, "I think his approach on LGBT issues, particularly in the wake of Orlando, has been perfect."

Three openly gay people are part of the delegation from California, and all three are pledged to Trump: Charles T. Moran, former president of the California chapter of Log Cabin Republicans; Peter Thiel, founder of Paypal; and Ric Grenell, an openly gay advisor to 2012 Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney and a political commentator for Fox News.

Three other openly gay delegates to the convention come from Washington, D.C., and none are pledged to Trump: Christian Berle (a Kasich supporter) and Rachel Hoff and Bob Kabel (Rubio supporters). Openly gay delegate winner Kevin Cain of Washington, D.C., gave up his delegate seat in May, telling the Washington Post he did not want to be involved "in any way" in nominating Trump for president.

A search of leaders of Log Cabin's 46 other chapters around the country matched against the RNC delegate list found no other openly LGBT delegates, and the party does not collect information about LGBT status.

So what should LGBT viewers watch for at the July 18-21 convention in Cleveland?

What to watch for

Party Platform: For months, the American

Unity Fund, a pro-marriage equality political action committee, has been lobbying convention delegates to support a more LGBT friendly platform. So far they have been unsuccessful (see story next page). The nominee would not be obliged to advance any particular part of the platform, but a softening of language hostile to LGBT people could be seen as a political victory. There is also reportedly an effort underway to get the platform committee to adopt language condemning the "radical Islamic terrorism" behind the attack on an Orlando LGBT nightclub in June. The committee, which includes at least one openly LGBT member (Rachel Hoff of Washington, D.C.), began debating its platform Monday, July 11, and is expected to approve a final document this week. In addition to LGBT-specific matters, the platform will lay out a lot of ideas for advancing "religious freedom," which is often code for sexual orientation oppression.

The Nomination: Although Donald Trump won enough delegates during the primaries to secure the nomination, staunch opponents of his nomination have threatened to try and derail that. But party leaders, including House Speaker Paul Ryan, have in recent days said they'd call on Republicans to rally around Trump, in the interest of party unity.

Vice-Presidential Pick: Of critical concern to many will be who Trump secures as his vice-presidential running mate and what that person's credentials will be on LGBT issues. Trump said he would announce his choice this week, but an announcement had not been made by deadline.

LGBT community visibility: LGBTrump plans to host an event at Cleveland State University on Tuesday night. Log Cabin Republicans and the local GOP chapter will host a convention watch party on Tuesday night. Log Cabin will join the American Unity Fund in hosting a "Big Tent Brunch" on Wednesday morning, with a panel of conservatives – including Olympic legend Caitlyn Jenner – discussing "diversity and inclusion in the GOP." On Wednesday evening, Log Cabin will team up with PFLAG to host a party.

Convention Speeches: Trump said earlier this month that the convention speaker list is all filled and that he would release it by July 6. That didn't happen and it had not been released by deadline for this article.

GOP Platform Fight Over LGBT Issues Fails

BY LISA KEEN

There were two dramatic players in the Republican Party's platform committee meeting Monday, July 11: Anne Dickerson and Rachel Hoff.

Dickerson repeatedly chided the committee for taking hostile swipes at the LGBT community through the party platform. Hoff implored the committee to simply acknowledge that there is a difference of opinion among Republicans on marriage for same-sex couples.

Both were soundly rebuffed.

The 112-member committee snubbed forceful appeals from Dickerson to stop attacking the LGBT community and delete hostile language in the party platform. Initially, it seemed to welcome the more quiet entreaty from Hoff to have the platform say only that the Republican Party welcomes "thoughtful conversation" about the meaning of marriage.

"In high school, I chose to be a Republican. My parents are not Republican so I was not born this way," said Hoff, eliciting a few laughs from other members. "I chose to be a Republican because I believe in the same principles that you do - freedom, individual liberty, and limited government. I'm here 15 years later, still in this great party despite the hurtful rhetoric and stance on these issues and all I ask today is that you include me and those like me - and not exclude us - by simply acknowledging that thoughtful Republicans represent multiple views on the definition of marriage."

Hoff noted near the beginning of her remarks, that she is the first openly gay member of the Republican Party's platform committee, which drew applause from only a few members.

The meeting, which was aired live on C-SPAN, was mostly quiet as she introduced her amendment to replace hostile language in the platform about marriage for same-sex couples with language that would acknowledge "there are diverse and sincerely held views on marriage within the party and that support for allowing same-sex couples the freedom to marry has grown substantially in our own party."

But there was no discussion and, when Hoff asked for a show of hands, the platform chair declared the amendment failed.

Earlier in the day, the committee adopted an amendment from Colorado member Justin Ever to add the word "traditional" in front of "two-parent household" in a sentence that proclaimed that children raised in a "traditional two-parent household" are physically and emotionally healthier and less likely to engage in drug and alcohol use, crime, and pregnancy outside of marriage.

The meeting, which was aired live on C-SPAN, was mostly quiet as Rachel Hoff introduced her amendment to replace hostile language in the platform about marriage for same-sex couples with language that would acknowledge "there are diverse and sincerely held views on marriage within the party and that support for allowing same-sex couples the freedom to marry has grown substantially in our own party."

"This is another poke in the eye to the gay community, and it's outrageous," said Dickerson. "This has no place (in the platform), and continuing to suggest that a gay married couple, which is legal in our country - this is outrageous to suggest children of a gay couple are more likely to be completely imbalanced... This is so provocative...I won't support it."

Jesse Long of Nevada said he would oppose the amendment because he wanted the party to support "any parent who wants to raise a child." A member who identified herself as a single mother from Nebraska said she found the amendment insulting not only to LGBT parents but to single parents.

And Hoff said it was not only a "slap in the face" of gay parents, but also "a slap in the face to their children."

The amendment passed easily by voice vote.


Dickerson introduced an amendment to strike language in the proposed platform that said the party supports the anti-gay First Amendment Defense Act "to ensure (private adoption agencies) do not face government discrimination because of their views on marriage and family." She said the language encouraged such organizations "to turn away gay couples" and was not only unconstitutional but "blatant discrimination."

A platform committee member from Virginia, 22-year-old Tommy Valentine, said Dickerson's remarks amounted to calling the platform committee members bigots and that he disagrees - a remark that elicited considerable applause from the committee. Dickerson's amendment failed on voice vote.

The platform meeting continues this week, with final debate and vote on the platform taking place during the Republican National Convention July 18-21 in Cleveland.



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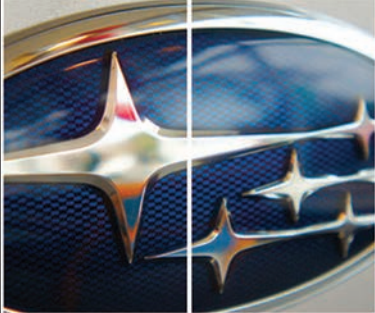

Center: Rhonda L. Kobold, DO, FACOG

Left:
Beth K. Mutch, MSN, FNP-BC
Teresa C. Kuz, MSN, WHNP-BC
Angela V. Viviano, MSN, FNP

Right:
Hina Javaid, MD
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► Michigan Cities

Continued from p. 7

6. City of Chelsea
7. City of Dearborn Heights
8. City of Detroit
9. City of East Grand Rapids
10. City of East Lansing
11. City of Farmington Hills
12. City of Fenton
13. City of Ferndale
14. City of Grand Rapids
15. City of Howell
16. City of Huntington Woods
17. City of Kalamazoo
18. City of Lansing
19. City of Linden
20. City of Marquette
21. City of Mt. Pleasant
22. City of Muskegon
23. City of Pleasant Ridge
24. City of Portage
25. City of Royal Oak
26. City of Saugatuck
27. City of Southfield
28. City of Trenton
29. City of Wayland
30. City of Ypsilanti
31. Delhi Township
32. Delta Charter Township
33. Kalamazoo Township
34. Lathrup Village
35. Meridian Township
36. Oshtemo Township
37. Saugatuck Township
38. Traverse City
39. Union Township
40. Village of Douglas

* A comprehensive nondiscrimination ordinance prohibits discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) in employment, housing and public accommodations.

Michigan Communities Providing Partial Protection

1. Bay City - SOGI, but only housing.
2. City of Birmingham - Sexual orientation only; Housing only.
3. City of Flint - SOGI, but housing and public accommodations only.
4. City of Grand Ledge - Sexual orientation only.
5. City of Saginaw - Sexual orientation only; Housing only.

► Schuette

Continued from p. 6

Privacy Act and Title IX - the 1972 law that prohibits discrimination based on sex.

Schuette has been fighting against the LGBT-inclusive youth guidelines for months. He issued a letter May 26 following the federal guidance, written to the Obama Administration, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch and Secretary of Education John King, requesting they retract a federal directive and called it “another prime example of federal overreach.”

The Michigan State Board of Education heard public testimony earlier this year on a proposed set of LGBT guidelines for K-12 schools that offer similar instruction to that which the U.S. Department of Education has issued. The board is expected to make a decision on the guidelines sometime in August. If passed, LGBT youth in Michigan public schools will have more protections against harassment and bullying along with additional safety. Schuette has yet to comment on those guidelines.

Michigan State Board of Education President John Austin was quick to respond to the news from Schuette’s office.

“It is unfortunate that, as he did with gay marriage, Bill Schuette is on the wrong side of history and wants to represent Michigan as a state inhospitable to our LGBT citizens,” Austin said in a statement. “Transgender school children, as all children, deserve dignity, respect and the right to be acknowledged and accepted in school, so they can go about the business of getting a great education.”

“In his July 8 statement Schuette wrote “every child in every school must be provided with dignity, privacy, respect and safety” and claims to take the issue of discrimination “very seriously.”

“That is why my office works daily to protect children from bullying and address the issue of teen suicide. Last year, our program to stop school violence, OK2SAY, received 1,336 tips

► Viewpoint: Fluidity

Continued from p. 11

sway in our youth, instead they captured it and changed its semiotic tune. A great battle feat we should praise.

I get what they mean. The youth have taught me much. When I started becoming involved in the community, I was given many a label as I revealed myself, and found it rather demeaning. I’m me. Telling me I should be this with that group over there, a sub group of a group of a group made me feel more alienated initially than I ever expected in finding community.

► Beaten and Robbed

Continued from p. 9

Yacka’s agency coordinates bias and hate crime incidents against the LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities for 11 states, including Michigan. In 2015, the combined agencies reported 1,253 incidents nationwide, including 24 hate-motivated murders.

Lisa McCormick, Ingham County’s chief assistant prosecutor, told me that shame, guilt and fear of being judged by the police or the Prosecutor’s Office are reasons they don’t get reported.

“That’s not the case here in Ingham County,” she told me in June in a conference room at the Grady Porter Building in downtown Lansing. “We’re not going to be judging. The only judging will be on the perpetrators, who deserve to be judged, by a judge.”

Spyker and Tupper told Lansing Police Detective Joel Johnson that reluctance to report was a motivating factor in

their crime spree. They admitted to pretending to be gay in order to rob victims they met through Craigslist. While they admitted to three specific instances, they related to Johnson that there were other communications. It remains unclear how many victims there were in this case.

Tupper’s interview began Nov. 30 with a confession of sorts. He and Spyker had been arrested by the city’s fugitive team hours earlier. Johnson arrived and set up video recording equipment to talk to both men.

McCormick, who was unable to release the confession video because the prosecutor’s office did not have the technical capacity to edit it to protect the privacy of the victims, reviewed the confessions. She said Tupper started his interview by asking if he were there about the “fucking faggots Craigslist.”

This story first appeared in City Pulse newspaper June 27. It is reprinted with permission.

concerning bullying, drugs, suicide, self-harm and other potential acts of violence, allowing officials to come to the aid of students in need of help, including transgender students.”

The OK2SAY program is designed to empower students, parents, school personnel, community mental health service programs and law enforcement to share and respond to student safety threats. Individuals can submit a tip OK2SAY at anytime and report a planned fight, if a student is engaging in self harm, instances of bullying or more. Depending on the situation either a mental health professional, law enforcement officer or existing school personnel will be notified.

According to OK2SAY.com from Sept. 2, 2014 to Dec. 31, 2015, 2,770 tips were received; over 1,000 of which were instances of bullying and cyber-bullying.

The GLSEN 2013 National School Climate survey found that most schools are not safe for LGBT youth in Michigan and only 9 percent of students attended a public school with a comprehensive anti-bullying and/or harassment policy that included specific protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. The report found that the majority of LGBT students experienced verbal harassment based on the LGBT part of their identity.

The survey also found that 57 percent of students who were harassed or assaulted in school never reported it to school staff and 52 percent never told a family member about the incident. Among students who did report incidents to school authorities, only 32 percent said that reporting resulted in effective intervention by staff.

We come to community, to find acceptance, ease stress, gather loves. We should stop throwing each other into boxes of sub-ness, and embrace fluidity as the babes do. Our youth are telling us, “The work you have done has given us liberty. We can exercise it, now!”

No, it’s not perfect. Yes, we have more work to do. But we must stand tall and embrace our youth as they rise up and soldier forth to take on our works. The world of hiding in bars, code words, scarves, pure hedonism and caves is falling behind us. We can openly marry, raise children.

We are no longer just about sex, as action, but people who love. We must move beyond the

labels we created to hide, embrace ourselves as normal, stop forcing categorization that hinders our own progress, and, from the mouths of babes, be individual persons whom define a culture, innovate, commune with governmental and commercial success, take on the world openly, resolute in science, social justice, art, as ourselves, embracing and honorable.

To live and love.

Heather Aymer is a writer and artist volunteering with Affirmations and Transgender Michigan.

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'True Blood' Alum on Why Drag Is More 'Physically Demanding' Than Playing Tarzan

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Alexander Skarsgård sure knows how to offset the uproar over his missing loincloth in "The Legend of Tarzan."

"I'm actually wearing it right now," teases Skarsgård, joking about the brouhaha regarding this Tarzan's more civilized article of clothing as he portrays the jungle warrior in Warner Bros.' new take on a classic tale.

"I do all my phoners in a loincloth."

"Phoners or...?" I ask, hinting at the obvious rhyme.

The 39-year-old "True Blood" alum beams, cracking up. "Exactly! I do all my *boners* in loinclothes."

And that's just the beginning of our revealing conversation, which leads to all sorts of places: being poisoned by Lady Gaga, how other straight men should approach a gay sex scene ("dive in"), and why – after giving us his best Farrah Fawcett impersonation last year – shooting "The Legend of Tarzan" "was nothing compared to that night in drag."

So, I don't know if you know this, but gay men love you.

Oh, really?

They do. Is that surprising to hear?

Well, I don't know. I've always been... I don't know how to answer that question, but thank you. That's very flattering to hear. It's always been the most natural thing to me because my uncle and godfather is a gay man and so growing up, even as a little toddler, it was just as natural as being straight. My aunt would show up with her husband and my uncle would show up with his husband. He was, by far, out of my father's four siblings (Alexander's father is actor Stellan Skarsgård), the most fashionable and the most trendy, cool guy. So, when I was a kid, he was the one I looked up to. I thought he was really badass: fit and awesome and cool, and obviously not because he was gay.

When I became a teenager and the kids made fun of other teenagers who were gay, I

never really understood that. It just baffled me because my idol, my godfather, was gay, and he was the coolest guy I knew. I just couldn't understand how that could be an insult.

That kind of personal relationship can change everything for somebody.

I agree. And I think a lot of the xenophobia and fear comes from that, from not having a personal connection. People that know someone close that they love who is homosexual or bisexual are more likely to sympathize with people in the LGBT community.

"The Legend of Tarzan" is, in part, about making your own family. How might that resonate with the LGBT community?

In a way, he's lost between two worlds, he doesn't fit in. He's adopted by these apes, and even though emotionally he's an equal and he's loved, he can feel that he's different. Then he goes to London and it's kind of the same.

He looks like people around him, but he also doesn't fit in there either. That sense of being an outsider and trying to fit in or finding your home and your place in the world – it's interesting to explore that. He's a character who, on the surface, has it all – this gorgeous, wonderful wife; incredible wealth; beautiful mansion – but people don't understand him, really, and his heart is still in the jungle.

Have you ever felt like an outsider?

I can relate to the feeling of being somewhere between two worlds. I was born and raised in Stockholm, but I've lived in the States for 12 years. In a way, I feel at home when I go to Stockholm, but it hasn't been my permanent home for 12 years. So, there are a lot of things that make me feel like an outsider: cultural references, the music scene, the arts scene, theater, what's going on back home in movies; other references make me feel out of touch too.

The States have been my home for the

last 12 years, but I also don't have any deep emotional connection to the place because I wasn't here as a kid. So walking around the streets of Stockholm, every single street corner will mean something because it had a profound impact on my formative years. I'll be like, "Oh, that street corner is where that girl broke up with me when I was 13," or, "That's where I had that fight with my best friend." I live in New York now and

all my memories in New York are from the past 10, 15 years. Obviously, in "Tarzan" the two worlds are a bit more extreme! (Laughs)

There are no apes on the loose in New York that I am aware of.

(Laughs) Yes, it's slightly more dramatic. But that is my job as an actor – to find something, even if it's on a more microscopic level, that allows me to tap into and understand the character on a larger scale.

What do you think starring alongside Lady Gaga in her "Paparazzi" video did for your gay following?

I have no idea – I wasn't famous at all. I wore a wig in the first season of "True Blood," so no one ever recognized me. But my friend Jonas Åkerlund is a tremendous music video director and called me and said, "Hey, I'm directing this video for an artist. Her name is Lady Gaga." I'd heard her name but didn't know much about her. He just basically pitched me the idea: "You throw her off the balcony and then she comes back and she poisons you." (Laughs) It sounded like a fun love story, so of course I said yes. I had a super fun day.

How did portraying someone who is pansexual on "True Blood," a show rife with queer characters and storylines, influence the way you view sexuality?

“When I became a teenager and the kids made fun of other teenagers who were gay, I never really understood that. It just baffled me because my idol, my godfather, was gay, and he was the coolest guy I knew. I just couldn't understand how that could be an insult.”

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July 14th-17th

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The Frivolist

BY MIKEY ROX

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Mixed Brights Bracelets

Doublehighfive BK's hand-curated, multicolored bracelets – made from recycled flip-flops by women in Mali – come in an assortment of cool colors, like mixed bold, brights, pastels,



pinks, and blues and greens, so you can keep this “Summer of Pride” haute until the temps take a dive. \$20, doublehighfivebk.com

Coconut Grove Swim Trunks

If you're nowhere near a beach this summer, you can still invite the essence of the open sea to your bestie's backyard with the Coconut Groves, tropical-inspired trunks from Chubbies. These macaw-croched butt-huggers (if you've got an ample pirate's booty, that is) are equal parts “aaarr!” and shiver-me-timbers for sky's-out-high's-out time-outs. \$60, chubbies.com

Sunnys Cap

It's hard not to light up when you see AMBSN's Sunnys Cap in melon. Emboldened with an embroidered sunglasses-sporting smiley-face emoji, you'll be doing everyone around you a favor as soon as you pop it on. \$32, jackthreads.com

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

► Tarzan

Continued from p. 17

It was just one of the most profound experiences ever. Just liberating. Even though there's shit loads of nudity on the show, it never felt gratuitous. I think that's when, as an actor, you feel uncomfortable, if you're standing there with your clothes off and you're not quite sure why.

Like if you'd been wearing that loincloth in "Tarzan."

That's why I wear nothing in all the flashbacks... because that would make sense! If it makes sense, it's not an issue; you just have to do it.

In 2006's "Kill Your Darlings," you played a transvestite. Then, during the premiere of "Diary of a Teenage Girl" last year, you went in full-on drag as Farrah Fawcett. How would you describe the feeling of putting on women's clothing?

I loved it. It was so much fun. On that movie, "Diary of a Teenage Girl," our first AD was a drag queen by the name of Cousin Wonderlette, who's on the San Francisco scene, and there was also Lady Bear, another drag queen who was the casting director for extras on the movie. Marielle (Heller), our director, wanted to do a big premiere at the Castro Theatre because she's from San Francisco, a lot of her friends live there and

she has a lot of friends in the gay community.

So, Cousin Wonderlette and Lady Bear were gonna host the premiere and do a number from "Rocky Horror Picture Show" and then throw the afterparty at a gay club. Everyone was planning their outfits and talking about these crazy drag outfits they were gonna come in with. I was sitting there with my grey suit and I just felt like, "Fucking hell, this is so boring; can I play as well?" I said, "I wanna look like Farrah Fawcett." I showed them that iconic image from the early '80s in that golden dress with the blonde hair, so that's what we went for. I can't quite say that we nailed it. I mean, they did an incredible job, but I think it's tough with a dude who's 6-foot-4 and 210 pounds. (Laughs) And with those heels, I was like 7 feet tall.

As physically demanding as shooting "Legend of Tarzan" was, it was nothing compared to that night in drag. Oh my god; walking around in those heels, in that super itchy, hot wig and the fake nails, I felt like Edward Scissorhands. I couldn't even grab a drink.

Once we got to the after party at the gay club, I just kicked my heels off and walked around barefoot because I was just dying. So, I have tremendous respect for all the drag queens out there. I got a little taste of what it takes to look that fabulous.

"True Blood" was groundbreaking for pushing many envelopes when it came to LGBT issues

and sexuality. How does it feel knowing that you were a part of a show that some deemed "too gay"?

Well, that's ridiculous. What was so interesting about the show was that it wasn't on the nose. It's obviously a cultural reference and a metaphor. A lot of the storylines are metaphors for the strife people in the LGBT community experience, but it's done in a very subtle way where people who have never met anyone who's gay or who have prejudice toward that community would still embrace the show and would still come up (to me) and be super excited about it. They would love Lafayette – I mean, a black, gay man. What (creator) Alan (Ball) did was beautiful and it was groundbreaking because, for myself, since I was a toddler, I've had someone very close to me that I admire who was gay, which made that lifestyle as normal as any other lifestyle. In this instance, a lot of people who didn't have anyone close to them in the LGBT community suddenly had someone in their living room every Sunday night that they loved.

What tips do you have for other straight men who are doing gay sex scenes?

You just have to embrace it. I had two gay sex scenes on the show. They're incredible scenes. I loved this scene and I remember talking to Theo (Alexander), who played the Greek lover of Russell Edgington (portrayed by Denis O'Hare), and that

was the first gay sex scene I had on "True Blood." He's also a straight guy and he was nervous; he had never kissed a guy before. I just said, "Look at the scene. It's this nemesis and he comes in and then it gets seductive and you think they're gonna make love and it gets into that and then suddenly my character stabs him in the back and he explodes. In two minutes, look at this emotional rollercoaster we're taking the audience on. If we commit to this, it's going to be an amazing scene and we're going to be very happy with it forever. If we hold back, that's when it gets awkward."

Same thing shooting the other scene with Ryan (Kwanten) – we knew that it was coming because we shot a scene the previous year where I hypnotize him and say, like, "When you dream, dream sweet dreams of me." Because we did it in a very seductive way, when they said "wrap" and I turned around and I saw the writers, I could just see in their eyes that they were like, "We're definitely gonna see this dream later on in the show." We knew it was coming. You have to think of the scene and how it fits in and hopefully be excited about the scene. Then, just dive in.

When can we expect you to do something as gay as "True Blood" again?

(Laughs) Well, I mean, next time I get drunk probably.

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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.

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Great Lakes Folk Festival Celebrates Culture, Tradition and Community

The roots, rhythms and the richness of music, dance, arts and culture come to downtown East Lansing for the Michigan State University Museum's annual Great Lakes Folk Festival, Aug. 12-14.

GLFF offers a one-of-a-kind mix of music and dance stages, demonstrations of traditional arts and storytelling, authentic ethnic food, an arts marketplace, and many special activities. The MSU Museum works year-round to develop a festival program that reflects the immense variety and vitality of art, skill, knowledge and wisdom of their cultural heritage for the public.

One of the program highlights this year is the Tuvan Throat Singers. This technique of singing multiple pitches at the same time is found in the remote Russian republic of Tuva in southern Siberia, as well as in Mongolia.

Also in the spotlight is Calan, a

Welsh Celtic group that plays fiddles, whistles, guitars and bagpipes. They are known for playing the traditional reed instrument from Wales called a pibgorn, made from a wooden pipe and the horns of a bull.

The new Jam Tent this year features scheduled music jams hosted by talented local musicians that will play traditional music like Bluegrass, Appalachian Old-Time, Irish, and Cajun. This is a great way to learn about traditional music and each session is open invitation, so anyone can play, listen and dance. No prior experience is necessary. Attendees are encouraged to bring their instruments and their dancing shoes.

Quilts from the museum's collection and quilt blocks from the community will be on display in the form of a pop-up exhibit, "60/50 Quilted Conversations: Materializing Civil and Human Rights," to spark discussion on different social issues.

Many cultures and communities have a long history of traditional arts, medicines and practices that have helped to sustain healthy living and address health challenges. Around the world, new attention is being given to the ways in which the arts and traditional knowledge about healing and wellness can address contemporary health issues. GLFF attendees can learn about arts and health through panel discussions and exhibits featuring quilt and fiber art displays.

The Campus and Community program features exhibits and presentations of exemplary collaborative projects where MSU faculty and staff have co-created partnerships that respond to community issues, needs, challenges or opportunities.

There is plenty of opportunity to see your musical group of choice as they are scheduled to play two to four times each throughout the weekend, including

See Great Lakes, next page

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The OutField Jeremy Brener's Inspirational High School Journey

BY DAN WOOG

Growing up in Houston as the son of a multi-sport athlete, it felt natural for Jeremy Brener to play sports. He enjoyed them all, especially soccer and basketball. He coached younger kids in a recreational league. "I've just always been enamored with competition and athleticism," the articulate, insightful high school senior says. "Sports feel safe and comfortable to me."

Brener lives in a diverse neighborhood; he's always been surrounded by different cultures, ideas and types of people.

"Maybe I was naive," he says. "To be honest, I didn't know what 'gay' meant until I was 12 or 13." He assumed that because all his friends had mothers and fathers, that "every relationship was between a man and a woman."

"I never heard anything about gay stuff," he reveals.

But in the midst of junior high basketball season, Jeremy's "gears started turning. It was a weird time." He felt different from his friends. He began understanding his burgeoning sexuality.

"That's when life started for me," Jeremy says. "I started to see other things. It scared me."

Jeremy thought that being gay meant "acting feminine, doing feminine things." But he did not fit there. He liked playing and watching sports.

Jeremy went online, reading and hearing other gay men's stories. He saw many different examples of what it means to be gay, how to live life. He realized he *could* be gay, play sports and hang out with other guys who like him for who he is.

"There's a whole spectrum of masculinity," he recognized. Pretty heady stuff for a 14-year-

old.

Through YouTube, Outsports, the Advocate magazine and websites like Gay Star News,

Jeremy went online, reading and hearing other gay men's stories. He saw many different examples of what it means to be gay, how to live life. He realized he could be gay, play sports and hang out with other guys who like him for who he is.

Jeremy "really started to wake up. I knew this is who I'm supposed to be."

Once he discovered he was gay, he thought that was the most important part of his personality. He wanted to tell everyone, to stop living a lie.

Now, he wishes he had not been so forthright. "Being gay is *not* the most important thing about me," he says emphatically. "You can lead a truthful, honest life without telling the whole world."

Friends slowly distanced themselves. His grades dropped. "I thought living my truth would be wonderful," Jeremy explains. "That wasn't the case."

Then, in February 2013, Los Angeles Galaxy soccer player Robbie Rogers came out. He was the first professional male sports team athlete in North America to do so.

Jeremy was coming off a knee injury. Compounded by his friends' reactions to his sexuality, he considered giving up soccer. But Rogers' coming-out experience propelled Jeremy back in the game. He even changed his jersey to 14. That was Rogers' number, and

also Jeremy's age.

Jason Collins and Michael Sam soon followed Rogers out the closet door. "I realized there really are gay people everywhere," Jeremy recalls. "And I saw that being gay is only part of a person. That's why Outsports (the LGBT website) is great. It really debunks stereotypes."

For his last two years in high school, Jeremy focused on just being himself. "People like me for me," he says proudly.

So who is Jeremy Brener? "I'm an athlete, a basketball coach, a friend, a brother, a son. I like physics and business. I'm so much more than a gay teenager. I'm proud to be gay, but I'm also proud of every part of me."

Jeremy is also a contributing writer for Outsports – the site that did so much to show him the world of gay athletics. Earlier this month, he wrote a story about Braeden Lange, the 13-year-old gay lacrosse player whose life was turned around by Andrew Goldstein, a former pro with his own positive tale. Braeden's coming out at a young age, facing some negative reactions, and still emerging empowered and strong – it all resonated with Jeremy.

He wove together Braeden's story – including the "Courage Game" organized by Goldstein, bringing together lacrosse players from around the country in a show of support



Jeremy Brener

for the youngster; an ESPN profile on the game and Braeden's life, and the founding of Philadelphia's Courage Home for homeless LGBT youth – with Jeremy's own coming-out process. It was a compelling read.

The next day, a young reader contacted Jeremy. He was struggling, and alone. Soon, though, he came out – and felt great.

"That was so powerful," Jeremy says. "If I weren't gay, that kid wouldn't have felt confident enough to do that."

"I'm gay for a reason," Jeremy concludes. "Now I want to try to make a difference in the world."

He doesn't have to try. He already has.

Dan Woog is a journalist, educator, soccer coach and gay activist. at OutField@qsyndicate.com.

► Great Lakes

Continued from p. 20

sets on a 2,400-square-foot dance floor. A full music and dance program is available online at www.greatlakesfolkfest.net/2016/music-dance/festival-performers/.

Musicians, such as fiddlers, percussionists, and accordion players, from different groups will take the stage in popular Tradition Showcases to share and compare traditions and techniques of their instruments.

The state's leading tradition bearers in music, material culture and community leadership will be recognized during the annual 2016 Michigan Heritage Awards. This year's honorees are The Costabella Cloggers of Hessel for team clogging; David Dutcher of Hessel for Native American arts; Carole Howard of Mt. Pleasant for square dance calling; Matt Kazmierski of Plymouth for Marimba building; Thomas Kelly of Detroit for a cappella gospel singing; Gary Tassier of Cedarville for boat building and restoration;

and Paul Wilson of Hessel for traditional boat building.

The Marketplace returns this year with more recycled and upcycled green foods, from jewelry to garden and fiber art, and sculpture. The MSU Museum also showcases master artists in textiles, basketry and other traditional arts.

The festival site is across from the MSU campus and spans the downtown core of the city for three days of festival fun. Festival hours are Aug. 12 from 6-10:30 p.m., Aug. 13 from 12-10:30 p.m., and Aug. 14 from 12-6 p.m.

Admission is by donation and \$10 per day is suggested. Contributions leading up to the event and on-site sustain GLFF. Parking will be available in downtown ramps and across Grand River Avenue on the MSU campus in designated areas. GLFF also provides bike parking on-site.

Find out more by calling 517-432-4533 or visit www.greatlakesfolkfest.net.

An advertisement for MedCart Pharmacy. The background features a vertical rainbow gradient. On the right side, there is a partial image of a man in a black leather jacket. The text is in a bold, sans-serif font. At the top, it says "PHARMACY UPGRADE" in large letters. Below that is the phone number "248.542.2300". Further down is the website "www.medcartpharmacy.com" and the address "1964 West 11 Mile Road, Berkley Between Woodward & Coolidge". At the bottom, there is a logo for MedCart Pharmacy, which includes a red shopping cart icon with a white cross and the text "MEDCART Pharmacy".



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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, July 14

Rehearsals for Metro Detroit LGBT Chorus 7 p.m. New members welcomed year round. One Voice Chorus uses singing to promote understanding outside of the LGBT community, and unity within it. One Voice Chorus, 1589 W. Maple Road, **Birmingham**. detroitonevoice@yahoo.com <http://onevoicechorus.net>

Friday, July 15

Working with LGBTQ Children 12 p.m. The Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression (SOGIE) learning series will expand your understanding of Social Identity in order to challenge your perceptions and strengthen your practice when working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) persons. SOGIE Basics will be offered the first 30 minutes prior to each training. All participants are encouraged to attend SOGIE Basics once, prior to attending any key topic. This will enhance the participants' learning by clarifying LGBT concepts and terminology. Pre-registration required. No Cost for NASW Members. \$30 for Non-Members. Two Social Work CEUs available. Co-Sponsors: The Ruth Ellis Center and Connections-Wayne County System of Care. National Association of Social Workers - Michigan Chapter, 2799 West Grand Blvd, **Detroit**. 517-487-1548. cnichols@thechildrenscenter.com www.nasw-michigan.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=812724&group=

Saturday, July 16

Monthly Gamenight 4 p.m. Visit the Meetup website for more details. Gay Geeks Social Group, 4636 15 Mile Rd., Apt. 106, **Sterling Heights**. www.meetup.com

Retro Fevre Saturdays 9 p.m. The best dance music from the 80s, 90s, and today mixed by DJ Beau Derek and Prime Minister. Red Door Night Club, 22901 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. 2485411600. events@reddoornightclub.com <http://www.reddoornightclub.com/events/>

Sunday, July 17

Paddle Group 1 a.m. Bring a kayak, canoe or whatever floats. The paddle group hits the watersheds known as Brighton, Huron-Clinton, Irish Hills, Jackson, Pinckney and Waterloo Recreation Areas. They paddle for two to three hours most Sundays. Life jackets are required. Yak season is April through October. Yak Womyn, **Ann Arbor**. sapphosis@yahoo.com

Tuesday, July 19

Community Fundraiser to Benefit Orlando Victims 5 p.m. Join the B. Nektar staff with their friends from Affirmations and Ferndale Friends to help. 50 percent of sales in the taproom will go to the Orlando Pulse Victims Fund. Additional donations are welcomed. B. Nektar Meadery, 1511 Jarvis St., **Ferndale**. 313-744-6323. www.gofundme.com/PulseVictimsFund

Foster Care and Adoption Orientation 6 p.m. Orchards Children's Services is seeking adults to create smiles in a child's life. Orchards is looking for adults from all counties to provide temporary care in their home for children ages 0 to 17 for foster care or independent living. Financial reimbursement,

training and support system provided. For information regarding orientation dates, please call 877-529-5532 or visit their website. Orchards Children's Services, 24901 Northwestern Highway, Suite 601, **Southfield**. 248-530-5370. smarks@orchards.org www.orchards.org

Wednesday, July 20

LGBT Cancer Support Group 6:30 p.m. This LGBT support group provides social and emotional support for LGBT persons with cancer, their partners, LGBT family members and friends. Gilda's Club Metro Detroit, 3517 Rochester Road, **Royal Oak**. 248-577-0800. www.gildasclubdetroit.org/calendar/lgbt-cancer-group-19/

Thursday, July 21

Ladies who love Ladies Night The hottest lesbian DJ Team, \$3 Drafts from all 18 taps all night, \$3 Jack Fire and Jack Honey drinks from 10 p.m. to 12 a.m. served by the Jack Girls. Pronto!, 608 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak**. 248-544-7900. www.facebook.com/prontorestaurantRO/

Friday, July 22

Red Hot Fridays 9 p.m. Top 40 and current dance music mixed by DJ Beau Derek and Prime Minister. Enjoy \$3 mixed drinks until midnight and \$1 "we call it" shot specials. No cover charge before midnight. Use the password "Red Hot." Red Door Night Club, 22901 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. 248-541-1600. info@reddoornightclub.com www.reddoornightclub.com

Saturday, July 23

Great Lakes Bay Pride 12 p.m. Great Lakes Bay Pride, **Bay City**. GLBPride@perceptionsmi.org www.GreatLakesBayPride.org/home2.html

Outdoor Games 12 p.m. Games offered in the park include table tennis, chess, checkers, beanbag toss, and more. Quicken Loans, 662 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. www.campusmartiuspark.org/events

Sunday, July 24

Ann Arbor Street Art Fair 10 a.m. Ann Arbor Art Fair, **Ann Arbor**. www.Artfair.org

BITE: A Pucking Queer Cabaret 5 p.m. Tickets: \$25 for Monday and Thursday performances; \$30 for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday performances. Purchase tickets at www.pridefilmsandplays.com. Pride Films and Plays, 5400 N. Clark, **Chicago**. 800-737-0984. www.hamburgermarys.com/chicago/attic/

Beginner Yoga for Baby Boomers 7 p.m. Taught by Charles Baber, R.Y.T. Classes are drop-in for \$5 per person. Bring a yoga mat and towel. Class sizes are limited. RSVP is required. Universalist Unitarian Church, 25301 Halsted Road, **Farmington Hills**. 248-345-4867. chas5540@aol.com

MUSIC & MORE

AEG Live "Parachute" Tickets: \$25-\$28. 18 and over welcome. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. 8 p.m. July 22. 248-544-3030. www.themagicbag.com

Ann Arbor Art Fair "Ann Arbor Street Art Fair". Downtown Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor. July 16 - July 24. www.Artfair.org

Blind Pig "Silent Films" Terrible as the Dawn, King Under the Mountain, and Arsonist Chair will also perform. Tickets: \$5 under 21, \$8. 18 and over welcome. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., **Ann Arbor**. 9 p.m. July 14. 734-996-8555. www.blindpigmusic.com

Go Comedy! Improv Theater "The Go Comedy! All Star Showdown" Tickets: \$18. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. June 25 - July 30. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Kerrytown Concert House "Three Worlds Trio" Jazz. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., **Ann Arbor**. 8 p.m. July 15. 734-763-4186. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Live Nation "Thousand Foot Krutch" Tickets: \$30. Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress St., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. July 21. www.saintandrewsdetroit.com/

Live Nation "Russ" Tickets: \$15. The Shelter, 431 E. Congress St., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. July 22. www.saintandrewsdetroit.com/

MotorCity Casino Hotel "The Whispers" Tickets: \$35-\$45. Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., **Detroit**. 8 p.m. July 23. 800-745-3000. www.olympiaentertainment.com

MotorCity Casino Hotel "Chris Isaak" First Comes The Night Tour. Tickets: \$38-\$55. Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., **Detroit**. 8 p.m. July 15. 800-745-3000. www.soundboarddetroit.com

Olympia Entertainment "Joel and Victoria Osteen" America's Night of Hope. Tickets: \$15 plus additional fees. Comerica Park, 2100 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. July 23. www.olympiaentertainment.com

Royal Oak Commission for the Arts "2016 Summer Concert Series" Pre-show with The Detroit School of Rock and Pop Music followed by Theo "Gridiron" Spight and Friends, and Zap Toro with the City Style Tango Dancers. Center Street between Third and Fourth Streets, Center Street, **Royal Oak**. 6 p.m. July 21. 248-246-3201. <http://romi.gov/arts>

Summer Carillon Concert Series "Linda Dzuris" Concert is free to the public. Elliott Tower at Oakland University, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, **Rochester**. 6 p.m. July 22. www.oakland.edu/elliott-tower

The Carr Center "Evenings in Paradise" Showcase of musical performances and entertainment by local and national jazz and R&B favorites. Paradise Valley Beatrice Buck Park, See website for location details, **Detroit**. June 7 - Aug. 25. www.downtowndetroitparks.com

The Fillmore Detroit "Gary Clark Jr. - The Story of Sonny Boy Slim Tour" Tickets: \$25-\$60. The Fillmore Detroit, 2115 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. July 21. 313-961-5451. www.thefillmoredetroit.com

The Fillmore Detroit "Garbage" Tickets: \$29.50-\$59.50. The Fillmore Detroit, 2115 Woodward Ave., **Detroit**. 7 p.m. July 16. 313-961-5451. www.thefillmoredetroit.com



Editor's Pick

Pitch a Tent. It's Time for The Ringwald's Summer Camp.

The Ringwald Theatre is hopping in a time machine and heading back to the 1950s for unending Summer Nights with LUBE: An Unauthorized Grease'd-Up Parody.

Danny (Vince Kelley) and Sandy (Richard Payton) meet at a cute beach, but their romance is short-lived, as Sandy has to go back to Australia. Or does she? When Sandy shows up for school at Rydell High, hilarity

ensues. Join the whole gang for a twisted take on a beloved musical, which contains adult language and situations.

LUBE: An Unauthorized Grease'd-Up Parody opens on Friday, July 15 and plays through Monday, August 8. Showtime is 8 p.m. on Friday, Saturday, and Monday nights at The Ringwald Theatre at 22742 Woodward Ave. in Ferndale. Tickets are \$10 on Monday night and \$20 on Friday and Saturday nights. For more information, call 248-545-5545 or visit www.TheRingwald.com.

Poor Man's Art Collective Gives Emerging Artists Chance to Shine

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

DETROIT – It's not easy for an emerging artist to get their work seen. But the Poor Man's Art Collective endeavors to make that goal a little more accessible.

"We created the Poor Man's Art Collective in 2003 as a response to a lot of artists that I had come across who were having difficulties showing their work in galleries, contests and exhibitions," said Geno Harris, the Collective's co-founder. "It's because they were emerging and or they did not have the experience or an art degree. So they felt a bit disenfranchised. And it was my experience as well with trying to shop my art around and trying to get some kind of direction or guidance."

Mychal Noir is the Collective's other co-founder.

"The Collective came about out of frustration, to be honest," Noir picked up. "Geno and I had tried to go to several different galleries to get our work shown and we were always turned away because we were self-taught artists. So after all of the galleries and established places turned us away we just decided to rent out spaces and do it ourselves. We all just pooled our resources and rented out a space and just did the damn thing, so to speak. And it just grew from there."

Thirteen years later, the Collective is still going strong. Their newest show, entitled Independent Artists United, opens July 15 at the Virgil Carr Center in downtown Detroit. It will feature the work of no less than 15 up and coming artists.

"The idea behind this show is kind of two-fold," Harris explained. "As always, it's to give the artists a platform to really show what art means to them. But also because Detroit is going through a resurgence we wanted to show Detroit

that the creative set - the visual artists, spoken artists, fashion designers, you name it - are a part of that resurgence and that there is quality art out here in Detroit that is affordable for the everyday person."

Noir said he is excited about the show. "The Independent Artists United show is probably our 14th or 15th show since



Cut/Mychal Noir and Geno Harris co-founded the Poor Man's Art Collective in 2003. BTL photo: Jason A. Michael

we started," he said. "This is maybe the second time that an establishment has approached us, which is the Virgil Carr Center. So I guess, finally, our hard work is starting to pay off. We have several new artists in the Collective and I think it's going to be a great show."

Humble beginnings

It's been 15 years since Noir first started painting.

"It was a natural progression for me," he said. "I used to be a poet and I used to write, which is my first passion. And I met Keronce Sims, who is an artist, and he kind of just inspired me to pick up a paint brush. I never intended to take myself seriously as an artist but it just kind of stuck. It was the one thing that didn't waver. My writing came and went but my painting stuck."

"People told me I was good at it, which made me enjoy it even more," Noir continued. "I still don't take myself

too seriously as an artist because I think when you do that you lose your creative edge. I just do what I feel and let the art speak for itself. I don't limit myself."

Harris started creating art the same year he helped found the Collective.

"I had just got a job working at the Detroit Institute of Arts in the contemporary art department and I had moved into the River Park Lofts down on Jefferson," Harris began. "Those loft spaces have these huge walls and I was trying to figure out what to do with them. I was watching one of my favorite shows on HGTV and the designer at the time had taken some every day grocery bags and did a wall treatment and made the wall look like suede. So I asked myself how could I do a smaller version and create some art? I just started figuring out what I was going to do."

Soon Harris was creating art with rapid frequency.

"Katrina Redd opened up the Redd Apple Gallery and I showed her one of my art pieces and she liked it," Harris said. "She showed it and she sold it within a day. Then she asked for more and I gave her four or five pieces and she sold them all within a week."

Harris is hoping for similar results for the Independent Artists United show. Featured artists include Harris and Noir as well as Reggie Abstrkt, Steven Athanas, Verbert Bennett, Jr., Judy Bowmen, Jay Coleman, Labeeb A. Hameed, Jack Kenny, Christie Love, Jimmie Scott Robinson, Dawud Shabazz, Venti Valdez, Duane Vaughn and Rosemarie Wilson.

Looking back over the past 13 years, Harris said he is happy with what the Collective has accomplished.

"We're proud as gay men to be contributing to Detroit's cultural renaissance," he said. "We want to help show what the lgbt community has to offer."

The Independent Artists United show will open at the Virgil Carr Center on July 15 and run through August 9. The Center is located at 311 East Grand River Avenue in Detroit.

Common Language Bookstore Book Launch

ANN ARBOR – Petra Kuppers will be appearing at Common Language Bookstore for a book launch party on July 20 at 6 p.m. The \aut\BAR will provide wine, beverages and light hors d'oeuvres. Kuppers will read from and discuss her new book of poems, "Pearl Stitch." The collection knits together feminism with queer and disability activism using cultural points of reference from

mythology to Madonna.

Kuppers is a disability culture activist, a community performance artist, and a Professor at the University of Michigan. She directs the Olimpias, an international disability culture performance collective. She lives in Ann Arbor with her partner and collaborator Stephanie Heit.



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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Laura Linney and Armistead Maupin pitching brand new 'Tales of The City'

Laura Linney is committed to playing Mary Ann Singleton. When other ongoing film/TV series might recast due to scheduling troubles or a host of other reasons, writer Armistead Maupin's main character for his novel "Tales of The City" has become a shared creation between author and actor. Proof: the two have been pitching an updated miniseries to studios, which, come on, had to be the charming highlight of any of those executives' days. The series, as it's currently described by Maupin himself, will be set in modern-day San Francisco, with Mary Ann and best friend Michael Tolliver in Baby Boomer late middle age. What they'll be up to is a mystery, but it hardly matters (honestly, it could well be an actual mystery, since they've become embroiled in those before); we just want to watch these lovable characters grow as old as possible. Olympia Dukakis is already attached to the project, too, so now all that has to happen is for that elusive "go" light to turn green.



Laura Linney. Photo: KathClick

Jim Parsons joins the cast of 'Hidden Figures'

The forthcoming nonfiction book "Hidden Figures" is that rare property so movie-ready that even before its publication date (Sept. 6), a film version is already in production. Concerning the little-known history of the African-American women mathematicians who provided NASA with the data necessary to dominate the Space Race and give the US an edge in that arena of the Cold War, the book by Margot Lee Shetterly should go a few steps toward dismantling the historical face of science as white and male. And the movie, already scheduled for release in early 2017 - no doubt to coincide with Black History Month - and directed by Theodore Melfi ("St. Vincent") will star Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, Kirsten Dunst, Kevin Costner and Jim Parsons. We're ready to see this one right now, just as long as it doesn't prioritize its helpful white characters and turn into "The Help Helps In Space."

Wanda Sykes 'Dream Team'

Wanda Sykes' recurring role on "Black-ish" has us wanting more. It's been too long since she was a regular on a hit series, and frankly we need her. That's why it's good news to hear she's working on a pilot for "My Name is Earl" producer Marc Buckland that could land her back on weekly TV. The title - for now, anyway - is "Dream Team." It's about a soccer coach who's gotten a little rusty and who then has to shepherd a group of 8-year-olds as they learn the sport. Justin Long stars as the coach, alongside Betty Gilpin ("Nurse Jackie") and gay comic actor Parvesh Cheena ("Outsourced"). As with all pilots, this may be the first and last you ever hear about it, but you never know. In the meantime, Sykes is also shooting an untitled action comedy with Goldie Hawn and Amy Schumer. Look, anything but another "Ice Age" movie.

'Broadway: The Next Generation' has a cast of thousands

Well, OK, not thousands. But a lot of people. And this forthcoming documentary is from Rick McKay, whose career is very sincerely focused on documenting the Broadway stage. He already made "Broadway: The Golden Age," "Elaine Stritch at Liberty" and this year's "Broadway: Beyond The Golden Age," so he's pretty much your guy for this sort of thing. As you might guess from its title, it's set to showcase the people taking musical theater into the next few decades. People like Lin-Manuel Miranda, Jonathan Groff, Anika Noni Rose, Billy Porter and Megan Hilty. Not that the old guard isn't represented. They speak, too. And by "they" we mean Barbara Cook, Lillias White, Betty Buckley, Michael Crawford, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Lea Salonga, Joanna Gleason, Rosemary Harris, Kelly Bishop, Debbie Allen, Cherry Jones, Nathan Lane, Richard Thomas, Loretta Devine, Donna Murphy, Bebe Neuwirth, John Lithgow, Frank Langella, and about seven dozen other names you know. The bad news? It's not due until 2018, which is probably still sooner than you'll get a ticket to "Hamilton."

Romeo San Vicente came crawling back to Broadway.

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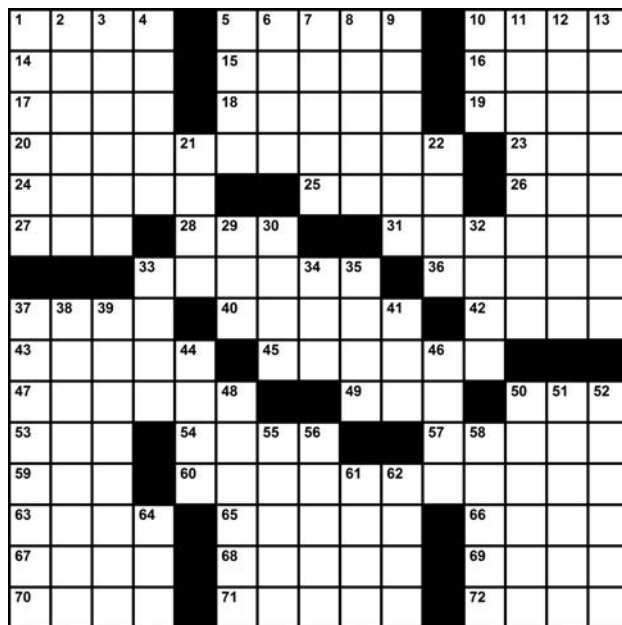
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- 1 Hazard for Sheehan
- 5 E with a queer orientation
- 10 Barely makes, with "out"
- 14 Inventor Elias
- 15 "___ you loud and clear!"
- 16 Stuff stuffed under G-strings
- 17 Male mating call?

- 18 Menotti's middle name
- 19 "___ put it another way ..."
- 20 Homophobic TV doctor of the '70s
- 23 Bloom of "The Producers"
- 24 Peaks in Peru
- 25 Words said near crystal balls
- 26 Eligible for soc. sec.
- 27 Teakettle sound
- 28 Env. stuffer
- 31 Wilde tragedy banned in London
- 33 Anita, who founded the antigay group Save Our Children

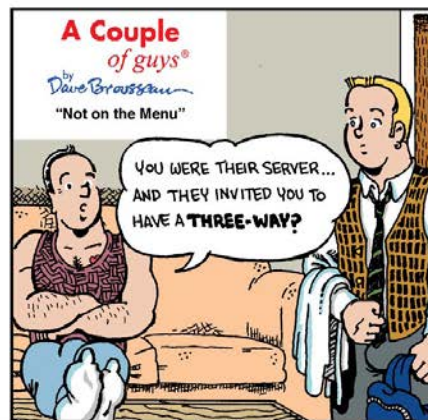
- 36 Frugal sort
- 37 "Quills" subject
- 40 Move stealthily
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- 43 Exams on sexual technique?
- 45 President who called gay people "sick unfortunates"
- 47 Middle point
- 49 Mineo of "Rebel Without a Cause"
- 50 Russian commune
- 53 Like hard-core porn
- 54 Tobias pseudonym
- 57 Former defensive tackle Tualo
- 59 Interjection for Ernst Roehm
- 60 Pope who decried homosexuality as "intrinsically evil"
- 63 "Are you up ___?"
- 65 Michelangelo piece with stones of stone
- 66 Park of Queens
- 67 Ron Howard film with Ellen DeGeneres
- 68 Autobiography of Grace's roommate?
- 69 Adolescent affliction
- 70 Matches a poker bet
- 71 Elton's tube
- 72 They depend on their masters

Down

- 1 The "T" in T.E. Lawrence
- 2 Caesar and Antony
- 3 Lammies, e.g.
- 4 Britten's change
- 5 Commands to attack
- 6 Sticking point

- 7 Beginning to come?
- 8 Places for plaques
- 9 Some Western homes
- 10 "The Name of the Rose" writer
- 11 He played to homophobia to help get Bush reelected in 2004
- 12 Put on a pedestal
- 13 Cincinnati gay bar
- 21 Friendly opening
- 22 Consenting votes
- 29 B'way locale
- 30 Singer Vikki
- 32 Blades of grass, collectively
- 33 Cold-cock
- 34 Born, to Bonheur
- 35 Some like them hot
- 37 Ancient Greek gay, perhaps
- 38 415, in San Francisco
- 39 He gunned down Harvey Milk
- 41 Org. that uses ball-washers
- 44 Belgrade resident
- 46 Mapa of "Switched at Birth"
- 48 Go over proofs again
- 50 Kahlo's country
- 51 "Bye Bye Birdie" writer Brecher
- 52 Makes erect
- 55 Blown away
- 56 Mischievous type
- 58 Stravinsky string, perhaps
- 61 "To Kill a Mockingbird" character
- 62 In a lazy way
- 64 Boob tubes

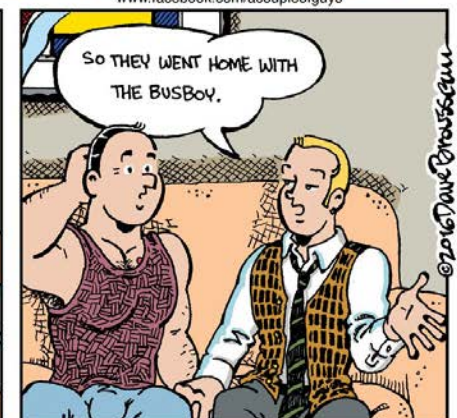
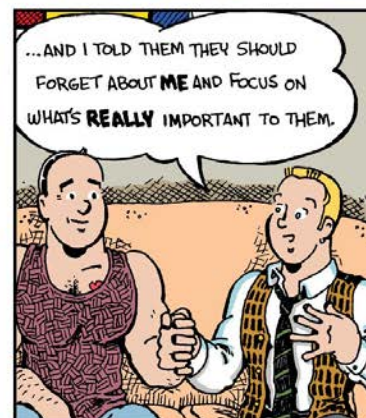
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The Youth Drop-In Center provides a **safe place** for youth, ages 13-20, to engage their peers for networking, fun, **support** and learning. **Open Fridays & Saturdays, 4pm-9pm.**

The Center has an XBOX 360 and games, pool table, board games, WIFI, Netflix, and much more.

Contact Tevin Giles, tgiles@goaffirmations.org for more information and to subscribe to monthly calendars.

XTL Youth Leadership Development Program

A six month program that works with 15 youth, ages 13-20, throughout Metro Detroit to learn valuable leadership skills and advocacy for issues facing LGBTQ youth. **This program has two meeting sites youth can choose from: Detroit and Ferndale.** Youth receive monthly stipends and transportation stipends.

Contact Lilianna Reyes, lreyes@goaffirmations.org to join the new group beginning in July 2016.

XTL Youth Workforce Development Program

A six month program that works with 12 young people, ages 13-24, throughout Metro Detroit to teach them workforce skills. They operate a youth inspired store (Recess: Store, Cafe, and Lounge). Youth are mentored by a Business Advisory Council from representatives from local businesses, financial institutions, automotive industry, and many more. Youth receive monthly stipends and transportation stipends.

Contact Lilianna Reyes, lreyes@goaffirmations.org to join the new group beginning in July 2016.



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