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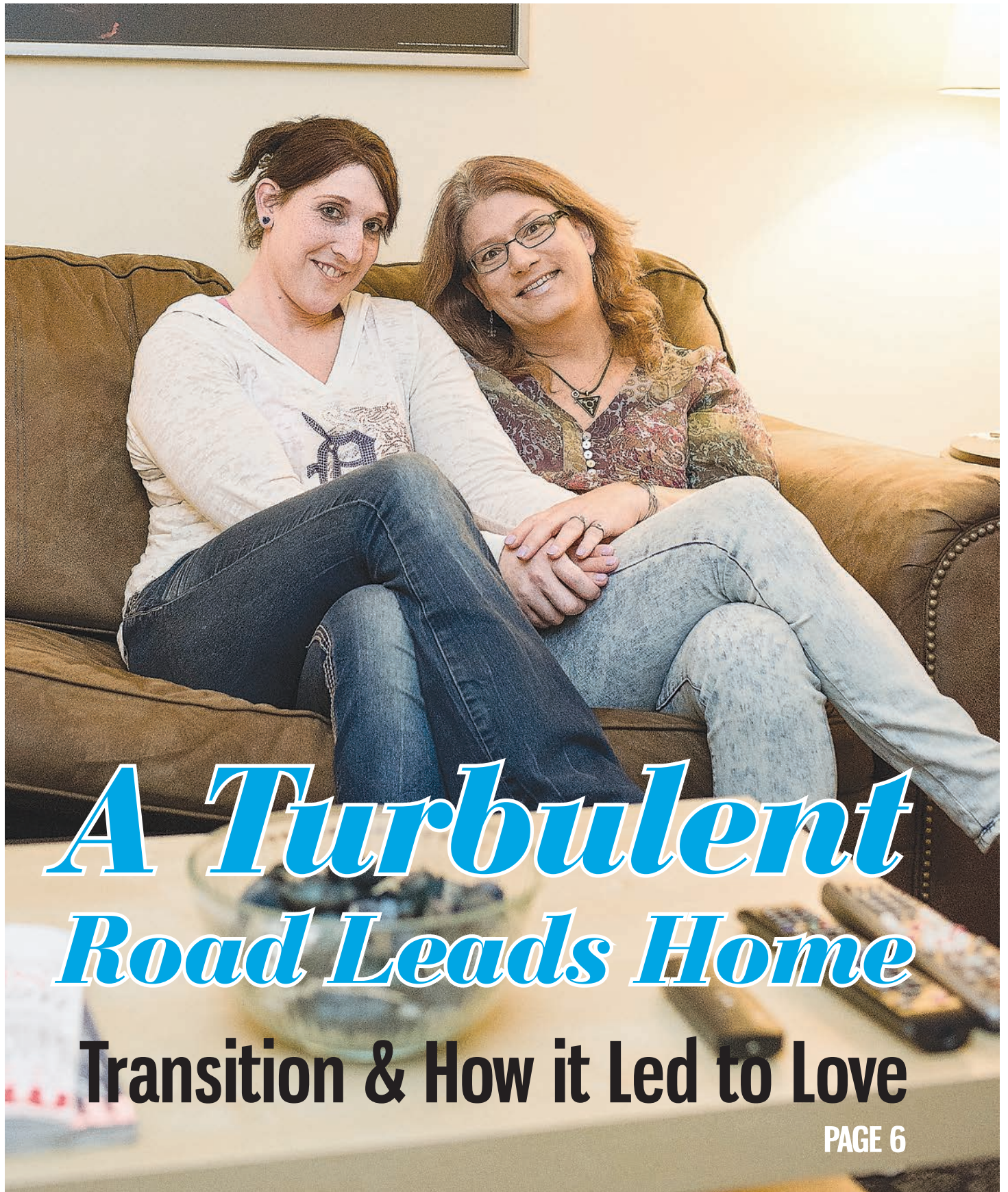
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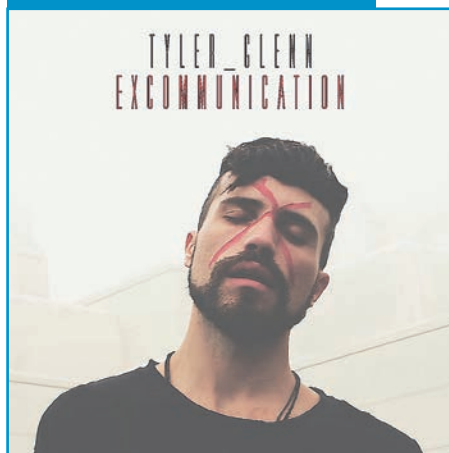
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Time to Close the Immigration Loophole: End Illegal Profiling

Advocates submit policy guidance to DHS to close profiling loophole

BY BTL STAFF

At critical moment, as Obama Administration dismantles Muslim special registry, guidelines to end profiling in immigration enforcement gains urgency and momentum. On Dec. 29, the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance submitted a widely supported policy guidance to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to prohibit profiling on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, religion, language, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Following a year of relentless advocacy by NQAPIA, staff from the President's Domestic Policy Council requested the model guidance language. In this time of political uncertainty and uneasiness, the administration's recent dismantling of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System - which gave rise to "special registration" that targeted Muslims and devastated immigrant communities after the Sept. 11 attacks - was welcomed by advocates.

"LGBTQ communities of color that NQAPIA represents have faced an unprecedented acceleration of violence and continue to be mistreated and singled out at airports, local neighborhoods, and peaceful gatherings," said Sasha W., NQAPIA Organizing Director.

"Now is the time for DHS to build upon the elimination of NSEERS and close the loophole to prohibit profiling in immigration enforcement," said Glenn Magpantay, NQAPIA Executive Director.

He continued, "Currently there is no policy against profiling in immigration enforcement. The U.S Department of Justice issued a guidance in 2014 barring profiling, but exempted the DHS and its agencies. As a matter of federal public policy, it is actually permissible for TSA, ICE, and CBP to assert that someone is a threat based on no other information other than what is profiled."

A Model for Change

For the past year, racial justice and immigrant rights advocates have been pushing to close this gaping loophole. To assist in this effort, NQAPIA developed the model guidance language to enact desperately needed protections against profiling. The model guidance prohibits DHS and its agencies from using race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, language, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity as the sole basis for monitoring, investigating, stopping, detaining,

“LGBTQ communities of color that NQAPIA represents have faced an unprecedented acceleration of violence and continue to be mistreated and singled out at airports, local neighborhoods, and peaceful gatherings.”

Sasha W., NQAPIA Organizing Director.

questioning, or searching an individual, or placing an individual into detention or removal proceedings.

It also details:

- Examples of inappropriate uses of profiling in border security, national security, and state and local law enforcement.
- A complaint process for addressing allegations of profiling.
- A remedy for when inappropriate profiling is used. Resulting detention or deportation should be deemed improper and revoked, as already exists in criminal proceedings where wrongfully obtained evidence is suppressed.

Racial profiling has been used in federal programs that have ravaged communities of color such as the "War on Drugs," "War on Terror," and in immigration enforcement abuses that created laws like Arizona's SB1070 and other collaborations between ICE and local law enforcement. Profiling has been widely rejected both on moral grounds and because of its ineffectiveness.

Republican President George W. Bush issued the first set of federal guidance barring profiling in law enforcement in 2003. There is widespread and bipartisan support against profiling and support for closing the DOJ loophole.

To that end, NQAPIA delivered over a thousand postcards and hundreds of e-petition signatures to DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson, demonstrating mass-based support for the end of profiling in DHS. NQAPIA also organized a protest on the 15th anniversary of 9/11 demanding an end to legalized profiling.

"There is no more urgent time than now to close the profiling loophole and end illegal profiling. We urge the President to take immediate action on this issue," concluded Magpantay.



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The Turbulent Road to Transition

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

When Kara Marie Ramsey finally embraced herself and came out as transgender in September 2013, she asked herself, "Who's ever going to love me for me? Who's ever going to want to share and be a part of my life for the rest of my life?"

Still struggling with her gender dysphoria – the feeling of being at odds with the gender one is assigned at birth – she thought to herself, "There's not going to be anybody. They're all going to see me as this freak show or there's going to be other transgender people out there with their plates full dealing with skeletons in their own closet.

Will I ever find someone on the same level as me where we're simpatico? You know, we connect not just emotionally, but spiritually and physically. Someone I can relate to. I basically just wrote it off."

Until she met Jacqui Leaonna Turner in a local support group for transgender people.

"This beautiful, angelic soul walked into the room," Ramsey said. And just like that, she realized there is the possibility of love out there for transgender couples and "all is not doomed."

There relationship was a true gift considering their heartbreaking challenges on a path neither Ramsey nor Turner expected to lead to one another.

She is Kara

Growing up, Ramsey didn't relate to her male playmates. And while she never expressed herself or vocalized her feelings, if Ramsey had the choice between catching a frog and stuffing it in her pocket – as her little boy friends often did – or sitting down for a tea party with the girls, she secretly chose the latter.

"Cognitively, I didn't have the understanding at such a young age to make sense of what was happening. I knew something was wrong when I would look in the mirror and what I saw did not reflect how I felt on the inside," she said.

"Being a child of the '60s and with very little information available about transgender people and Hollywood playing up the whole cross-dressing thing in sitcoms and comedies ... it was all a big haha type of thing. I never saw it as being funny or comical, so I learned



Kara Marie Ramsey and Jacquiline Leaonna Turner at home. BTL photo: Andrew Potter

to repress all of those feelings in a world that was unaccepting and unwelcoming of someone who was born transgender."

Ramsey's effeminate ways as a child led to bullying, decades of being misunderstood, and severe depression.

"I was 8 when I discovered alcohol and started getting drunk to escape my perception of reality, which was a living hell and it progressively got worse as I got older" she said. "I transitioned to drugs by the age of 12 and by the time I was 24 was drinking fifths of Scotch every day and doing almost every drug except heroin."

Fortunately, Ramsey wound up in a drug and alcohol treatment center and has remained drug-free for the last 30 years. Now, Ramsey said she is able to drink socially again without

a problem.

But her gender dysphoria remains an issue. Over the years, she was admitted to mental institutions three different times and was diagnosed with bipolar and a borderline personality disorder.

Following multiple suicide attempts, mental health professionals medicated Ramsey to the point where she felt "zombie-like or catatonic." She survived 14 rounds of electroconvulsive, or shock, therapy, which erased periods of time from her memory that she will never get back.

"When they suggested it, I just wanted to die at that point, so whatever," she said. "I wanted help and I just wanted to stop hurting inside. The emotional pain was so severe that I agreed to this, but it didn't work."

While on disability as a result of her medical issues, Ramsey went back to Specs Howard School of Media Arts in Southfield in 2010 to earn a second degree in graphic design. Her first degree in 1994 is in video broadcasting.

Ramsey was searching online for graphic design jobs when she randomly came across the story of reality TV star and transgender girl Jazz Jennings – a documentary she identified with immediately.

"I was up 24/7 researching anything and everything I could learn about being transgender. The deeper I dug, the more dots started connecting themselves," she said. "Because obviously after 50 years I had accumulated 50 million and one questions as to why I felt certain ways during certain times about certain things. And they started answering themselves and I'm going, 'Whoa, wait a minute, really? This explains it, finally.'"

That was in August 2013. A year later, she legally changed her name and began hormone replacement therapy.

"I started seeing more and more Kara coming out. I was learning to apply makeup and grow longer hair," she said.

There was still one problem between her legs, so when she could in March 2016 – a day before her 53rd birthday – Ramsey had sex reassignment surgery.

She has tried to maintain a relationship with her family although it's a dysfunctional one.

"They don't understand nor do they want to," she said, adding that her sister, who was always "my rock" growing up, has now disowned her.

"But I've been so deeply blessed since Jacqui's come into my life. Her family has embraced me as one of their own."

Jacqui is Her

Having a supportive family was "pretty shocking" for Turner when she came out a little over a year ago.

"I didn't want to disappoint anyone or have anybody even think those were the kind of thoughts or feelings I was having. I was terrified," she said.

Growing up in a contemporary Catholic household and serving as an altar boy, Turner did her best to live by the book with her loyal rescue dog, Ginger, by her side. Except for

“Transitioning is my choice, not because I want attention, but because hiding this any longer would have taken me to my grave.”

W

when she painted her nails, pierced her ears and played dress-up with the girls.

Without knowing exactly what it means to be transgender, Turner said she felt "uncomfortable" discussing her feelings with her therapist at the time.

"She would ask me how I cope. Well, I didn't want to tell her I turned to women's clothes. That I would put make up on and hide in the closet where nobody knew about me in order to feel calm. Of course the shame comes with that. I'm not supposed to do that stuff so I'd masculinize myself even further. It was a constant battle," she said until she began hormone replacement therapy in 2015 at the age of 36.

It was suggested by another therapist who Turner finally opened up to. That same therapist was the first person to tell Turner she is transgender.

"Not a 'she-male' or a transvestite. Someone who feels this way because they were born in the wrong body," said Turner, who visited a cross-dressing group at one point and realized, "I don't feel the same as these other girls. I don't belong here. I'm like, 'Oh my God, my therapist is right. This can't be happening.'"

Turner admits that years of denying her truth led to her suicide attempt following a messy divorce, losing her job and falling into a deep depression.

But someone saved her.

"My daughter helped me discover who I am and I owe her my life for that," she said about one of her two sons who began displaying signs of being transgender as early as the age of 3.

An incident on the playground forever changed Turner.

"I saw the commotion and headed over to them. I heard her yelling at three boys who were picking on her because she was wearing a dress. She told them to stop treating her this way. That she's a girl, not a boy. She said, 'You will respect me and call me a girl.' She was 5. It just hit me. My daughter can stand up to these bullies in the world and express who she is and she's completely fine with it. I'm dad. I'm supposed to be doing those things and protecting her," said Turner who finally decided to transition.

"Transitioning is my choice, not because I want attention, but because hiding this any longer would have taken me to my grave," said Turner.

She came out to her children in March 2015.

"My therapist encouraged me to be open about it and not hide this from them," she said, adding that her original plan was to wait until they turned 18 or until they got married before opening up to them.

"But I knew that wasn't fair to any of us. As I was becoming more myself, it was getting harder and harder not to be myself, so one weekend I told them, 'Daddy's got something he wants to tell you.' At first my son was kind of sad because he didn't want me to be a girl, but I told him that daddy has always been a girl, but daddy has always presented himself as a guy and daddy doesn't feel comfortable that way. Daddy is still the same person. Daddy pulls engines out of cars and fixes cars, but daddy does it as a girl and will look like a girl and still be able to do those things like play football in the front yard and jump on the trampoline," she explained and they have since embraced her.

Now, it seems Turner's children have the best of both worlds.

"No matter how much you try to explain who you are or share your story, there are people who will just never understand," said Turner. This includes some of her coworkers in a male-dominated industry. She works at a local collision and body shop where her boss outed her for "safety reasons."

Despite this, Turner said she knows now more than ever that "showing the world who I am" is what she needs to do.

Reflecting True Gender

Leaving sweet messages on sticky notes for each other on the bathroom mirror every day helps to remind them to love themselves for who they are, but it's not easy.

"I grew up in a male body. There are so many features about myself that I wish I could change" said Turner. "However, I am more comfortable now even though I pick these features up that I see of him that I don't like – big hands, broad shoulders – I feel like other people see that and I question myself a lot of the time. For me, having the wrong parts really messes with me sometimes and I'll start crying. It's a constant reminder. It's not right. It's not who I am. I am ready to finally match my body up to how I feel."

Turner plans to have SRS surgery in July or August this year through the University of

See Transition, page 17

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Michelle Brown to Host Weekly Internet Radio Show

‘Collections’ explores intersectionality; features stories about people creating change

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

People who know Michelle Brown will say that she talks to everybody.

“I am always collecting lost souls, new friends and the people I’ve met throughout various parts of my life always have such great stories and are doing all kinds of stuff,” said Brown, a voice for women, African-Americans and the African-American LGBTQ community. Born and raised in Detroit, she has used her strength as a communicator to confront the issues of affordable housing, community development, gentrification, homelessness, drug addiction, and bringing HIV/AIDS housing to Detroit.

She will continue talking to everybody as the host of her own internet radio show called “Collections by Michelle Brown” on The Live Network presented by Elevation Nation Media Group.

Brown is always looking for new opportunities to add to her repertoire which includes advocating for youth empowerment. She has worked with several youth programs to initiate reading and writing workshops for children in the Detroit Public School System.

Brown is a guest columnist whose viewpoints have appeared locally and nationally in *Between The Lines*, *GBM News*, the *Detroit News*, *Michigan Citizen* and *Cherry Grrl*.

Brown has worked as a commentator on Radio Free Georgia’s “Alternative Perspectives,” and has appeared on *Democracy Now*. She co-hosts a blog talk radio show “Can We Talk For Real” which airs out of Chicago and a monthly open mic program “Evolution” in Ferndale. She is also a novelist, a children’s author and a poet.

“Collections” premieres at 7 p.m. Jan. 5 and will air every Thursday online. Brown spoke with BTL about the show described as “a natural, organic, authentic and powerful collections of interviews created to highlight the lives of those standing boldly in the crosshairs of their intersectionality and creating change as they move through life.”

“I think because of my background I’m able to express things in a way that reaches out and crosses barriers. This show is not just geared toward African-Americans. It’s geared toward everybody.”

What does intersectionality mean to you?

Right next to that in the dictionary is me. Don’t put me in one box or the other. I will be talking to people coast to coast and out of the country, even, about who they are and what they do. The things they have always been interested in. Everyone has something about them and when they walk into a room, you want to put them in this box rather than look at all these other things that people are capable of beyond what you see.

In what way does your voice matter?

When you start to talk about intersectionality, I think about one of my earliest experiences getting to know people in the transgender community. Someone said to me, ‘You don’t know what it’s like to walk into a room and be judged based on who you are.’ And I’m going uh, yeah, I do. As an African-American person, a woman who is a mother with an adult child that lost both of her parents – I can talk about the whole spectrum from being the child to being the caregiver and all the places in between.

I think because of my background I’m able to express things in a way that reaches out and crosses barriers. This show is not just geared toward African-Americans. It’s geared toward everybody and when you ask, “Why me?” I have often been the only black child in a group of white people, the only Catholic in a group of Baptists, the only gay person in a group of straight people, the only artist in a room full of political activists, an African-American woman who has that resourcefulness – the way you learn how to see the good and to reach out and help. As history is changing when pretty soon minorities will be the majority. How do we as women use all of our skills? Hopefully, everyone from a teacher to an octogenarian will see something in me and say, “You know what, if Michelle can be bold and do it, then I can be bold and go out and do it.”

What is something you have learned by talking to people?

That sometimes life’s a bitch and you have to stretch your toes out as far as



Tune in to “Collections by Michelle Brown” at 7 p.m. on Thursdays on The Live Network.

you can to touch the bottom so you can start to rise up.

Tell us something people might not know about you.

I am into worm composting to the point where I was making worm boxes and showing kids how to do it. I believe in the environment – composting, recycling and reusing. People say things like, “Oh, I love what you have on” and it’s something from 10 years ago. I recycle clothes. That part about the environment and how we’re going to live is really, really important to me. I also speak Spanish. I love all things

español. I have traveled to central and southern America and see myself living in one of those places in my golden years whenever I get to those.

Is there someone in the radio industry who inspires you?

I think I’m like a black Terry Gross. I’m an NPR nerd. I like to ask questions that make people think, like her. To help people learn more about each other and what we are doing and see themselves in that person. Engage the listener so they say, “I never thought about that.” Kind of like worm composting. Anybody can do that.

In Red States, Businesses Gearing Up to Fight Bathroom Bills

BY JONATHAN MATTISE

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) – Sean Henry, the president of Tennessee’s NHL team, is stunned he even has to explain why he hopes state legislators will snub bills similar to North Carolina’s transgender bathroom law, which has consumed that state for months and scared off businesses and sporting events.

The Nashville Predators team is among about 300 companies, ranging from health-care giant HCA to FedEx, joining under the moniker Tennessee Thrives to oppose bathroom and religious objection bills, which they consider discriminatory and bad for business. Companies in other GOP-led states have had success voicing opposition under similar names: Georgia Prospers, Opportunity West Virginia, Missouri Competes.

“I honestly cannot believe that in 2016 I’m actually asked a question as to why I would support anti-discrimination groups,” Henry said. “I think the real question is: who hasn’t joined?”

After the United States Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage in 2015, social conservatives turned to statehouses, seeking state laws to let businesses, pastors and government refuse services to LGBT people based on their religious objections to same-sex unions.

Social progressives hoping to hold back that tide appealed to citizens’ sense of equality and people’s pocketbooks.

Despite the political and economic repercussions that erupted in North Carolina, the American Civil Liberties Union expects an increase in statehouse proposals limiting LGBT protections in 2017.

Frank Cannon, president of the socially conservative American Principles Project, encouraged Republicans to push back against those trying to cast North Carolina’s bathroom bill as a financial liability. He pointed to a GOP wave led by President-elect Donald Trump as proof that the public still embraces social conservatism.

“Republicans must keep fighting because, while the left was able to successfully define HB2 as an economic issue and convince elite corporations and celebrities to punish the state of North Carolina for protecting the privacy of young girls, their overreach clearly backfired in the presidential race in a big way,” he said.

North Carolina’s law omits LGBT people from state anti-discrimination protections and orders transgender people to use bathrooms in schools and government buildings that align with the sex on their birth certificate. Businesses, conventions and sports events have avoided North Carolina in protest, and

After the United States Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage in 2015, social conservatives turned to statehouses, seeking state laws to let businesses, pastors and government refuse services to LGBT people based on their religious objections to same-sex unions.

Republican Gov. Pat McCrory lost his reelection under heavy criticism for signing the law.

Now, as lawmakers begin their work this winter, some Republicans are heeding business groups’ warnings to steer clear of the laws, even in some of Trump’s more favorable turf.

Kentucky looks on paper like a state likely to embrace a law like North Carolina’s: the GOP won control of both legislative chambers in November for the first time in a century, and Republican Gov. Matt Bevin joined a lawsuit this year challenging the federal government’s directive that public schools allow students to use the bathroom of their gender identity. Yet Bevin, a staunch social conservative, has dismissed calls for a bathroom bill.

“Why would we?” he said. “Is there anyone you know in Kentucky who has trouble going to the bathroom? The last thing we need is more government rules. I’m cutting red tape, not creating it.”

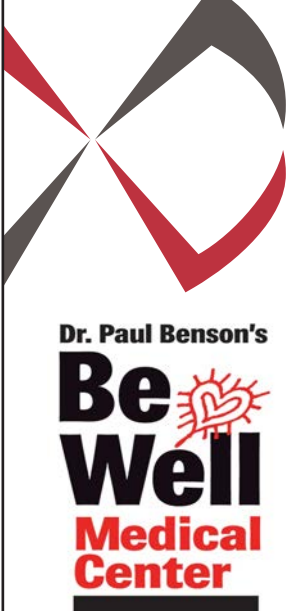
This spring, Georgia’s legislature passed a bill aimed at shielding religious people who deny services because of a moral objection. Within days, Coca-Cola and other big-name Georgia companies joined prominent Hollywood figures calling for a veto. The Walt Disney Co., Marvel Studios and Salesforce.com threatened to take business elsewhere. The NFL said the potential law would factor into whether Atlanta hosts the 2019 or 2020 Super Bowl.

Georgia’s Republican Gov. Nathan Deal vetoed it.

In West Virginia, where Trump won every county and more than 68 percent of the popular vote, the incoming state Senate President said his poor state desperately needs economic opportunity and should not wade into controversial social issues in 2017.

“Putting forth solutions to problems that don’t exist is not going to be on our agenda,”

See Red States, page 14



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2016: LGBT Year in Review



BY LISA KEEN

2016 will go down in the LGBT history books as a year of sobering pushback against the many gains won in the years prior. In the space of 12 months, the community has gone from having the most pro-LGBT president in history to bracing for a new president who has, so far, nominated a line of cabinet secretaries who are mostly hostile to equal rights for LGBT people. It has seen the largest mass shooting in U.S. history target an LGBT nightclub and an unprecedented number of anti-LGBT bills in state legislatures.

As the year closes, activists are focused on preparing to defend their gains and dodge the seemingly inevitable attacks of the future.

“This is the moment we are called to resist,” said National Center for Lesbian Rights Executive Director Kate Kendall, following the presidential election. “We are about to be tested as never before, and speaking for myself, and NCLR, we will not stand down, sit idle or be silent in the face of oppression, bullying or threat. This election result is devastating for our nation and especially for the most vulnerable. But we will fight on and will never give up.”

Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin said, “This is a crucial moment for our nation and for the LGBTQ movement. The election of a man who stands opposed to our most fundamental values has left us all stunned ... At a time like this, we don’t slow down. We double down.”

But first, a quick look back at the most momentous events in LGBT history for 2016:



1. Donald Trump was elected president

Despite being called the most pro-gay Republican presidential candidate in history and even embracing the LGBT community in front of a hostile Republican convention, Trump’s election has left the community stunned with trepidation. At stake are not only myriad regulations that have sought to curb discrimination against LGBT people in

federal workplaces, hospitals and the military, but also the likelihood of one or more extreme conservatives on the U.S. Supreme Court.

2. LGBT support was largely behind Clinton

From the beginning of the 2016 campaign, all signs pointed to most LGBT support marshaling behind Democratic hopeful Hillary Clinton. And she made clear she valued that support, appointing an openly gay campaign

manager and liaison to the community and by speaking out for LGBT equality in many, if not most, of the speeches she gave.

3. Gunman massacres 49 in Orlando Pulse Nightclub

In what has been called the worst mass shooting in U.S. history, American citizen Omar Mateen, 29, a security guard from Fort Pierce, Florida, entered an LGBT nightclub in Orlando at 2 a.m. Sunday, June 12, and shot 102 people, killing 49 before police killed him. While Mateen called 911 during the attack and declared his allegiance with the Islamic State (aka ISIS or ISIL), President Obama said there was no “clear evidence” that the shooter was “directed externally” by any terrorist organization.

4. Justice Antonin Scalia died

Antonin Scalia, the U.S. Supreme Court justice most hostile to equal rights for LGBT people, died suddenly and unexpectedly, giving President Obama an opportunity to nominate a more moderate replacement. But even though Obama still had 11 months left in office, the Republican-dominated Senate took the position that the next president – not the current one – should get to choose Scalia’s replacement.

5. Supreme Court agrees to take up transgender case

With only eight justices on the bench, the U.S. Supreme Court announced it would review a federal appeals court ruling that favored allowing a transgender student to use a school bathroom consistent with his gender identity, of which he was denied access. The case, *Gloucester v. Grimm*, asks the court to decide the validity of a U.S. Department of Education interpretation of Title IX, a federal law prohibiting discrimination based on sex in education. The Department says the law also prohibits discrimination based on gender identity.

6. Unprecedented number of anti-LGBT bills

Almost 200 anti-LGBT bills were introduced into state legislatures around the country, a number the ACLU said was “more anti-LGBT bills this year than in any other time.” One that passed into law in North Carolina, HB 2, garnered national attention largely because of its scope. The law prohibited transgender people from using a public restroom for the gender they are living as and barred any



local government from having an ordinance that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

7. Backlash against HB 2 was swift and powerful

Reaction to North Carolina's boldly discriminatory new law, HB 2, quickly turned against the legislators who ushered it into being, including North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory. McCrory helped get the law passed and vigorously defended it in the media once it passed. But many corporations and major sporting events announced they would move out of the state because of the discriminatory law. The U.S. Attorney General filed suit against the law. And by year's end, McCrory found himself losing his re-election bid to a challenger who opposed the law. It was, overall, a message to legislators pushing anti-LGBT legislation in the future that they could not count on the public in general to stand by and let them discriminate.

8. Jeff Sessions nominated as attorney general

While the current U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch jumped in quickly to stop anti-LGBT discrimination in North Carolina and elsewhere, President-elect Trump's nominee to replace her represents her antithesis. Sessions has spent years opposing equal rights for LGBT people, including his time as U.S. senator. He voted for every anti-LGBT measure and against every pro-LGBT measure.



He also once claimed, "Gays and lesbians have not been denied basic access to things such as health or schooling or to the ballot box."

9. Senate confirms gay man as Secretary of the Army

In May, the U.S. Senate confirmed the nomination of an openly gay man to serve as Secretary of the U.S. Army – the first openly gay person to serve as the head of any military branch. The confirmation of Eric Fanning, by voice vote, came very quickly after U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas, lifted a hold he had put on the nomination.

10. Tammy Baldwin wins leadership role

The U.S. Senate's only openly LGBT member, Tammy Baldwin, D-Wisc., was selected for one of the Democratic Party's top leadership positions in the Senate, following the Nov. 8 elections. The Senate new Minority Leader, Charles Schumer of New York, chose Baldwin to serve as Secretary of the Senate Democratic Conference (aka Senate Democratic Caucus). The position is charged with keeping minutes of the Caucus meetings and helping organize its meetings and is the fourth ranking position among the Democrats. Beyond that, however, the position ensures that Baldwin will have a strong influence in Democratic actions in the Senate and, perhaps, positions her to seek even more important roles in the future.



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Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

A Rose by Any Other Name

There's a joke about the gay guy who goes for his annual medical checkup. He coughs three times and bends over for the proverbial Pokemon.

The proc-doc finds a rose, retrieves it, then another, and finally a blooming dozen. American Beauties all. "Where did these come from?" he asks. "How should I know," coos the retentive patient. "Isn't there a card?"

Having seen "Gypsy" with Ethel Merman belting out "Everything's coming up roses," I'm sure the proc-doc joke has other punchlines. "What's matter, doc, what's a bottom's rosebud for?"

In spite of Dr. P's & Q's advice that an exit is not an entrance, there are those who prefer revolving doors for convenience and quick turn around. (But not in hotel lobbies.)

In truth, we humans – straight and gay – have been widening our horizons since the ancient Cretans gifted the world with the perfect tool for that purpose: the dildo.

We've updated Old Faithful with AAA batteries, packaging, celebrity sizes and nicknames. For the sports minded there are plastic balls on a

Occasionally, an excess of zeal and/or KY means an unplanned visit to the ER Lost & Found Department. A variety of objects d'art have been recovered, cataloged and occasionally bronzed. Gerbils, for example.

rope. A well-placed pillow is a useful prop for the required gymnastics, and an understanding chiropractor helps.

Occasionally, an excess of zeal and/or KY means an unplanned visit to the ER Lost & Found Department. A variety of objects d'art have been recovered, cataloged and occasionally bronzed. Gerbils, for example.

Unbelievable? You're right. But this lovable critter is the subject of one of America's persistent urban legends. It surfaced about 1985, and was given out in some anti-gay media as fact not fabrication.

Jan Harold Brunvand, an urban legend expert, says he collected a dozen versions of this homophobic story. (In one, the unwilling gerbil sex partner is wrapped in a plastic bag and given a dash of laughing gas to enhance it's track record. Variants include mice, ferrets and neutered ragmops.)

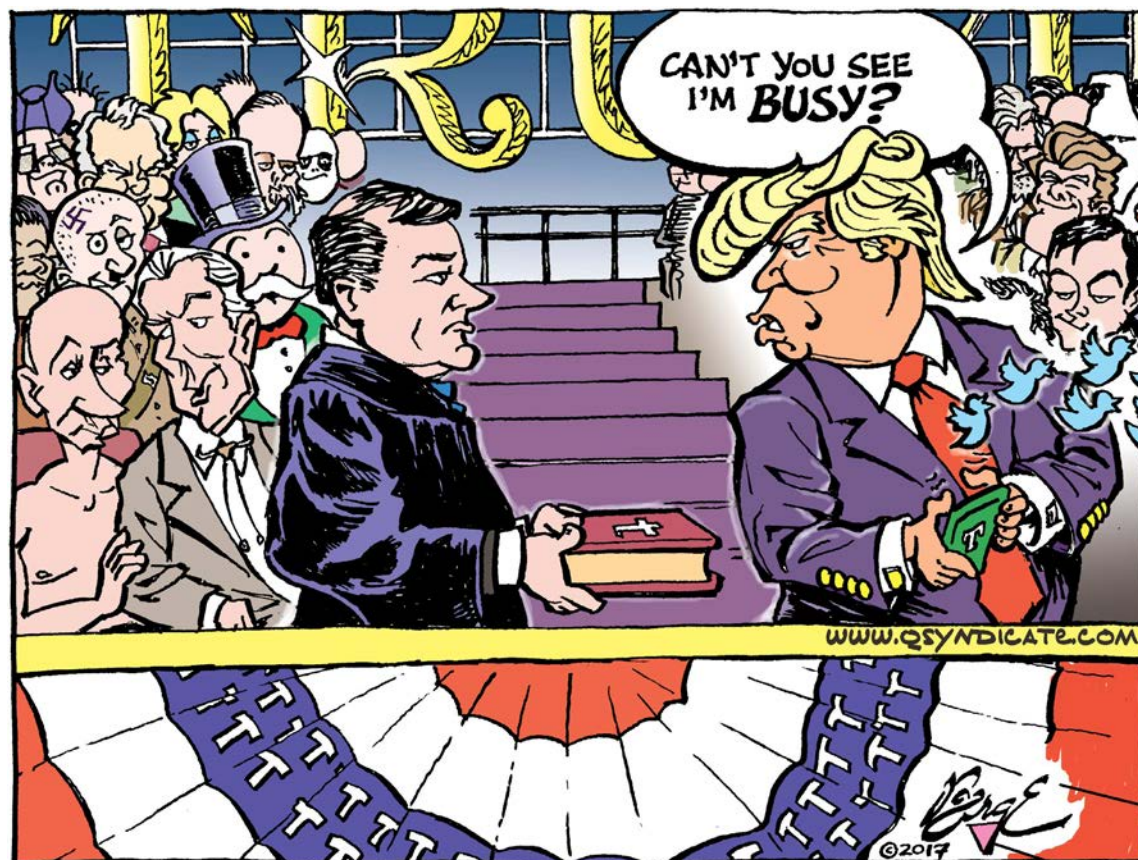
Another urban legend is the Gay Roommate Caper. (Campus straight guy is chloroformed by horny roomie and wakes up with an unaccountable need for Prep H.) Variation: Army setting. And – God Bless America! – a few soldier jerkoffs actually wore, "Watch Out for the Ether Man" t-shirts.

According to Brunvand, the source can be traced back to "The Arabian Nights," with wine as the narcotic, a pasha as perpetrator and European youngsters as the victims.

There are AIDS scares, too. Here's one that made the rounds: Beware where you sit at the movies, HIV-laced hypodermic needles are being left on the seats. (Always carry an inflatable whoopee cushion.)

My favorite urban legend – circa 2017 – concerns the unsedated GOP homophobe who got his minuscule Trumper caught in a revolving door at rush hour. He wasn't sure if he was coming or going. (Don't hold your breath, Mary!)

Charles@pridesource.com



The Frivolist

Stink, Stank, Stunk: 7 of 2016's Biggest Grinches

BY MIKEY ROX

From wayward politicians and Olympians to dangerous cults and corporations, this year had all the tenderness of a seasick crocodile. But before we bid adieu to 12 beleaguered months that we're all eager to send packing, let's vilify once more these seven Grinches with hearts (and other appendages) three sizes too small.

Scientology

Three years after Leah Remini publicly cut ties with the Church of Scientology (of which she was a member for more than 30 years), the actress continues her crusade to expose the underbelly of the "religion," which culminated in November with the premiere of the explosive docu-series *Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath*, currently airing on A&E. Through interviews with other ex-members, the reality program provides new details on what appears to be commonplace violence and harassment through the ranks; makes shocking revelations about the church's policy on shunning anyone suspicious of Scientology and its opposition to same-sex relationships; reveals gross abuses of power by leader David Miscavige, and shows harrowing glimpses of its cult-like brainwashing abilities.

Donald Trump

Every week it seems President-Elect Trump is embroiled in a new controversy, the flames of which are fanned by his famously thin skin and a strange affinity for stream-of-consciousness social media usage. If he wasn't degrading women, he was practicing xenophobia, and if he ran out of steam in those regards, it was because he was busy choosing anti-LGBT cabinet members while taking potshots at the United States military. By all accounts, he's the thinking person's worst nightmare – most of whom will spend the next four years with their heads under the covers.

By all accounts, Trump's the thinking person's worst nightmare.

Death

They say the only two certainties in life are death and taxes – and 2016 gave us a long list of famous people who no longer have to pay taxes. This year we said goodbye to some of the most prolific people on the planet (many of them allies to the LGBT community), including (but not limited to) David Bowie, Prince, Alan Rickman, Garry Marshall, Florence Henderson, Elie Wiesel, Alexis Arquette, Gene Wilder, George Michael, Anton Yelchin, Carrie Fisher and her mom Debbie Reynolds.

The Alt-Right

This election year gave us myriad new concepts to bear, like how Russia is very much involved in our politics. But perhaps the most disturbing was the rise of the alt-right, whose ideology is firmly planted in white nationalism (and homophobia; don't let 'em fool ya), even if the cowards behind the movement won't admit as much. Far more frightening than a journey to 2020 with a Commander-in-Queef at the helm, it's this group of "young rebels" – like traitor-to-our-cause Milo Yiannopoulos, a gay conservative "journalist" – of whom we should really be afraid.

Fake clickbait headlines on Facebook hooked users more often than real headlines.

Facebook

Buzzfeed News made an astonishing discovery last month: Fake clickbait headlines on Facebook hooked users more often than real headlines. In fact, Facebook users engaged with farcical election-related headlines – most of which were either anti-Clinton or pro-Trump, says CBS News – with a share, like or comment more than 8.7 millions times while real news from legitimate sources garnered engagement fewer than 7.4 million times. What does this prove, you ask? Something you already know: We're a nation full of idiots, and now they're in charge.



Gatherers in Cannon Ball, North Dakota celebrate news Dec. 4 that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers won't grant an easement for the Dakota Access oil pipeline. Swayed by possible violence over the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) in North Dakota, the Obama administration declared a new route must be chosen. AP Photo: David Goldman

Dakota Access

If Dakota Access, the energy company responsible for a proposed underground oil pipeline from North Dakota to Illinois, had its way, it would have bulldozed tribal land of the Standing Rock Sioux while waving its middle finger in the rearview mirror. But despite bringing in a security force with attack dogs to goad environmental protesters into submission, the Army Corps of Engineers eventually denied easement of the line, declaring the land off limits while alternative routes are investigated.

Ryan Lochte

Olympic gold medalist Ryan Lochte, who endeared himself to the nation during the 2012 Games with his every-bro demeanor and doofus-y grin, made us collectively regret that he was ever issued a passport when he falsely claimed that he and three other American swimmers were robbed at gunpoint in Rio de Janeiro. While surveillance video of what really went down that drunken night at a Brazilian gas station didn't bode well for anyone involved – guns were actually drawn – his "over-exaggerated" retelling of the events had us wishing he'd swim back under the rock he came out of.

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.

Creep of the Week

Samuel Rodriguez

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

The Trump transition team doesn't want this to get out, but I got my hands on the questionnaire given to the clergy wanting to pray at his inauguration.



It consists of three questions:

Are LGBTQ people children of God?

Does God hate the poors because they are too dumb/lazy to be rich?

Who's your daddy?

The only acceptable answers are:

Firm NO.

Firm YES.

Firm Trump.

It turns out that a lot of people passed this test! Because, according to Christianity Today, the Trump prayer lineup is bigger than any president's since Reagan! As in Ronald, Patron Saint of the GOP.

CT also calls it an "unusually broad and diverse clergy lineup" because they are not all Christian (there's a rabbi!), they are not all men (there's a woman!), and they're not all white (there's a black man and a Hispanic man!). Good work, everyone! Discrimination is OVER after Jan. 20, thank God!

Not included in this "broad and diverse" line up are all the Muslims praying that they don't get hate-crimed by Trump's supporters.

One of Trump's chosen is Samuel Rodriguez, head of the National Christian Hispanic Leadership Conference.

Like many of the other Trump preachers, Rodriguez preaches the gospel of prosperity, which literally means that rich people get rich because God loves them and that poor people are, like, gross and godless and poor. Super convenient if you want to get people who are losing their jobs to vote for a self-proclaimed billionaire who runs on a platform of taking away their health insurance. It's what God wants!

Now you may recall that the first thing Trump did to begin his campaign was to call Mexicans rapists and threaten to deport a whole bunch of brown people, not to mention building that stupid wall. Surprise, surprise, Rodriguez did not like that very much! He called Trump

In a September 2016 Q&A with Christian voters, Rodriguez pointed out that only Christians can save the country from terrible things like marriage equality by voting for Trump, obviously.

out in the Wall Street Journal, and good for him!

But that was SO long ago (July 2015) and Trump has totally changed since then, in that he's gotten worse and is increasingly more comfortable with the fact that he will never face any sort of consequences for being a racist. So obviously Rodriguez is all, "Trump is my man" now.

Why? Because the Supreme Court. Rodriguez believes that getting some right-minded folks on the court to overturn Roe v. Wade and marriage equality is more important than fighting to keep Hispanic families from getting torn apart by racist-driven immigration policy. Which sure does seem like yet another example of how evangelicals are all pro-life until you're born, then you're on your own!

In a September 2016 Q&A with Christian voters, Rodriguez pointed out that only Christians can save the country from terrible things like marriage equality by voting for Trump, obviously.

"Elections have consequences," he said. "Because 25 million Christians did not vote in 2012, the institution of marriage suffered a radical transformation via the conduit of judicial and executive fiat."

He said during that same Q&A that, "If you can't vote for a candidate, vote for the platform, vote for the party platforms, and the party platform that best will protect your right to be a Christian and reach others with the loving, grace-filled message of Jesus Christ."

In other words, if you can't vote for Trump, vote for Jesus. Because the only way to Jesus is through Trump.

If claiming that Jesus is working through Donald "Grab 'Em By the Pussy" Trump doesn't prove that right-wing evangelicals are full of shit, then nothing will.

A Lawmaker's Solution for Marriage Debate: Remove the State

BY SUMMER BALLENTINE

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) – A Missouri Republican saw last year's debate over a proposed constitutional amendment that would have protected businesses that deny services to same-sex couples bring lawmakers to tears and grind legislative work to a halt. His solution: Take state government out of marriage completely, for both gay and heterosexual couples.

"You can stop spending so much emotional energy on the issue, and we can move on to other things," state Rep. T.J. Berry said, adding, "I'm treating everybody the exact same way and leaving space for people to believe what they believe outside of government."

His bill, filed ahead of the 2017 legislative session, would make Missouri the first state to recognize only domestic unions for both heterosexual and same-sex couples, treating legal partnerships equally and leaving marriages to be done by pastors and other religious leaders.

But such peace could be elusive for several reasons. Some argue that leaving marriage to religious leaders is a way to constitutionally refuse to perform ceremonies for same-sex couples. Plus, there are potential logistical issues with stripping references to marriage in hundreds of state statutes, and the federal government recognizes only marriages for benefits. Berry's idea has been met by skepticism from pretty much all sides of the gay marriage issue.

Other states including Alabama, Indiana and Michigan failed to pass similar bills to limit the government's role in marriage, and Oklahoma representatives passed a bill that didn't make it out of the Senate.

The Missouri bill's chances are unclear, although Republican House Majority Floor Leader Mike Cierpiot, who lives 30 minutes south of Kansas City in Lee's Summit, said the issue needs to be discussed due to impassioned arguments among LGBT rights groups and religious organizations that have continued in the wake of the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage.

The bill is backed by states' rights group Tenth Amendment Center, whose spokesman Mike Maharrey called it a "great compromise" and referenced county clerks in other states, such as Kentucky, who refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

"It removes that type of battle of conscience," he said.

Progress and Struggles Reflect in Top Race Headlines of 2016

BY ERRIN HAINES WHACK

Of the many events marking the closing year of Barack Obama's time as the nation's first black president, none had deeper resonance than his opening of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture on the National Mall. Tracing the history of black America from its dark beginnings in human bondage to Obama's historic election, the museum has already welcomed more than 600,000 visitors.

"It is a monument, no less than the others on this mall, to the deep and abiding love for this country, and the ideals upon which it is founded. For we, too, are America," the president said that day in September.

The opening was a watershed cultural moment for many African-Americans, including some who lived through an era when they were unable to cast a ballot. And the highs and lows depicted within the museum's walls echoed in the progress and struggles of minorities in America during the past 12 months.

Many in the African-American, Muslim, Latino, and the LGBT communities watched this year's presidential election with alarm, as Republican candidate Donald Trump ascended to party nominee, then president-elect. Trump's rhetoric on the campaign trail – including his reference to Mexican immigrants as "rapists" and vow to build a wall on the U.S. southern border, his call for a ban on Muslims entering the country, and ominous description of "inner cities" in his pitch to black voters – was interpreted by some as racist and xenophobic.

His rallies, attended by thousands, were sometimes tainted with racial animus, and white nationalist support of the candidate prompted his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, to deliver a speech on the danger of the so-called "alt-right" movement. Since the election, hundreds of racist incidents have been reported in schools and other public spaces across the country.

Still, the election also saw Nevada Democrat

Many in the African-American, Muslim, Latino, and the LGBT communities watched this year's presidential election with alarm, as Republican candidate Donald Trump ascended to party nominee.

Catherine Cortez Masto make history as the first Latina elected to the U.S. Senate, and California Democrat Kamala Harris became the second black woman elected to the Senate.

For Americans looking for an escape from the divisive political climate, their usual refuge of sports was interrupted this year.

In January, entertainer Beyonce's Super Bowl halftime performance – where she and her dancers wore costumes in homage to the Black Panthers – was seen by some as political and militant. San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick began the season by staging weekly protests against the national anthem at the start of games. Kaepernick, who is black, said his decision to kneel and not stand during the anthem was an attempt to draw attention to the issue of racial disparities in community policing.

The sports world was also cause to celebrate for many African-Americans this summer, as black women took the spotlight at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. Powerhouse gymnast Simone Biles took home four medals, and swimmer Simone Manuel became the first black woman to win an individual medal in the sport. Black women also dominated in track and field, with Michelle Carter becoming the first American woman to win gold in the shot put. Bronze medal-winner Ibtihaj Muhammad was the first Muslim-American woman to compete for the U.S. wearing a hijab.

Obama's presidency has paralleled a period of tragedy highlighted by the Black Lives Matter movement: the shootings of unarmed black men by police officers. Shootings in North Charleston, South Carolina, Baton Rouge and Minneapolis this year have stoked anger and frustration on both sides of the argument. In Dallas, the fatal shootings of five officers by a black gunman seeking revenge highlighted the divide between support for

black and blue lives.

Acquittals in the trials of several officers accused of giving an injured, unarmed black man a "rough ride" in the back of a police van in Baltimore, and a mistrial in the case of Michael Slager, accused of shooting Walter Scott in the back as he fled on foot after a traffic stop in North Charleston, left open the question of whether officers will be convicted in such cases – seen as a measure of justice by some in the black community. Many viewed as a victory a federal jury's conviction of Dylann Roof, the white man who killed nine black church members in Charleston after joining with them at their weekly Bible study. Roof faces a possible death penalty and is expected to be sentenced next month.

The Orlando night club shootings that left 49 victims dead in June struck a devastating blow to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Many of the victims were also of Puerto Rican descent. Gunman Omar Mateen, who died in a gunbattle with police, pledged solidarity to the Islamic State group in a 911 call from the club.

Native Americans scored a win after months of protesting the building of the Dakota Access oil pipeline. As many as 5,000 people camped out on the federal land in North Dakota in solidarity with two Sioux tribes suing over the pipeline, even as heavy snow and bitter cold set in. The Army has declined to let the project move forward amid objections that it would contaminate drinking water and threaten ancient burial sites.

The deaths of boxer Muhammad Ali and Cuban dictator Fidel Castro transcended race in their impact. Ali's Muslim identity resonated with people of the faith outside of the black community, and Castro's defiant reign was interpreted in some Latin and African countries as an important part of the struggle for independence and uplift.

► Red States

Continued from p. 9

Republican Sen. Mitch Carmichael said.

Still, bathroom bills have been introduced in Republican states that include Alabama, South Carolina and Missouri, where the governor's mansion changed from Democratic to Republican control. And in South Dakota, where GOP Gov. Dennis Daugaard vetoed a bathroom bill in 2016, the bathroom issue could make the 2018 ballot.

Tennessee is in wait-and-see mode while

the U.S. Supreme Court considers the federal bathroom guidance for schools, which state Republicans think Trump would ditch anyway, said Tennessee Rep. Glen Casada, the GOP caucus chairman.

The state has faced backlash for passing a 2016 law that lets therapists decline to see patients based on religious values and personal principles. As a result, the American Counseling Association canceled a Nashville convention, calling the law discriminatory.

Tennessee Thrives says it'll advocate for policies of inclusivity and nondiscrimination.

The group hopes its formation serves as warning shot to state lawmakers as the agenda takes shape for the session starting Jan. 10.

Dale Walker, president of the Tennessee Pastors Network, said the business opposition will only motivate conservative religious groups to push harder for bathroom bills and "religious freedom" measures.

"They've done us a great favor," Walker said. "They're going to galvanize the conservative churches in Tennessee like they have never seen before."

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Between the Lines

Republican Success Opens Door to Amending US Constitution

BY DAVID A. LIEB

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) – The November election put Republicans in full control of a record number of state legislatures around the country, a level of power that gives the party an unprecedented opportunity: change the U.S. Constitution.

Republicans already control Congress, the White House and more governors' offices than they have in nearly a century. But it's the state legislatures that hold perhaps the greatest promise for lasting change.

The GOP now holds numerical majorities in 33 legislatures, one shy of the two-thirds required to initiate a convention on constitutional amendments. There is no credible talk of using that power for amendments on hot-button social issues, such as banning abortion or gay marriage. But conservatives have a list of bread-and-butter governing issues they would like to see enshrined in the Constitution.

One, to require a balanced federal budget, is already approaching the level of support that would trigger a convention. Beyond that, a major state-level push is planned during 2017 for a constitutional convention that could also consider amendments to impose term limits on members of Congress and rein in various federal powers.

President-elect Donald Trump has pledged support for an amendment on congressional term limits.

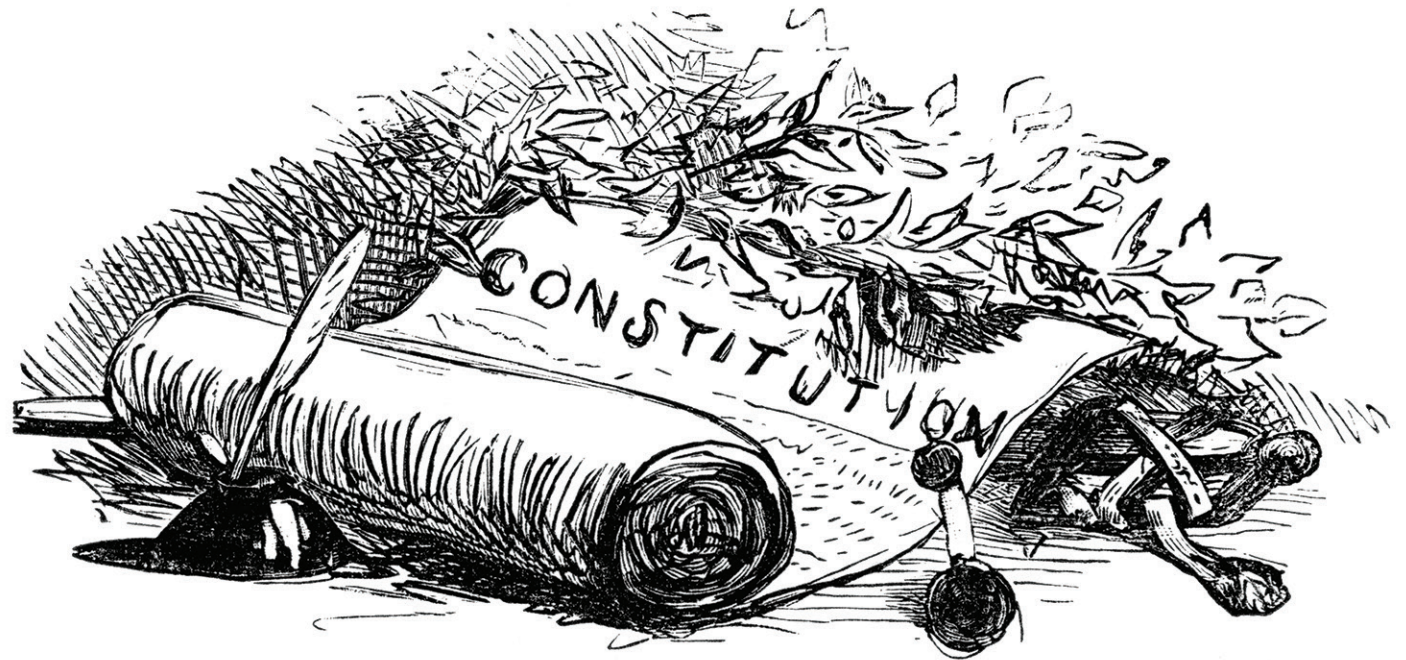
"The possibility of constitutional change is in the air," said law professor Jeffrey Rosen, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, a nonprofit museum that is hosting academic debates and symposiums about the efforts to amend the Constitution.

The U.S. Constitution has been amended 27 times since it was ratified in 1788, and its Article V spells out two ways to propose amendments. By a two-thirds vote of each chamber, the U.S. House and Senate can refer an amendment to the states. Or two-thirds of the state legislatures can request that Congress call a convention of the states.

Both scenarios require three-fourths of the states – or 38 – to ratify an amendment before it takes effect.

If the supporters of a balanced budget amendment succeed, it would be the first time in the nation's history that states initiated the process. That scenario has become more likely as a result of the November election.

It takes 34 states to trigger a convention for constitutional amendments, meaning a unified Republican push would need the help of only a few Democrats in a single state to reach the mark.



"The overwhelming success of one political party at the state level is something of real constitutional significance," said Akhil Reed Amar, a constitutional law professor at Yale University.

Every state except Vermont has some sort of balanced budget requirement, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. The U.S. government does not, but not everyone agrees that's a problem. During recessions, for example, federal government spending can help drive the economy even if it means spending at a deficit.

Twenty-eight state legislatures already have approved measures calling for a convention to propose a federal balanced budget requirement, although they use a variety of terms that could raise legal questions about whether they all count toward the threshold.

Organizers at the nonprofit Balanced Budget Amendment Task Force have lined up sponsors in nine additional Republican-led legislatures – Arizona, Idaho, Kentucky, Minnesota, Montana, South Carolina, Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming – with the goal of reaching the two-thirds threshold in 2017.

But Republican control is no guarantee of success.

A Wyoming measure calling for a convention on a balanced budget amendment was shelved in 2015 after the state Senate altered it to make it contingent on assurances that Wyoming would not see a reduction in federal revenue.

Montana's Republican-led House overwhelmingly defeated a resolution calling for a convention on a balanced budget amendment when it last met in 2015.

Opponents expressed fears of a "runaway convention" during which delegates might propose all types of possible amendments.

Similar fears have thwarted past attempts at passing a balanced budget amendment. The movement peaked at 32 states when Missouri passed a resolution calling for a convention in 1983, then dipped to about half that as numerous states rescinded their resolutions. The tally began growing again after Republicans swept into control of many capitols in 2010.

The possibility of a convention dominated by delegates from a single party is "alarming," said Carolyn Fiddler, a spokeswoman for the national Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee.

"There are no rules. They can just throw out the whole Constitution if they want to," Fiddler said. "It's the wildest of Wild West situations."

Supporters of a balanced budget amendment hope to allay such fears by convening this coming summer in Nashville, Tennessee, to propose rules and procedures for a future convention on constitutional amendments. They contend a convention is unlikely to veer off into contentious issues such as abortion and gun rights because amendments ultimately will need bipartisan appeal to win ratification from 38 states.

The mere possibility of a state-initiated convention has been enough to prompt Congress to action in the past. With states just shy of the two-thirds mark in 1912, Congress instead wrote its own amendment requiring senators to be elected by a vote of the people

rather than through state legislatures. The states then ratified the amendment.

But Congress has repeatedly fallen short of the two-thirds vote needed to refer a balanced budget amendment to the states. The last time both chambers tried was in 2011.

During the past three years, eight states have passed resolutions calling for a convention that would go beyond a balanced budget amendment to include other fiscal restraints, term limits for Congress and federal officials, and unspecified restrictions on federal power. Though still far from the two-thirds threshold, supporters of those causes believe the Republican rise to power could help their movement grow rapidly.

"With the election and things that have happened, it provides really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to restore critical structural checks in our constitutional system," said Utah state Rep. Ken Ivory, a Republican attorney.

Ivory was elected in September as the presiding officer of a simulated convention of the states designed to demonstrate that the method of proposing constitutional amendments actually can work. Among those present at the event was law professor Randy Barnett, director of the Center for the Constitution at Georgetown University.

"Amending the Constitution is always a longshot, no matter how you go about it," Barnett said. But if 34 states – including 33 Republican ones – call for such a convention, "it would be very difficult for the Congress to stop that."

► Transition

Continued from p. 7

“No matter how much you try to explain who you are or share your story, there are people who will just never understand.”

- Leonna Turner.

Michigan Health System Comprehensive Gender Services Program where Ramsey had her procedure.

"I feel extremely blessed to have Kara by my side during the process," said Turner. "She'll be able to take care of me. I know not many trans women get to have this experience."

Ramsey said although SRS is now recognized and covered by most major insurance companies, the healthcare system does not seem to favor this "cosmetic" or "elective" operation.

"But it is literally life-saving. We are trying to educate people – those who don't quite understand or get it – to see things differently," said Ramsey.

This includes educating their transgender sisters who believe having this surgery means everything will be fine afterward and that gender dysphoria will magically disappear.

"Unfortunately, no. Yes, having the surgery is a huge help, but it's a process to break away from that way of thinking about yourself," said Turner.

Finding Love in a Hopeless Place

What began as a friendship during a time when Ramsey and Turner made peace with the idea they might have to go it alone has blossomed into true love.

The lesbian transgender couple from Plymouth felt "instantly connected" and knew in their heart of hearts that they would be together forever.

Recently engaged, they are planning for a winter wedding this year after Turner recovers from her surgery.

"I want her to be able to have the same opportunity to finally live in her truth as a female from a legal standpoint and have that be reflected on our marriage license," said Ramsey.

Turner sums it up best: "There are times that I wish I was born cis female, but I'm happy I was born trans because I found my love and my soulmate. It took being trans in order to do that."

Watch the Online Video
www.pridesource.com



Locate the video at <https://youtu.be/GxcM6T80PHg>



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Beyond Mariah Carey calling me “dahhhling” in her famous diva affectation as my childhood self landed somewhere over the moon, a lot happened in 2016. Acting queen Meryl Streep spoke affectionately to me about her lifelong love for the LGBT community. Country queen Dolly Parton revealed that she, naturally, has been a confidante to her own gay and lesbian family members. And then there’s Joe Jonas, who shared his fondness for S&M, potentially inspiring some adventurous bedroom behavior this year. Here’s a collection of some standout quotes from Hollywood queens – and one horny JoBro.



“I was a funny kid and that was one thing I always knew I had. You know how you’re insecure as a kid? I was like, ‘Well, I know I’m funny.’”

– Jane Lynch

“I’ve grown up with gay people and been in love with gay people.”

– Meryl Streep

“In my teenage years, I was very girly. I remember when I used to go on a French exchange in Paris and all the locals called me ‘mademoiselle’ because they thought I was a girl.”

– Hugh Grant



It’s definitely fun when you bring some whips and leather and whatever you may be into – a little bit of S&M – into the bedroom.

– Joe Jonas

A YEAR IN REVIEW...

“I would be blessed with a gay son.”

– Gwen Stefani



“I’m not saying ‘Will & Grace’ is responsible for gay marriage; I’m saying that maybe there was an element that helped in some way.”

– Megan Mullally

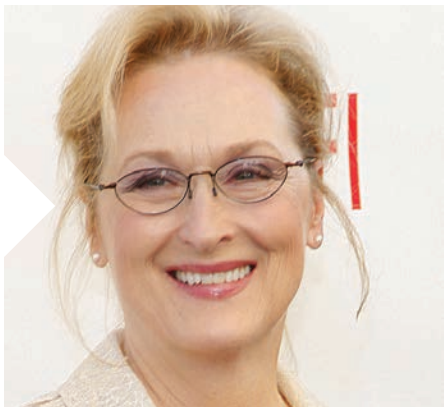
“You just have to embrace it... They’re incredible scenes.”

– Alexander Skarsgard on shooting gay sex scenes for “True Blood”

“I know what dark places feel like and I know what the absence of love and community feels like, and if I had a me when I was growing up to see, I would have perhaps been familiar to you guys a lot sooner than two years ago.”

– Tituss Burgess





“We love you, sweetie darlings!”

– ‘Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie’ actresses Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders



“I think some of the shoes I wear are ugly but they don’t hurt. I just don’t want my feet to hurt anymore.”

– Cyndi Lauper

“There are a lot of people, and time does this, who are going to be severely embarrassed for their bias and intolerance. And they’re going to have to live with that; that’s going to be their legacy. I refuse to have that as part of my legacy.”

– Michael Buble

Jane Lynch: Photo by Jake Bailey. Joe Jonas: Photo courtesy of Republic Records. Meryl Streep: Photo by Starfrenzy. Michael Buble: Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. “Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie”: Photo courtesy of Fox Searchlight Pictures. Gwen Stefani: Photo by Jamie Nelson. Tituss Burgess: Photo courtesy of Netflix. Dolly Parton: Photo courtesy of Webster PR. Mariah Carey: Photo courtesy of E!

WHAT THE CELEBS SAID

“There are thousands upon thousands of voiceless LGBT people within even just the Mormon community who feel like they can’t ask questions and can’t have doubts and can’t be themselves. I want to be able to give a microphone to those people.”

– Tyler Glenn

“I have a song called ‘Outside’ that a lot of people from the gay community have always said they grew up listening to and were like, ‘That helped me come out to my family.’”

– Mariah Carey



“I’ve had many people through the years who I have helped to feel good about themselves. I say, ‘You need to let people know who you are and you need to come on out.’”

– Dolly Parton



Happenings

Editor's Pick

The Queen of Mean Visits Detroit

Coming off of her "Stuffed" tour, Lisa Lampanelli – a comic's comic – is heading to Detroit Feb. 17 to get up on stage and say what most people are afraid to think in one of her raunchy, gut-busting performances. Her recent play, she said, is about food and body image. Lampanelli said, "It shows 'the real me' - the 'me' behind the Queen of Mean stage persona, and while it feels somewhat liberating to have my authentic self step out of the shadows, there's still a little fear. Fear of my fans not accepting that real me."

Embracing her new, skinnier self, Lampanelli will do what she does best, said Jim Carrey, "by boldly poking fun at everyone, Lisa releases us from a prison of cultural guilt. She's more than a standup. She's a standout." Tickets are \$30-45 for Lampanelli's performance at 8 p.m. at the Sound Board inside the



MotorCity Casino Hotel at 2901 Grand River Ave. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.soundboarddetroit.com.

OUTINGS

Thursday, Jan. 5

Gender Non-Conformists 7 p.m. A social and support group for genderqueer, genderfabulous, transgender, gender-exploring folks and all those who transgress gender binaries. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

PFLAG Trans Meeting 7 p.m. First Thursday monthly PFLAG Tri-Cities, 815 N. Grant, **Bay City**. leishashaler@gmail.com www.pflag.org

Saturday, Jan. 7

Smart Recovery 10 a.m. Smart Recovery offers people with any type of addiction a place to learn how to change unwanted behaviors through cognitive based methods. This is a non-12 step program, led by Smart Recovery trainers, and does not require abstinence. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Alcoholics Anonymous Brownbaggers 1:30 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Youth Leadership Program Interviews 5 p.m. Interviews open to youth ages 13-20. The program begins Jan. 17 at 4:30 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Ireyes@goaffirmations.org www.goaffirmations.org

Men's Discussion Group 6 p.m. Group for gay, bisexual and transgender men ages 18 and up. This group frequently offers holiday parties and outings such as movie nights in addition to regular meetings. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Sunday, Jan. 8

The Legend of Georgia McBride 3 p.m. Tickets: \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., **Ferndale**. 2485455545. www.theringwald.com

Monday, Jan. 9

Winter Donation Drive Accepting winter hats, coats, earmuffs, gloves, and scarves of all sizes. Each Friday from 5-7 p.m., Affirmations will hand out these items as needed until Jan. 27. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 2483987105. Ireyes@goaffirmations.org www.goaffirmations.org

Free Health Care Marketplace Enrollment 4 p.m. Open to all Oakland Primary Health Services, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Alcoholics Anonymous 5:45 Serenity 5:30 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Sexual Addicts Anonymous 7 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Tuesday, Jan. 10

Gamenight 1 a.m. Gay Geeks Social Group, 4636 15 MILE RD Apt. xxx, **Sterling Heights**. www.meetup.com
Wednesday, Jan. 11

FTM Detroit 7 p.m. This discussion provides trans men an opportunity to discuss a fuller image of transition within their larger life including deconstruction of doubt, male privilege, vulnerability and more. Attendance restricted to FTM/transgender men, anyone who identifies on the transmasculine side of the spectrum. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Thursday, Jan. 12

JTCC Pizza House Fundraiser Mention JTCC while placing your order anytime for delivery and online orders. Jim Toy Community Center, 618 Church St., **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-5095. www.pizzahouse.com

Parent Support Group 7 p.m. Dr. Melissa Farrell, LCP and Roz Keith facilitate ongoing group for parents of trans youth to better understand what it means to be transgender. Event is free. Stand With Trans, 5725 Walnut Lake Rd, **West Bloomfield Twp.** 248-661-5700. laura@temple-israel.org

Saturday, Jan. 14

Motor City Bears 6:30 p.m. A gay male, social and fund raising activity group for Bears and admirers, established in 1994. Meet and greet starts at 5:30 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Sunday, Jan. 15

PFLAG Ann Arbor 2 p.m. Ann Arbor meeting for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Free to attend. PFLAG Ann Arbor, 306 N Division St. **Ann Arbor**. 724-741-0659. info@pflagaa.org pflagaa.org

Tuesday, Jan. 17

Coming Out Over Coffee 7 p.m. A casual discussion group covering all aspects of coming out and the effects it may have on your life. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Narcotics Anonymous 7 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Transgender Life Support 7 p.m. An open discussion group for people identifying as transgender and their allies. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Wednesday, Jan. 18

Senior Koffee Klatch 1 p.m. A discussion and networking group for people 45 years of age and older. Various discussion topics, social outings and potlucks are incorporated throughout the year. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Newly Single 7 p.m. A support and discussion group for those who are newly single and are coping with the loss of a relationship. The group offers support, resources, skill building opportunities and social events. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Thursday, Jan. 19

Detroit Elders 5 p.m. Attendance is free. SAGE Metro Detroit, 4750 Woodward, **Detroit**. 313-833-1300 ext. 15. <https://sagemetrodetroit.org>

All Genders Film Night 6:30 p.m. A social group to view and discuss films that relate to the unique challenges in the LGBTQ community. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-

398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Friday, Jan. 20

Come on In, Come on Out - Safe and Sound with Out Loud 8 p.m. Out Loud Chorus explores the concepts of safety and finding a home and is our response to the Pulse shootings. Songs include: Come to My Garden, Rather Be, Somewhere Only We Know, Earth Song and Would You Harbor Me. Tickets are \$15 in advance/\$18 at door, \$12 for seniors & students (65+). Free for children under 4 and unemployed people. Out Loud is sponsored in part by the Michigan Council of Arts and Cultural Affairs and the NEA. Our Saturday night performance is sponsored by the WCC Out-Space Club. Paul Haebig directs the chorus. Brendan Jacklin accompanies us on piano, Tamara Perkuhn plays drums and Edie Herrold rounds out the trio on bass. Out Loud Chorus, 4800 E. Huron River Dr., **Ann Arbor**. 734-265-0740. outloudchorus@gmail.com www.olsonline.org

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

Romeo & Juliet Tickets: \$12-20. Slipstream Theatre Initiative, Slipstream Theatre, 460 Hilton Road, **Ferndale**. Jan. 7 - Jan. 29. 313-986-9156. www.slipstreamti.com

Professional

Beautiful - The Carole King Musical No shows on Dec. 24, 25, 26 and Jan. 1 (evening) and Jan. 2. Tickets: \$44-140. Broadway in Detroit, Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., **Detroit**. Through Jan. 8. 313-872-1000. www.broadwayindetroit.com

Phantom of the Opera Tickets: \$35-130. Broadway in Detroit, Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., **Detroit**. Jan. 11 - Jan. 22. 313-237-SING. www.broadwayindetroit.com



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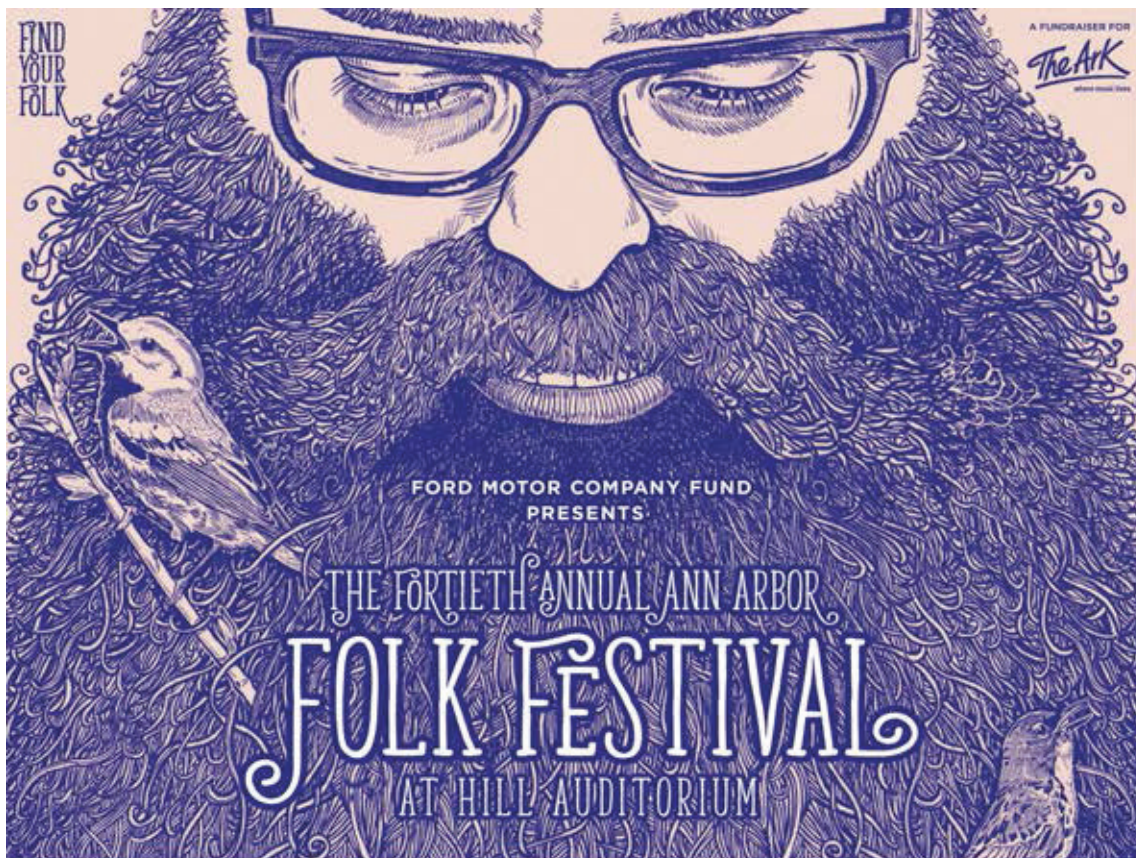

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 ZACH HECKENDORF
 Susan Werner, MC

Saturday, January 28 | 6:30PM
INDIGO GIRLS
MARGO PRICE
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One of the special programs at AAFF is the The New Negress Film Society (newnegressfilm.org.) The NNFS is a NY-based collective of black women filmmakers whose priority is to create community and spaces for support, exhibition and consciousness-raising.

2017 AAFF Features Selection of Special Programs

The Ann Arbor Film Festival is pleased to introduce a selection of the special programs for the 55th season on March 21-26. AAFF special programs provide an additional opportunity to view avant-garde films, outside of the awards competition. With a commitment to diversity and a desire to promote a broad range of perspectives, the programs showcase the updated philosophy of the festival.

Amongst the programs is the much anticipated "Video Bureau: Works From An Archive of Chinese Video Art." Another special program with New York roots is an AAFF commission by the The New Negress Film Society (newnegressfilm.org.) The NNFS is a NY-based collective of black women filmmakers whose priority is to create community and spaces for support, exhibition and consciousness-raising.

A program showcasing new voices in postinternet art is being curated by DINCA org-founder Andrew Rosinski. This program will feature fresh video work from today's young internet and postinternet artists, performative videomakers, and glitch artists.

To commemorate the centennial of one of art history's most influential and playful periods, the AAFF presents "100 YEARS OF DADA: Dada in Dialogue with the Present," a short film program curated by John Canciani and Aline Juchler of Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur, Switzerland.

The AAFF is also thrilled to present renowned Japanese benshi Ichiro Kataoka. Alongside world-renowned local experimental music darlings Little Bang Theory, Kataoka

will perform to a screening of "A Page of Madness," a 1926 Japanese avant-garde by director Teinosuke Kinugasa.

The six-day festival presents 40 programs with more than 180 films from over 20 countries of all lengths and genres, including experimental, animation, documentary, fiction, and performance-based works. AAFF receives more than 3,000 submissions annually from more than 70 countries and serves as one of a handful of Academy Award-qualifying festivals in the U.S. supported in part by the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs, the UM Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design and the Michigan Theater.

For more information, visit <http://aaiffilmfest.org>.

Name Change Workshop

Jazz McGinnis wants to assist transgender and gender nonconforming individuals in beginning the process of gaining affirming identity documentation by initiating court ordered name changes. So he partnered with the Jim Toy Community Center's Know Your Rights Project and the University of Michigan's law student group, OutLaws, to

“ We're hoping to reach transgender people across Michigan who otherwise could not navigate the process to gain that one piece of paper, that one ID card, that will reduce their exposure to potentially dangerous situations. **”**

See Cool Cities: Ann Arbor, page 24

IDIOT-SYNCRASITY IGOR AND MORENO

Igor Urzelai and Moreno Solinas, creators
Thursday, January 12 // 7:30 pm
Friday, January 13 // 8 pm
Saturday, January 14 // 8 pm
Arthur Miller Theatre | Ann Arbor

Direct from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, these two London-based dancers take audiences on a unique journey of self-discovery, exploring both togetherness and solitude, and reclaiming dance as an agent for change. "Idiot-Syncrasy feels very human. More than that: humane...I left feeling an expanded person." (*LondonDance*)

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► Cool Cities: Ann Arbor

Continued from p. 23

host a name change clinic on Feb. 11 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. The location is to be determined.

McGinnis – a Rand Skolnick Point Scholar in the field of Social Work at UM, where he plans to further his advocacy for LGBTQ health equity – said the clinic will be available to walk participants through the laborious process, complete court forms, answer legal questions, and be paired with an advocate to accompany them through the filing process at their local county courthouse.

“We’re hoping to reach transgender people across Michigan who otherwise could not navigate the process to gain that one piece of paper, that one ID card, that will reduce their exposure to potentially dangerous situations

and increase their ability to access housing, healthcare and employment,” he said.

More details will become available online www.mlawoutlaws.org.

The Jefferson: New Condo Development Near Downtown

Coming soon: The Jefferson, the new condo development Alex de Parry of Ann Arbor Builders has planned for the northeast corner of Jefferson and Ashley streets, a transition point between downtown and the Old West Side neighborhood.

The tentative design plans for the project at 116 W. Jefferson St. were submitted to the city’s Design Review Board last week, according to an MLive.com report.

Ann Arbor Builders is working with architect J. Bradley Moore & Associates and civil engineer Macon Engineering on the project.

The four-story, 23-unit condo development is planned for a site that’s immediately south of the existing Ashley Mews condos, just west of Main Street. A small office building and three houses would be demolished.

Future residents of The Jefferson would have a short walk to the heart of downtown Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan campus.

Ann Arbor’s main transit hub, the Blake Transit Center, also is a short walk away, so the condos would offer living options that are not car dependent.

“The Jefferson is a residential condominium project incorporating two- and three-bedroom dwelling units,” the plans state.

“The design reflects the form and character of many of the buildings in the city’s industrial crescent known as the First Street character area, generally following the route of the Ann Arbor Railroad through the west side. The building has been designed to enhance the southeast side of downtown area, in keeping with recent building trends in the area, while providing a unique residential living environment close to downtown and the University of Michigan campus.”

The units offered range from 1,145 to 1,485 square feet. The building is organized around the corner of Ashley and Jefferson with a landscaped entry on the diagonal formed by the adjacent railroad tracks.

The site layout preserves the opportunity for inclusion in a future Allen Creek Greenway trail through the area and would incorporate public art, and the top floor would have outdoor patios, according to the plans.

The condos sit atop a parking garage level, which is nestled into the existing slope so it is fully below grade on the eastern side of the property. There is one parking space proposed

for each condo.

“The facade has been intentionally designed to be in keeping with the rectangular forms of the commercial/industrial buildings in the area, many of which now house residential uses,” the plans state.

All the condos would have outdoor balcony spaces. There would be a building entry at the southwest corner with large windows facing landscaping and an entry canopy, and there would be both stairways and an elevator in the building.

The Jefferson is described as an urban residential community catering to anyone who wants to live near downtown. It’s expected most would be in the 25-to-65 age range and either living alone or with a partner, or with friends or kids.

The plans indicate the design is influenced by its location, lot size and irregular shape, as well as its context. That includes both the neighboring built environment and external influences such as the railroad and floodplain.

The design for The Jefferson also is inspired by The Mark, a condo building de Parry recently built on Liberty Street across from the Argus Farm Stop.

View the plans in detail online at www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2016/12/see_plans_for_new_condo_develo.html.



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Hear Me Out

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

BETTE MIDLER · THE DIVINE MISS M · DELUXE



Bette Midler, 'The Divine Miss M: Deluxe Edition'

Long before Bette Midler became social media's beloved socio-political rabble-rouser, before "Wind Beneath My Wings" and your annual viewing of "Hocus Pocus," she was singing the soundtrack for a throng of naked, lustful gay men. That was 1969, when the now-iconic actress/singer/shade-thrower first unleashed her billowy croon at Continental Baths in the basement of The Ansonia Hotel in New York City. A few years later, in 1972, her bathhouse stage name, "The Divine Miss M," served as the title of her debut album. The release was partly recorded with a crowd in the studio where they "served Chinese food," noted in the reflective letter from Miss M, who gives a loving nod to the gay community that she says made her feel like "I had opened the door to the closet." Her flamboyant musical presence still radiates four decades later, as does her big-hearted renderings of career staples such as "Chapel of Love" and "Friends." Like her latest celebration of all-female groups from the mid-20th century, "For the Girls!," Midler has always relished a vintage sound. "The Divine Miss M" was when the wheels of her old-soul started turning. She was in her mid-20s then, but the sound emanating from songs such as the matriarchal waywardness of "Hello in There" and the sultry "Do You Want to Dance," featuring her bathhouse accompanist Barry Manilow on piano and

Cissy Houston's backup vocals, defied her youthfulness. Deeper within the "Deluxe Edition" are seven rare mixes and two stunning demos, including her striking lullaby-like take on the Eagle's 1973 song "Saturday Night." Even though she wishes "I could remember more of it," Midler looks back fondly on the launch of her career, as she should. "The Divine Miss M" is as legendary as her own divinity.



David Bowie, 'Who Can I Be Now? (1974-1976)'

To David Bowie, a song was never just a song. It had to constitute a concept that couldn't

be distilled into a single four-minute piece, an artistic credo the late master of subversion expounds upon during a terrifically meandering and insightful exchange with beat godfather William S. Burroughs. The conversation is published in a handsome book that excavates a brief-but-crucial period in Bowie's illustrious career: 1974-1976, when Bowie threw himself beyond the scope of his formative years and into the classic rock-'n'-roll sound that'd spill over into the unruly catalog of his later work. The book is part of an expansive box set, a follow-up to the collection's debut, "Five Years," spanning 1969-1973. Bowiephiles are immersed in his most exploratory artistic wonder years through the book's surprisingly

even-handed commentaries, vintage Bowie photos and promo posters, and his handwritten lyrics for "Future Legend," circa 1974. Above all, the music speaks volumes about Bowie as an auteur who dared to step out of every box the industry tried to put him in. Following his eighth studio album, "Diamond Dogs," Bowie released 1975's soulful diversion "Young Americans" and 1976's spectacular image-breaker "Station to Station." The trifecta, a 12-disc experience that includes live discs and the previously unreleased album "The Gouster," is an enlightening submergence into the musicality, personality and versatility of Bowie's identity-challenging rock persona.



Kate Bush, 'Before the Dawn'

In 2014, revered stage-recluse Kate Bush came out of hiding for the handsomely produced live epic

"Before the Dawn." The theatrical yarn is a hypnotic sprawl consisting of the gay-loved goddess' trademark goth sound, leaning heavily on two suites: "The Ninth Wave" (from her 1985 album "Hounds of Love"), explained by Bush in the liner notes as the "struggle to stay alive in a dark terrifying ocean," and "A Sky of Honey" (from 2005's "Aerial"), her self-described exploration of the relationship between birds and light. Even without the visual component (an array of celestially staged photos packaged inside the album suggest the show was a magical feast for the eyes), the evocative nature of uilleann pipes, the accordion, a bouzouki, a charango – and Bush's own fairy-like presence – foster a far-out wonderland only Bush could conjure. Which makes her return to the stage – her first live shows since 1979 – all that more thrilling. The 155-minute musical odyssey extends beyond the two suites, but because Bush thrives in an avant-garde state, the show refrains from being a best-of. Therefore, her earliest work is absent. (No "Wuthering Heights," folks.) "Lily" and "Top of the City" from 1993's "The Red Shoes" fill out the first of three discs. "Never Be Mine" is an early stand out – so good Bush could've walked off and left behind thousands of fans content to simply bask in her presence even if just for a few songs. Act III's trifecta, wherein she closes with "Aerial" and returns for an "Among Angels" / "Cloudbusting" encore, is only real because it actually happened. Otherwise, it seems to exist in another time and place – as does Bush, whose enigmatic presence and bewitching voice on "Before the Dawn" takes you far beyond wherever your feet think they are.

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Best Albums Of 2016

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI



10. Britney Spears, 'Glory'

If you counted the Holy Spearit out after 2013's weird let-down "Britney Jean," you should know better. Brit's next success is always her next comeback, but "Glory" wasn't just the teeter-totter effect – she's over, she's back – in full swing. Her return to artistic, well, glory repositioned the Vegas-headlining mom somewhere between the hazy "Blackout" and "In the Zone" with its celestial pop and less-fabricated production. And the nod to her Southern roots, the country-licked "Liar," where she's actually, like, singing? More of this singing thing please and stat.



9. Tyler Glenn, 'Excommunication'

Mormonism – but really all organized religion – got a much-needed wake-up call thanks to Tyler Glenn. On "Excommunication," the Neon Trees frontman was not about to sugarcoat his cutting words when he held the LDS Church accountable for his suicidal thoughts and made no apologies for being a glammed-out gay. In the process, Glenn's first solo project as an out man sticks to his

pop sensibilities, which make for the best music of his career. Standouts include the soaring "Midnight" and the sparsely produced "John, Give 'Em Hell," a sincere moment of encouragement that every shamed queer kid needs to hear.

8. Michael Kiwanuka, 'Love & Hate'

It's not until nearly halfway through "Cold Little Heart," the cinematic-like launch song from Michael Kiwanuka's stunning sophomore release, that we hear the British soul artist's vintage-sounding croon wash over us like a warm bath. Kiwanuka is a modern-day Otis Redding, and his sensitive-man voice is unshakeable as it imprints an old-school vibe on each of these timeless tunes.

7. Angel Olsen, 'My Woman'

Some voices make everything in their path disappear. Angel Olsen's heavenly drawl is one of them. With "My Woman," the St. Louis native tangled you within her intoxicating world of stirring melodies and whispery vocal flourishes. If she didn't have you with the stark synth-specked opener "Intern," well, that's probably your fault. But there's no way you could resist "Sister," a guitar sprawl that will have you yearning right along with it.

6. Emeli Sandé, 'Long Live the Angels'

Five years is practically a lifetime between albums in the transient pop world, but for Emeli Sandé, that time, it seems, is just what she needed. Reeling from the end of a longtime relationship to her childhood sweetheart, the gifted "Next to You" soprano let her forlorn feelings simmer into this devastating



(the breathtakingly raw "Shakes") and empowering (the lifting mid-tempo "Babe") diary of a healing heart.

5. Lori McKenna, 'The Bird & the Rifle'

Songwriter-to-the-stars Lori McKenna is nominated for four Grammys this year: one for Tim McGraw's

rendition of "Humble and Kind," a song she wrote and also recorded for "The Bird & the Rifle," along with best Americana album, American Roots performance and American Roots song. The recognition is overdue. As intimate as eavesdropping on a room full of revealing conversations, McKenna's 10 character-driven songs – from the sincere "Wreck You," about a relationship that's gone off course, to the sharp ageism-commentary "Old Men, Young Women" – are showcases for the singer-songwriter's unique ability to tap into the human condition.

4. Miranda Lambert, 'The Weight of These Wings'

Country music's incipient legend wanted her double-disc divorce album to speak for itself. She eschewed the typical promo interviews.

There was no buzzy primetime confessional. Instead, Lambert's glorious 24-song narrative – easily some of her best work – plunges deep into the heart and renders insight through her drunken, cigarette-dragging, broken-hearted path to contentment. The journey starts and ends with a pair of steadfast mantras, "Runnin' Just in Case" and "I've Got Wheels," meanwhile also challenging gender norms on

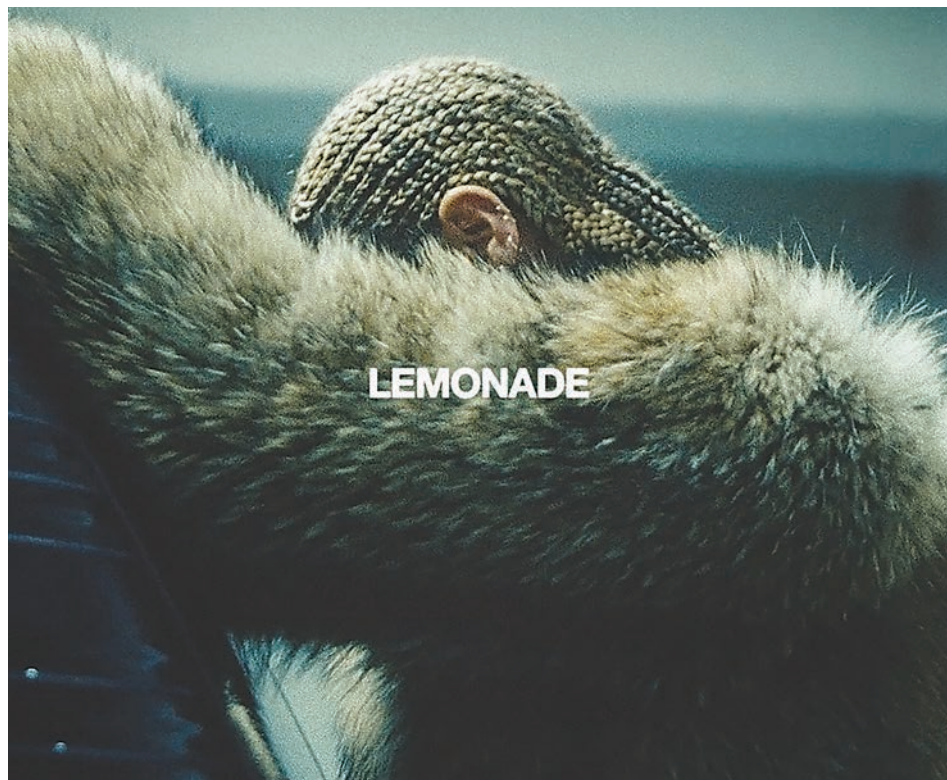
“Tomboy” and enlisting rebound sex to remedy her breakup woe on the glorious Grammy-nominated “Vice.” At least half of Lambert’s steel-pedal confessionals – undoubtedly, “Pushin’ Time,” which is sweet, tender, perfect – will be sitting comfortably amid country’s classics.

3. Frank Ocean, ‘Blond’

Out music maverick Frank Ocean is responsible for some of this past decade’s best R&B, and this year, “Blond” proved that his skillful debut “Channel Orange” wasn’t just a fluke. The open-hearted “Blond” works like magic, slow burning snapshots of childhood nostalgia, bygone relationships (with women {ITAL and} men) and one very moving car ride (the mesmerizing James Blake-assisted “White Ferrari”) into your life story as Ocean reveals his own.

2. Bon Iver, ‘22, Million’

“It might be over soon,” a piping voice cuts in. Amid the loop, a gospel sample and garbled synths, Bon Iver laments the inevitability of dissolve. Throughout “22, Million,” the Wisconsin-born songwriter is grappling with time through lyrical vignettes of life that are fleeting, just like this fly-by album and its transcendental back half. If you’re not moved to tears by the time you get to the album’s quiet coda, “00000 Million,” then it will purge you with its wistful reminder to surrender to the sometimes nasty doings of fate.



“Who even remembers Beyoncé before 2016? With ‘Lemonade,’ the Slay Queen recast herself as an edgy auteur, thrashing radio pop parameters with a few swings of her baseball bat.”

1. Beyoncé, ‘Lemonade’

Who even remembers Beyoncé before 2016? With “Lemonade,” the Slay Queen recast herself as an edgy auteur, thrashing radio pop parameters with a few swings of her baseball bat. Yes, she pretty much ran the world – and yes, she definitely made earlier career efforts look like amateur hour. Suddenly, she was more than a song slayer – she was a black voice that mattered. A risk taker. A meme-starter. She was the reason we couldn’t stop talking about some good-haired hussy named “Becky.” The storybook narratives lifted the curtain to potential personal reflections on married life with Jay Z, but also took a broader look at current gender and racial divides. “Freedom” furnished the strength for us to survive Trump’s America. “Daddy Lessons” was the country song you never knew you needed from Beyoncé. And “Lemonade” as a whole? A cultural and genre-busting touchstone in both Bey’s career and pop music itself.

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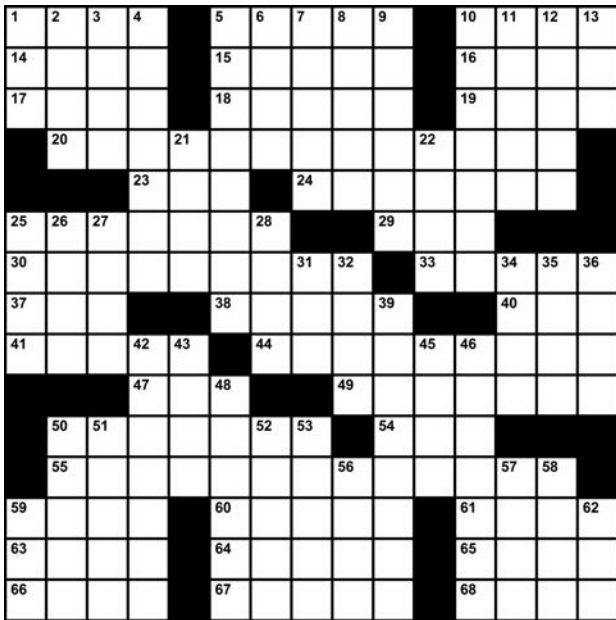
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Q Puzzle



- 47 Descartes's conclusion
 49 Principe's island partner
 50 Lincoln's Gettysburg comments
 54 Seed spilled by some farmers
 55 Karen portrayer in 30-Across
 59 Frat toga
 60 Part of a religious title
 61 Shakespeare's foot
 63 "I Say a Little Prayer for You" writer Bacharach
 64 Fairylike
 65 "___ homo!"
 66 Accts. for the future
 67 Language like "bull dyke"
 68 Enjoy Forster

Down

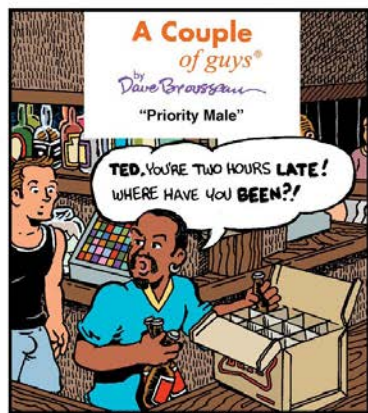
- 1 Carrier to Copenhagen
 2 "Legally Blonde" character
 3 At the ready
 4 Family member, to a homophobe
 5 Musical co-starring David Hyde Pierce
 6 Branch of math, briefly
 7 Aerial defense acronym
 8 Fruit in a slot machine
 9 Is nuts over
 10 Palace, to Othello
 11 Em's Dorothy
 12 Hidey-holes
 13 Part of Q and A (abbr.)
 21 Not Prot.
 22 Flat top in high places

Messing Around the Set

Across

- 1 Tickle pink
 5 Milano opera house, with "la"
 10 Paquin of "True Blood"
 14 Protected from the wind
 15 Fondled rudely
 16 Pride member
 17 Pole, for example
 18 You must remember this
 19 Men on top, perhaps
 20 Will portrayer in 30-Across

- 23 Battery size
 24 Sudden body fluid emissions
 25 Confection with nuts
 29 Fed. retirement gp.
 30 Clinton ad that sparked talk of a "Will & Grace" revival
 33 Alan who played Grace's dad
 37 JFK preceder
 38 Drags
 40 From ___ Z
 41 Bottom workers
 44 Jack portrayer in 30-Across



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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE



Kate McKinnon takes the lead in 'The Lunch Witch'

She already has an Emmy for her work on "Saturday Night Live," and she's managed to steal every scene she had in the ensemble comedies "Ghostbusters," "Masterminds," and now "Office Christmas Party." The next step, then, for Kate McKinnon is leading lady. This being McKinnon, however, she will be playing a school lunch lady who is also a witch. Of course. The adaptation of Deb Lucke's young reader novel "The Lunch Witch" will be directed by Clay Kaytis ("The Angry Birds Movie") and will star McKinnon as Grunhilda, a witch without purpose – nobody really believes in magic or witches anymore – who decides to unleash her awful cauldron of badness on unsuspecting children in the school cafeteria. Along comes a misfit child who needs a mentor and, well, you can probably guess the rest. This one was just announced, so McKinnon is the only cast member attached, but come 2018 or so, lunch will be served.

The incredibly true adventure of one girl in the afterlife

Maria Maggenti ("The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls In Love," "Puccini For Beginners") returns to her Sundance Film Festival stomping grounds in January with the premiere of "Before I Fall." Maggenti wrote the screenplay, adapted from Lauren Oliver's 2010 YA novel about a young girl (Zoey Deutch, "Why Him?") who dies in a car accident, only to relive the experience over and over. As she uncovers the mystery of why she died, she also learns what she might do to change her fate. Or not. Directed by Ry Russo-Young ("Nobody Walks"), this

teen "Groundhog Day" of The Dead also stars Halston Sage ("Goosebumps") and Jennifer Beals ("The L Word"). And though we were hoping the YA trend would wind down, we're grateful that this one has nothing to do with teens fighting an evil government after the apocalypse. Look for it to fall into theaters sometime later in 2017.

'Talk Show the Game Show' is the real name of a real show

You're already watching gay comic Billy Eichner's "Billy on The Street" on deep cable channel TruTV, right? Well, you should be. And once you find that one on your cable line-up, you'll know where to go when another queer comic, Guy Branum, debuts his own new comedic series, "Talk Show the Game Show." It's OK if you don't know this man's name just yet. He's one of our favorite stand-up comics, he wrote for "Chelsea Lately," currently writes for "The Mindy Project," and he co-hosts a very cool pop culture podcast called "Pop Rocket." "Talk Show the Game Show" (produced by Branum and Wanda Sykes) will pit comedians and other celebrities against each other in competition to win the title "Best Guest of the Night." Various talk show-themed challenges will go down – we're hoping for some kind of contest related to fake enthusiasm, which is mostly the point of most talk shows – and judges will roast the participants. It hits TruTV in spring of 2017 and we can't wait to watch.

Prolific queer filmmaker Francois Ozon delivers 'Frantz'

Hey foreign film fans, it's that time again, when French filmmaker Francois Ozon drops another one in your lap. The prolific queer director makes at least one, sometimes two, movies a year – most of them make it into U.S. theaters, an accomplishment that eludes many European filmmakers – and he shows no sign of slowing down. His latest is "Frantz," and the critical buzz suggests that it's one of Ozon's better offerings in recent years. A re-imagining of legendary filmmaker Ernst Lubitsch's 1932 film "Broken Lullaby" (just go ahead and add it to your TCM wishlist), which was in turn based on a French play by Maurice Rostand, it stars French actor Pierre Niney ("Yves Saint-Laurent") and German actress Paula Beer as two people who meet at the gravesite of a fallen World War I soldier. The soldier was the woman's fiancé, but his relationship to the man remains a mystery. Later in 2017, subtitle enthusiasts will get a chance to solve it for themselves when it opens in, naturally, quite limited arthouse release before hitting streaming services.

Romeo San Vicente favorite French word is "macaron."



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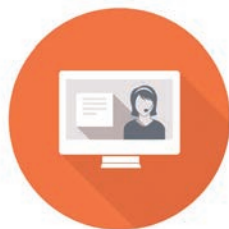
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- Gonorrhea
- Chlamydia
- Syphilis

CONVENIENT METRO DETROIT LOCATIONS

TESTING ALSO OFFERED IN BARS, CLUBS
AND OTHER METRO AREA LOCATIONS

MONDAY

Matrix MAC Health
FERDALE
1PM-6PM
By Appointment

TUESDAY

Matrix MAC Health
FERDALE
11AM-4PM
By Appointment
MIDTOWN
2PM-7PM
Walk-In

WEDNESDAY

Affirmations
FERDALE
5:30PM-8:30PM
Walk-In
or Appointment

THURSDAY

Matrix MAC Health
FERDALE
9AM-12NOON
AND 2PM-5PM
Walk-In
or Appointment

NO
FRIDAY
TESTING

Matrix MAC Health in Ferndale & MidTown Detroit • Affirmations in Ferndale

Call 1.888.226.6366 to make an
appointment or for information.

1 (888) A CONDOM



MATRIX MAC HEALTH IS A PROGRAM OF MATRIX HUMAN SERVICES. LEARN MORE. GIVE. VOLUNTEER. DISCOVER MORE AT MatrixHumanServices.org

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