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MI Civil Rights Commission Seeks Public Input

LGBT Groups Request Clarified Interpretation of Elliott-Larsen

BY BTL STAFF

Equality Michigan on Monday asked the Michigan Civil Rights Commission to issue an interpretive statement to clarify that the prohibition against sex discrimination in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act includes protection against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

In their request, EQMI pointed out that there is a lack of clarity in current law that leaves both employers and employees, landlords and tenants, and a host of others unsure of what state civil rights law covers.

If accepted, it would clarify the ambiguity that exists surrounding the scope of sex discrimination currently prohibited by the ELCRA and bring Michigan law into alignment with the growing body of understanding from federal judges and legal scholars.

In order to ensure that it is considering all points of view, the Commission has asked the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to solicit public input. Now through close of business on Aug. 15, the Department will accept public comments on the EQMI request

at MCRC-Comments@michigan.gov. The Commission will address the request at their Sept. 18 meeting in Lansing.

“All hardworking people should be treated fairly and equally by the laws of our state,” said Stephanie White, executive director at EQMI. “Most employers want to do the right thing, and many have been pro-equality leaders in Michigan, but there will always be a few people who only do what’s right when the law clearly requires it. This interpretive statement will provide that clarity to all Michiganders.”

Unlike 18 other states, Michigan does not currently have a law that explicitly prohibits anti-LGBT discrimination in employment, housing, or public accommodations. In addition, although the federal prohibition on sex discrimination in employment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has been interpreted to encompass discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation, many LGBT people in Michigan do not receive the benefit of this prohibition, because they work for employers with fewer than 15 employees, the threshold for Title VII

coverage.

According to EQMI, the interpretive statement being requested would make it clear that anti-LGBT discrimination is unlawful in Michigan, clarifying the legal responsibilities of employers and individuals and giving notice to victims of discrimination that there are remedies available.

“The Michigan Civil Rights Commission has already issued a report concluding that anti-LGBT discrimination ‘exists and is significant’ in Michigan,” noted Nathan Triplett, director of public policy and political action at EQMI. “The Commission has the legal authority and, in light of their own factual conclusions, the moral responsibility to act on anti-LGBT discrimination.”

In a press release, EQMI states if the Commission grants the coalition’s request, it will be an important incremental step toward protecting LGBT Michiganders from discrimination. At the same time, the organizations are agreed that the interpretation alone is not a substitute for legislative action to amend the ELCRA.

The coalition of LGBT organizations

making this request includes: the ACLU of Michigan, Affirmations, the Equality Caucus of Genesee County, Equality Michigan, the Gender Identity Network Alliance, GLSEN Southeast Michigan, Grand Rapids Pride, Inclusive Justice, Jackson Pride Center, Jim Toy Community Center, Lansing Association for Human Rights, LGBT Detroit, the Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network, the OutCenter, OutFront Kalamazoo, Perceptions, PFLAG Ann Arbor, PFLAG Clinton Township, PFLAG Detroit, PFLAG Family Reunion/Detroit, PFLAG Genesee County, PFLAG Greater Lansing, PFLAG Grosse Pointe, PFLAG Holland/Lakeshore, PFLAG Jackson, PFLAG Keweenaw, PFLAG Lenawee, PFLAG Livingston County, PFLAG Manistee, PFLAG Owosso, PFLAG Plymouth/Canton, PFLAG Port Huron, PFLAG Tri-Cities, SAGE Metro Detroit, Stand With Trans, Trans Sistas of Color, Transgender Michigan, and Up North Pride. These organizations have submitted a seven-page memorandum (<http://gaybe.am/8h>) of law outlining the legal basis for the request.

Anti-Racist, Anti-Facist Group to Take Action

Michigan Peoples Defense Network Will Protest Church Militant’s “Strength and Honor” Conference for Men

BY BTL STAFF

The Michigan Peoples Defense Network, an anti-racist, anti-fascist action group dedicated to fighting all forms of oppression, has called a press conference at 5 p.m. on July 28 to announce an action countering the “Strength and Honor” conference for men by the radical Christian news organization Church Militant.

Detroiters and activist organizations - MPDN and Workers World Party - will gather on the sidewalk in front of Church Militant, 2840 Hilton Road in Ferndale to organize a picket and protest of the “Strength and Honor” Conference on Aug. 5 at 8:30 a.m. at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Sterling Heights. The goal is to “shut

down the hateful messages spread at this conference,” according to a press release.

MPDN said the Church Militant is a radical religious hate group working to suppress women’s rights and LGBTQ rights and promote a theocratic Christian agenda.

The “Strength and Honor” conference website states the event is “for men who want to take back their country and their Catholic faith, who would love to be a part of the growing momentum leading back to a life that just makes sense, a movement towards restoring sanity in their country, love for Holy Mother Church, and finally, a government that will begin to reflect that.”

MPDN said many of the church’s points are lifted from or are identical to “men’s rights” discourse, which focuses on reducing



Detroiters to rally Aug. 5 to shut down Church Militant “Strength and Honor” conference for men; July 28 press conference to announce plans. Photo courtesy of MPDN

Continued on pg. 9



Ann Arbor Spiritual Center Welcomes New Director

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

For just over a year now, Lauren Tartarsky, 30, has been the senior minister of the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth in Ann Arbor.

“We’re an inclusive space and safe haven for spiritual seekers who come from many different backgrounds,” said Tartarsky of the center, which is nearly 20 years old. “The majority of people who come to the center consider themselves spiritual, not religious. All are encouraged to follow the specific tradition, teacher or spiritual path that speaks to them – including none at all. We share a desire for an expansive and accepting community; a community that nourishes us in deep ways and that offers a space to connect and grow in our own personal spiritual path, whatever that may be.”

Tartarsky considers herself to be a spiritual eclectic as do many people who attend the center, which averages 75-80 people at their Sunday morning services. She takes what

speaks to her from many different traditions and engages in diverse spiritual practices that include contemplative meditation, visualization, nature walks, dream analysis, free-form dance and yoga.

Born in Denver, Colorado, and raised Reform Jewish, Tartarsky was spiritually curious from a young age.

“When I was 10 years old, I printed out copies of my favorite quotes about life and hung them all over my walls,” Tartarsky recalled. “I’ve always been someone who seeks inner truth, meaning, purpose and deep experience.”

Tartarsky’s activism began to take shape while she was in high school.

“I became the president of our International Club and that’s where it all started,” said

Tartarsky. “I raised over \$10,000 for a compound in Ethiopia with a hospital, K-12 school, orphanage and biodynamic farm. My first true international travel was visiting the compound when I was 17. This all led me to

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DESCOVY is a prescription medicine that is used together with other HIV-1 medicines to treat HIV-1 in people 12 years and older. DESCOVY is not for use to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection. DESCOVY combines 2 medicines into 1 pill taken once a day. Because DESCOVY by itself is not a complete treatment for HIV-1, it must be used together with other HIV-1 medicines.

DESCOVY does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.

To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses, you must keep taking DESCOVY. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

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

DESCOVY may cause serious side effects:

- **Buildup of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold (especially in your arms and legs), feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large and fatty. Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turning yellow (jaundice); dark "tea-colored" urine; light-colored bowel movements (stools); loss of appetite; nausea; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight, or have been taking DESCOVY for a long time. In some cases, lactic acidosis and serious liver problems have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** DESCOVY is not approved to treat HBV. If you have both HIV-1 and HBV and stop taking DESCOVY, your HBV may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking DESCOVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health.

What are the other possible side effects of DESCOVY?

Serious side effects of DESCOVY may also include:

- **Changes in body fat**, which can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking DESCOVY.
- **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking DESCOVY if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems**, such as bone pain, softening, or thinning, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.

The most common side effect of DESCOVY is nausea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don't go away.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking DESCOVY?

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or have had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take**, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Other medicines may affect how DESCOVY works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Ask your healthcare provider if it is safe to take DESCOVY with all of your other medicines.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if DESCOVY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking DESCOVY.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Important Facts about DESCOVY, including important warnings, on the following page.

Ask your healthcare provider if an HIV-1 treatment that contains DESCOVY[®] is right for you.



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IMPORTANT FACTS

This is only a brief summary of important information about DESCOVY® and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and your treatment.

MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT DESCOVY

DESCOVY may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Buildup of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms: feeling very weak or tired, unusual muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold (especially in your arms and legs), feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Severe liver problems**, which in some cases can lead to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms: your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark “tea-colored” urine; loss of appetite; light-colored bowel movements (stools); nausea; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** DESCOVY is not approved to treat HBV. If you have both HIV-1 and HBV, your HBV may suddenly get worse if you stop taking DESCOVY. Do not stop taking DESCOVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months.

You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight, or have been taking DESCOVY or a similar medicine for a long time.

ABOUT DESCOVY

- DESCOVY is a prescription medicine that is used together with other HIV-1 medicines to treat HIV-1 in people 12 years of age and older. DESCOVY is **not** for use to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection.
- **DESCOVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.

HOW TO TAKE DESCOVY

- DESCOVY is a one pill, once a day HIV-1 medicine that is taken with other HIV-1 medicines.
- Take DESCOVY with or without food.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF DESCOVY

DESCOVY can cause serious side effects, including:

- Those in the “Most Important Information About DESCOVY” section.
- Changes in body fat.
- Changes in your immune system.
- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.
- Bone problems.

The most common side effect of DESCOVY is nausea.

These are not all the possible side effects of DESCOVY. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking DESCOVY.

Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with DESCOVY

BEFORE TAKING DESCOVY

Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- Have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- Have any other medical condition.
- Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with DESCOVY.

GET MORE INFORMATION

- This is only a brief summary of important information about DESCOVY. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- Go to DESCOVY.com or call 1-800-GILEAD-5
- If you need help paying for your medicine, visit DESCOVY.com for program information.



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Ann Arbor OUTFest Marks 23 Years



Photo courtesy of Jim Toy Community Center

BY DARIUS OSBORNE

Ann Arbor is not only known for its world-renowned University of Michigan, but for its impeccable support and programs for the LGBTQ community. This year marks the 23rd anniversary of OUTFest, a pride celebration held Aug. 4-6, hosted by the Jim Toy Community Center. The event's goal is to celebrate the LGBTQ community and allyship in the Ann Arbor area, and to support the Jim Toy Community Center.

Jim Toy is a legendary figure in the LGBTQ activist community, and the organization which bears his name is the premier community center and resource for LGBTQ-identifying people. OUTFest festivities offered include a movie night, drag revues, performance by the Out Loud Chorus, a beer and wine garden, great food, yoga, art, inspirational guest speakers, Kid Zone, a picnic and much more. All are welcome to take part in the celebration, and proceeds benefit programs and events from the Jim Toy Community Center.

What makes OUTFest stand out among other pride events? It caters to all tastes and interests. If you are most interested in watching performances, look no further than the the main stage which will feature a drag revue, burlesque performance, Redi & the Midnight Hour, and special guest Todrick Hall, who will no doubt put on a spectacular show. Todrick Hall started his career as a ballet dancer and

later worked on big projects such as The Color Purple on Broadway and Disney's Beauty and the Beast, was a contestant in the ninth season of American Idol, and starred as Lola, a drag queen cabaret performer, in the Broadway musical Kinky Boots.

OUTFest takes place in Kerrytown, which is one of the biggest LGBTQ-friendly areas in the region. You'll find LGBTQ literature in the Common Language bookstore, where you can browse through fiction, non-fiction and even adult themed novels. Close by is \aut\ BAR, a gay-owned watering hole which has been the heart of Ann Arbor's Kerrytown area since 1995. The bar has some of the best happy hour specials and brunch options you can imagine.

The festival even offers a Friday movie night where you can sit and enjoy a low-key evening with family and friends. Every year the movie selection is different, so be prepared for a sing-along musical or maybe an animated, themed screening! Kids are a top priority at OUTFest, as well. On Saturday there will be a Kid Zone with a bounce house, face painting, games and even a drag queen book reading. How cool is that?

Night life in the city of Ann Arbor is unmatched by other surrounding cities. Necto Nightclub is arguably the most popular dance club in the city, with its themed nights that include Factory Monday, Mix Thursday, Pride Friday and Frequency Saturday. This club has the largest and longest running LGBTQ night in Michigan since 1984. Not to mention

the long and lavish guest list over the years which includes an abundance of amazing hosts and performers. This year is no different because the weekend of OUTFest the nightclub will feature the talented Katya, from RuPaul's Drag Race. If you aren't able to make it to Necto Nightclub then you may want to come another week and head on over to "Candy Bar" night at Live nightclub, which takes place every Thursday night.

Boylesque is the place to be for a night of remarkable entertainment by some of the most talented drag queens and drag kings in the region. The drag performers are mostly local, but some visit as special guests from other cities and states. So, if you are in the mood for some sparkle (and plenty of sass) you don't want to miss the show. Let's not forget Drag Queen Bingo, as well. The queens don't hold back with the hilarious stories and jokes to keep you entertained while playing your bingo cards. Both events are held at Ypsilanti's local pub, the Tap Room, which is located on Michigan Ave. Ypsilanti is a close neighbor to Ann Arbor — located just 15 minutes away.

The Ann Arbor's People's Food Co-Op & Cafe Verde offer some healthy and organic food and drinks if you want to do some grocery shopping or grab a light lunch. Or, you can swing by the famous Zingerman's Delicatessen where they offer mouth watering desserts and some of the best sandwiches in the area — that have even impressed President Barack Obama. For the vegan crowd, the The Lunch Room has a wide variety of options as well.

The host hotel for OUTFest is the Holiday Inn Ann Arbor Near the University of Michigan. Guests will love the convenient location with easy access to major interstates and transportation - as well as parking, pet-friendly accommodations, and accessible rooms for guests with disabilities. Give them a call, mention you're attending OUTFest, and get a special group rate.

Ann Arbor's entertainment scene is ever-growing and there's always something to get excited about. People from all over the world come to our great city for education, business or pleasure. For sure, you'll be pleased by how much this city has to offer.

For more information about OUTFest and a list of festival events, visit www.a2outfest.com.

► Defense Network

Continued from p. 4

women's agency and reproductive rights. MPDN also said "men's rights" is a thinly veiled defense of rape culture.

The organization points to the church's racist anti-Muslim rhetoric, painting Muslim migrants and refugees as sexual predators.

MPDN said, "As the radical Christian right rises in America, having supported Donald Trump's campaign of hatred against the most marginalized, it is more vital than ever that the community stands against hate draped in a cross."

In response to the planned demonstration, Church Militant issued a press release titled, "Theological Conference Targeted by Antifa Allies," which states the claim that the conference is about "men's rights" is a deliberate distortion. The conference is about men's obligations, not "rights."

The conference, according to Church Militant, is entirely theological in nature, offering talks on the essential role of sacrificial masculinity required of Catholic men to be good husbands and fathers.

The press release reads: "Church Militant is not a hate group; MPDN is the real hate group, trying to intimidate religious organizations into silence... MPDN is anti-religion when that religion promotes theologically grounded teachings like the sacredness of life from its first beginnings to its natural end, and the sanctity of traditional marriage between one man and one woman... Church Militant is proudly pro-woman, pro-life and pro-immigrant."

BTL previously reported on Church Militant's anti-LGBT views. Read the story online <http://gaybe.am/MK>.

See what the Michigan Peoples Defense Network is up to on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MichiganPeoplesDefenseNetwork/.



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Between THE Lines™

Past Embraces Present-Tense



Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

It's been 60 some years since I last saw the young man who sits across from me. He has, at 19, what a friend calls "the poetry of youth." An eager freshness that's a joy at my age to see.

He hasn't changed much. Still thin as a rail. Tall as ever. Same deep blue eyes. But I have changed. Oh, my, my...

There's a kinship between us. It's hard not to make comparisons. Yes, it was fall of '56 when he left Gilead Baptist Church membership, realizing at 20 he was gay, knowing that because of this "shocking sin" there was no welcoming place for him as a born-again believer.

I'll give him credit for wasting no time to begin what has proven to be for him a long, long journey. (How well I know it!)

Yes, so much has happened since those decades passing quickly by. So many people we both knew are gone. A whole world has vanished. I'm bewildered by the sideshow that's taken its place. A nonstop carnival of glitter, guns, guttersnipe. Trump and his theocratic cronies scare the hell out of me.

As my young visitor looks out my studio window, and the setting sun weaves slowly in and out among shared memory clouds, my visitor seems both friend and, curiously, stranger.

More than anything I'd like at this moment to give him a reassuring hug. An embrace of looking-back acceptance. But how might he react? What if he just, say, up and disappears? These days anything can happen.

I wonder — did we ever exchange glances or greetings on that long-ago downtown Detroit gay street thoroughfare? Did we take time to ever get even slightly acquainted? The important thing is that he somehow, unexpectedly, stopped by today.

It's nice to have visitors, especially on a day that's not quite sure whether it's sunshine summer or Windy City fall. It would be a bit of luck if he could stay through September. (I'm sure it would be "like old times.") But what's youth got to do with old age? Pride celebration or no Pride celebration?

I'm curious how he found me. I'm not in many important address books. Like everyone with nothing to hide, I'm AT&T unlisted.

(Foolish I know, but I find myself wondering what he thinks of me? Overweight. Bald-by-choice. Retired fuddy duddy. Have I become someone he's come to respect? Would he likely trade places? Or I with him? Silly question.)

He smiles. Not an open smile, but a smile of gentle introspection. Thoughtful. Troubled? Maybe he'll be a writer, a poet, an artist. He certainly has sensitivity. Will he make something of his life? Or get by on his looks? Ah, the age-old gay dilemma.

I hum absentmindedly, and he speaks. "If you're wondering why I dropped in out of the blue, it's because I thought you might have answers. I've taken important steps to be me. A gay man. You've been down that special road.

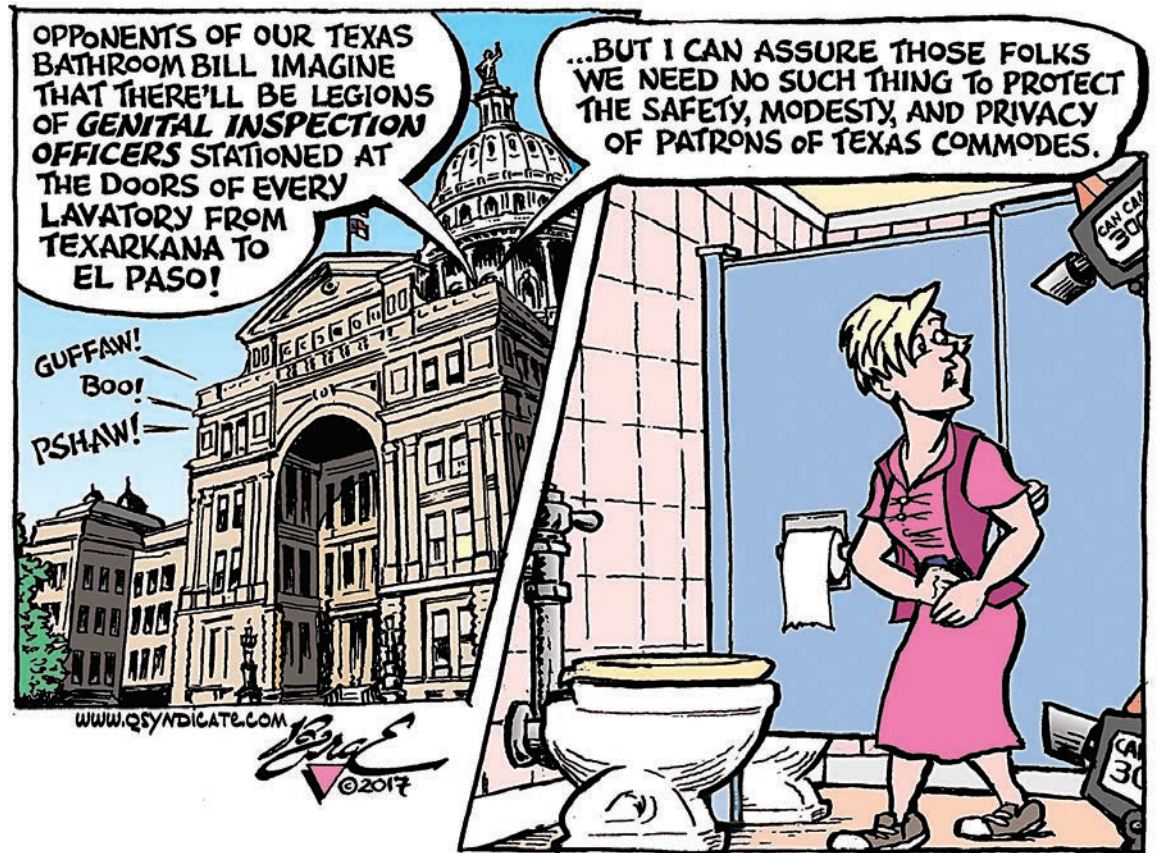
"What's it like near the finish? Would you do things differently?" Direct and to the point

"Near the finish?" (Hey, young guy: I'm not over the hill yet.) "Different? Yes! I'd stay out of debt. I'd get a college degree sooner. I wouldn't drink to excess. I'd have fewer chance encounters. A lover or two. More friends. And I'd tell anybody who put us down — young you and senior me -- to go chuck it. Would I be gay again? Silly, silly boy!"

Ah! I've said the right thing. He laughs, wholeheartedly. "Great!" he beams, taking his leave. "It's important to know someone who's been there. Goodbye. For what it's worth: God bless you."

And, as we hug long at parting -- maybe for the very last time -- he adds so softly, so caring: "Thanks ever, Charles. Thanks for being the me in you that I've finally become."

Connect with Charles Alexander at charles@pridesource.com



Mombian

New Guide Offers Advice for and from LGBTQ Parents



BY DANA RUDOLPH

As an LGBTQ parent, I sometimes feel like I've had to make things up as I go along. But "Pride and Joy: A Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Parents," gives queer parents and parents-to-be a handy way to tap into the collective wisdom of many who have gone before. The new book, by Sarah and Rachel Hagger-Holt, offers stories, advice, and insight not only on starting a family, but also on navigating the years to follow.

The book is not meant to be a manual, however, the authors tell us, but rather "an invitation to join a conversation." They hope that the stories in it "will spark moments of recognition," help readers find solutions to their own dilemmas, and convey that we're all part of a community.

The Hagger-Holts are themselves raising two children, ages six and eight, in the U.K. Rachel, a clinical psychologist and Sarah, who works in charity communications, have already published one book together, a guide for living as an out Christian. For their new and non-denominational work, they interviewed over 70 LGBTQ parents, their grown children, sperm donors, prospective parents, and others across the U.K. and Ireland to provide a range of perspectives, anecdotes, and advice. And despite its British and Irish

roots, most of the book is broadly applicable to LGBTQ parents in the U.S., too.

The first section covers starting a family, beginning with how people have decided to do so in the first place. Even the chapters about specific options—adoption/fostering, sperm banks, surrogacy, known donors, and straight relationships—are less about the mechanics and more about sharing insights on why people chose that option and what it was like for them.

Part Two, "Coming Out as a Family," includes choosing names for parents and donors, telling extended family about your plans to parent (and navigating what could be varied reactions), responding to questions from medical and social service professionals as well as from other parents, and being an LGBTQ family in the school system. (Best section heading: "We're here, we're queer, and we're on the PTA.")

A third section explores "Creating New Forms of Family," and the importance (or not) of biological connection, gender roles and expectations, being out as a parent, and relationships with co-parents, donors, birth parents, and others.

The final part looks at life changes that some LGBTQ

See next page

► Rudolph: Mombian

Continued from p. 10

families may face, such as gender transition, divorce, and new relationships, and then turns to ways of maintaining our own LGBTQ identities as parents. It wraps up with a chapter about talking with our children about sometimes tough topics like sex and relationships, prejudice, diversity, “and what it means for them to be part of an LGBTQ family, helping them to be confident in their own story and in sharing it with others.”

Several “special feature” essays also take in-depth looks at additional topics like cross-cultural parenting, seeking asylum as an LGBTQ family, being an ally to LGBTQ parents, and choosing not to parent.

The book is consistently encouraging but not saccharine, balancing practical tips with stories

that cast light on the emotional aspects of being an LGBTQ parent. The Haggar-Holts do a good job pulling together the diverse opinions and experiences of their interviewees, but are not afraid to offer their own insights, too. In talking with children about LGBTQ people and relationships, for example, they observe that this isn’t a matter of sex; instead, “We’re telling them a story about how much they are loved, wanted and surrounded by people who care for them.”

“Pride and Joy” is a welcome addition to the small canon of guidebooks for LGBTQ parents, most of which (like Stephanie Brill’s *The New Essential Guide to Lesbian Conception, Pregnancy, and Birth*, Rachel Pepper’s *The Ultimate Guide to Pregnancy for Lesbians*, and Eric Rosswood’s recent *Journey to Same-Sex Parenthood*) focus on starting a family rather than raising one, and do not fully include transgender or bisexual parents. Arlene Istar Lev’s

“*The Complete Lesbian and Gay Parenting Guide*” is probably closest in covering more than just how to start, but like Brill and Pepper’s work is now over a decade old. And Michael Shelton’s more recent “*Family Pride: What LGBTQ Families Should Know about Navigating Home, School, and Safety in Their Neighborhoods*,” feels less like a guidebook and more like a survey of the state of LGBTQ families in 2013.

The Haggar-Holts, in contrast, offer a broader look across the family lifecycle and the spectrum, even including several bisexual parents in different-sex relationships, as well as trans and genderqueer parents. They acknowledge the need for bisexual and transgender people to sometimes find their own spaces. They also wisely include insights from adults with LGBTQ parents.

Some might argue that a cross-spectrum book isn’t necessary; that each part

of the spectrum has its own specific concerns on the way to and through parenthood. While that may be true to some extent, a cross-spectrum book also shows that we have many things in common; that some of us sit in multiple or changing places on the spectrum; and that we can learn much from each other to enhance both our own parenting and our ability to support others in their journeys.

The book will likely appeal most to new LGBTQ parents or LGBTQ people considering parenthood, but even those of us with a few years of experience under our belts will find much of value in this bouquet of stories, tips, and reflections about the grand adventure that is being an LGBTQ parent.

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

“*In talking with children about LGBTQ people and relationships, for example, they observe that this isn’t a matter of sex; instead, “We’re telling them a story about how much they are loved, wanted and surrounded by people who care for them.”*”

Creep of the Week

BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

John K. Bush

When America wakes up from the nightmare of the Donald Trump presidency — assuming we survive it, of course — we will be left with a country severely damaged by a president and a party who have no respect for democratic norms or American ideals.

There are many villains in this plot: Trump, Mike Pence, Mitch McConnell, Paul Ryan, Jeff Sessions, Tom Price, Betsy DeVos. The list goes on and on. But even when most of these people are but hideous footnotes, Trump will have long lasting destructive power remaining in the courts.

While Trump and the Republicans like to call Democrats “obstructionists,” there’s really no comparison when it comes to the Republicans during Obama’s presidency. McConnell is the greatest obstructionist in history. After all, he stole a Supreme Court seat from Obama. This, of course, allowed Trump to appoint the right-wing Neil Gorsuch to the highest court in the land. And Supreme Court appointments are a lifetime gig. That means you get to be a Supreme Court judge until you die or retire, whichever comes first. Gorsuch is only 49. He’ll likely spend decades on the bench.

Of course, Supreme Court appointments aren’t the only lifetime gigs Trump gets to hand out. Due to McConnell’s unprecedented obstructionism, Obama wasn’t able to fill many federal judge vacancies. More than 100 empty seats awaited Trump when he took office. And Trump is wasting no time appointing right-wing conservatives to those seats.

According to Kyle Barry of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the appointments “foretell a Trump-stacked judiciary that would clear the way for constitutionally suspect executive actions, shield corporate wrongdoers from accountability, and imperil the civil rights of all Americans.”

It’s no surprise that Trump, unqualified and incompetent, would appoint judges who are completely unfit for the bench. Which makes the appointment of Josh Bush, a Kentucky lawyer and blogger that Think Progress called “the Donald Trump of judges,” understandable, but no less inexcusable.

Bush, who the Senate voted along party lines to confirm to a lifetime appointment on the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, is a longtime foe of LGBTQ people.

And yet during his Senate hearing Bush claimed that, gee, he hadn’t given much thought to *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the case that made marriage equality the law of the land. “I have not had occasion to study this decision of the Supreme Court in light of any methodology of constitutional interpretation,” he said.

Sure. I mean, Bush freaked out when the State Department under Hillary Clinton revised passport applications to include Parent 1 and Parent 2 instead of just Mother and Father (because, you know, same-sex couples who have children are a real thing) by bemoaning the “the nanny state -- more precisely, a nanny Secretary of State.” But I’m sure the marriage equality decision wasn’t even on his radar.

He told the Senate that of course he’d uphold *Obergefell*, just like he’d uphold *Roe v. Wade* even though he has compared abortion to slavery.

27 LGBTQ rights groups wrote a letter to Senators asking them not to confirm Bush.

“Mr. Bush’s disparagement of decisions protecting the right of individuals to make highly personal decisions—including the right to engage in private consensual adult relationships and the right to procreative freedom—reveals a hostility to well-established fundamental rights of liberty, privacy, autonomy and self-determination that have been the lynchpin of legal progress for LGBT people,” the letter stated.

And yet, Bush now has a lifetime appointment. Elections have far reaching consequences. 2018 is crucial. Vote.



Michigan Non Profit Resource

Have You Experienced Discrimination?

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

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

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

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

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

► Lauren Tartarsky

Continued from p. 5

American University where I studied international relations, sociology, race relations and the like. I traveled with the US Campaign for Burma to Thailand, and I went to Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus for a peace and conflict resolution program through American University. I studied abroad in France and traveled a bunch throughout Europe, and went to Africa a few times.”

By the time she earned her bachelors of arts degree in Peace and Conflict Resolution from American University she was a full-fledged environmentalist.

“I ended up my senior year of college studying a lot about the environment, specifically food systems,” Tartarsky said. “I got really passionate about food access and the environment because it brought together issues of human rights, health, empowerment of marginalized groups, and the environment, all of which I was super passionate about. My first career was in food systems, doing food policy that promoted access to healthy foods in low-income communities across Colorado.”

Tartarsky would go on to earn her master’s degree in Spiritual Guidance from The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology before she met the woman she moved to Michigan to be with.

“I actually moved here for a relationship that didn’t last,” she said. “It was a typical lesbian U-Haul situation. But I have always loved Ann Arbor and I had been ready to leave Denver for a while and find a place that felt more like home to me. I’m a small city person with a serious love of nature, so living in Ann Arbor gives me the best of both worlds and I could not love it more.”

Tartarsky had only been in Michigan a short time before she found the center.

“I stumbled upon it online while looking for a spiritual community when I first came to Ann Arbor,” she said. “The first time I went to a Sunday service, I found out they were hiring to replace the senior minister and I immediately got a shock to the heart. The application was due before the next Sunday and I applied right away. The thought of directing a spiritual center that is diverse and open and affirming was kind of a dream for me. I never expected it to come true so early in my career.”

But the dream did come true and Tartarsky got the job.

“I give the Sunday talks most weeks and that usually lasts 15-20 minutes,” she said. “My talks usually have a topic that has something to do with life and spirituality, things like uncertainty, possibility, grief, liberation, awareness, and then I bring in different traditions and spiritual practices, as diverse as I can get.

“The Sunday services are really member-driven, as there are so many points of participation,” Tartarsky continued. “There are numerous committees that support the center and so much volunteer involvement you wouldn’t believe. There is a very horizontal leadership structure, with all of us really working together as a team. I support the center’s growth and communicate our vision and mission to the community. I offer spiritual counseling to our members during times of difficulty and I do home, hospital and hospice visits. I also lead workshops and courses there. I’m doing a beginning meditation workshop for teens in September and a free-form dance workshop in October. I’m also developing a meditation course for the winter.”

To connect with Lauren Tartarsky or to learn more about the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, visit interfaithspirit.org.

‘Grownmance’ Novel Inspired by Male Survivors of Abuse

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

By day she is Dr. Staci Hirsch, residential director for the Ruth Ellis Center in Highland Park. But by night, she is A.G. Davis, writer and official biographer of “The Roswell Discrepancy: A Human Romance in Three Parts.”

This series of stories was inspired by the lives of males – gay, bisexual, and straight – who were survivors of childhood sexual abuse and sought therapy from Davis in hopes of becoming open to real love despite what was done to them.

“They were not only victims groomed by trusted adults but also of a society that has, until very recently, ignored them or refused to label their experiences as trauma,” said Davis, who has a doctorate degree in clinical psychology and has worked in social services as a therapist and program administrator for over 30 years. She called on her three decades worth of experience to conceptualize the characters in her story.

Her first fictional book – recently released by Mirador Publishing – introduces the character, Desmond “Deetz” Mac Innes, who Davis said, “is a combination of five clients who were sexually abused as children and came to me for treatment in the distant past as well as a sprinkle of men I know now. I do not feel I did those clients justice. The only piece of him that is reflective of my father is his love of pro audio/visual equipment and the physical abuse he experienced from my grandfather.”

She calls her book a “grownmance” about Deetz who returns to Wales after his father dies. In the preceding years, Deetz became a skilled martial artist, slept with everyone – every which way – from San Francisco to Thailand, all the while improving his psychic powers and insightful wit. But on his journey home, he is confronted by another problem, an old crush on his childhood best friend, Angus Reese, soon to be the 12th Earl of Glamorgan.

“It’s a love story for adults who have been around the block and are ready to stop and examine the cracks in the sidewalk,” said Davis. “It is full of hot sex, intelligent, snarky comments about our current cultural/political climate, and Jewish magic out of Wales. It’s also about

loyalty and how often times the family we make as adults is better than the one we were born into.”

Reluctant to out herself as a woman, albeit a bisexual one, Davis feared that people would question whether a woman could write about gay romance.

“I hide my real name only because folks don’t think a cis female can write honestly and comprehensively about male love,” Davis explained. “I don’t want my gender to get in the way of the story. I was raised

who been to enough Pride parades and prefer our tequila with Netflix,” she said. “My daughter, L.G., just graduated from college and, like any good millennial, is too busy finding herself and writing her own (young adult) novel to worry much about mom.”

“The Roswell Discrepancy” is actually slated to be the first book of a trilogy.

“The process is frightening as all get out,” said Davis. “It’s so anxiety producing.

My therapist gets overtime and combat pay all at once. The stories have been generally outlined. The first book will focus on how love starts, the second is about how love is sustained after lust becomes comfort sharing, and the last will be about the loss of your partner and reflecting on the larger forces that brought you together in the first place. The anxiety comes from having these characters in my head all the time, talking to me while I work my paying job or while watching the latest installment of Sense 8.”

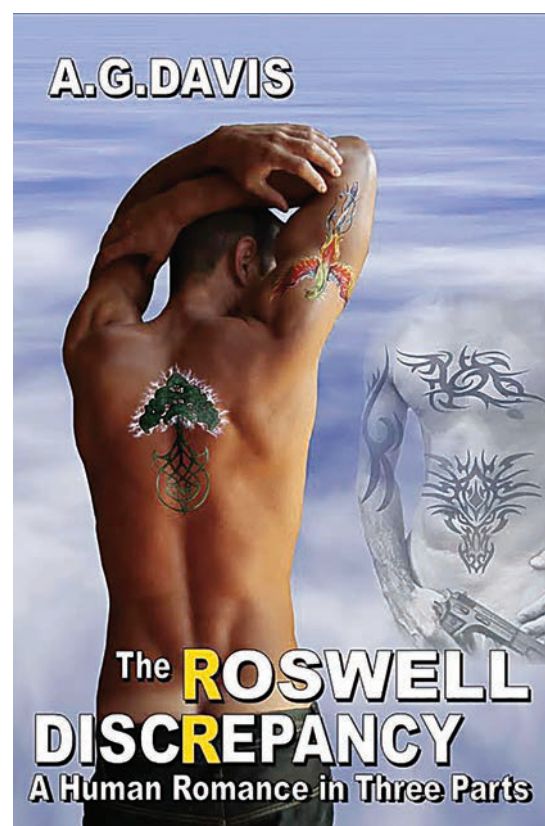
Davis said if the books do well she’d eventually like to retire from her day job.

“My husband is 69 years old and just had quadruple by-pass surgery,” she said. “I would like to earn enough from writing to leave the 9 to 5 and buy an RV where we could travel the country together. It would be nice to write the next book while watching the sunrise off the Pacific Ocean from the back of my fifth wheel.”

But wherever she’s at, she’ll always remember the many men who have walked through her professional door.

“For so long I’ve helping people with wide-ranging backgrounds but who had one thing in common – they were trauma survivors looking for love,” said Davis. “‘The Roswell Discrepancy’ is the start of a series of books focused on how longing and romance are experienced and lived differently by men. May this book and the ones forthcoming in the series offer some hope for those I tried to help and the hundreds of thousands who I was never blessed to know.”

Part one of the “The Roswell Discrepancy” series is available on Amazon for around \$15.



by a straight man who made John Wayne look like a sissy. I’ve been around and have had men as my BFFs my whole life. Much of the sex described in the book came from what I saw and what I heard in real life and real time. Darlin’, if I had a penis, you’d call me butch.”

Born and raised in Chicago, Davis did her undergraduate work at DePaul University and received her doctorate in psychology from Argosy University, which was at the time called the Illinois School of Professional Psychology. She said she came to Detroit “on a romantic visa, which I overstayed.” Davis has been married to a man she calls “Mr. Grumpy” for nearly 20 years and the couple have one daughter.

“We’re just a couple of old bi-babies



Ken VanWagoner helps a customer at the Good Beans Café in Flint. BTL Photo: Jiquanda Johnson

Flint Coffee Shop Keeps Doors Open Despite Obstacles

Ken VanWagoner Attributes His Success to a Modest Lifestyle and His Commitment to the Community

BY JIQUANDA JOHNSON

In nearly two decades, Ken VanWagoner has faced a number of struggles that could have forced him to close the doors at Good Beans Café in Flint.

He remembers shooing away prostitutes, drug abusers and dealers from the doorstep of the coffee shop located just outside of downtown Flint – all of which drove customers away.

“Part of what I present here does not rely on a revenue stream,” VanWagoner said. “I don’t have to have a paycheck. What ends up making this work is that I don’t have a mortgage note. If I did, I would be out of business.”

VanWagoner has a long history in the hospitality industry. As he worked in various kitchens since college he always desired to open his own business. When his twin sister was in a fatal car accident, he came to Flint to care for his mother who was stricken with grief and through that tragedy he decided to set up a European-style coffee and beverage shop near downtown Flint.

“There were cafes throughout the U.S., but Flint was behind about 10 years,” VanWagoner said. “So, the whole idea was new for people around here, a place that only served coffee.”

Initially, he pursued loans to open Good Beans but a number of rejections forced him to find other funding for the coffee shop located on 328 N. Grand Traverse in Flint’s Carriage

Town community.

“I remember when I first opened. I wanted to borrow money to get the place going and all the places I asked for money said no,” VanWagoner said. “Every one of them said no.”

VanWagoner said he tried to obtain both conventional and unconventional loans to open Good Beans but the rejections may have saved his business.

“There’s no way I would have the business that would support a note. They all knew that but I didn’t. They were right,” he said. “I would have been out of business.”

In 2000, Good Beans opened to the public. Shortly after opening the doors, VanWagoner struggled with ongoing crime issues that made some customers uneasy.

“I remember people coming and telling me if I could get rid of the drug dealers and prostitutes that I would have more business,” he said. “But I couldn’t. There was nothing that I could do to get rid of them so the loyalty of my customer base was contingent on their acceptance of that. There were people who were not coming down here...but I was okay with that.”

Now he says crime is down, the nation’s economy is coming back, but Flint businesses are struggling with the city’s water crisis and the negative stigma now associated with the water.

See next page

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photo: SIM GoodBeans 2530 caption: Ken VanWagoner helps a customer at the Good Beans Café in Flint. Photo: Jiquanda Johnson

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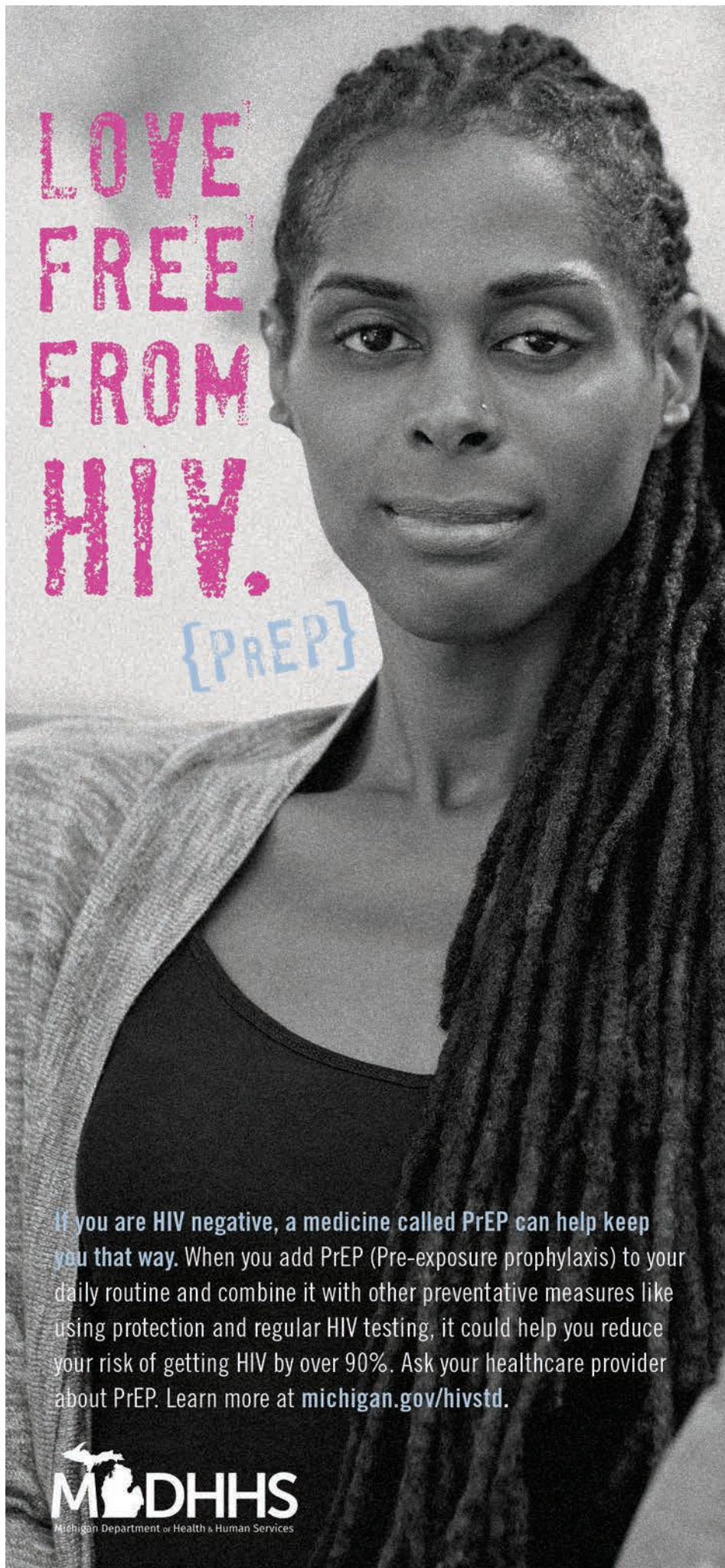
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► Good Beans Café

Continued from p. 13

“This poor city was finally beginning to come back,” VanWagoner said. “We fought the perception problem for a long time. Now that crime got better, we started getting people to come to downtown Flint. There’s a loyal following that will always come. I’m talking about from the surrounding communities. Now we have to convince people that the water is safe.”

Be it crime, the city’s water crisis or the nation’s struggling economy, VanWagoner said his business has managed to stay afloat because of his very modest lifestyle.

“I don’t own a fancy car. I don’t own a fancy house. I can afford to make it work,” VanWagoner said. “But I couldn’t ask anyone to live like I do.”

A statement that proved to be true when his partner, Michael, who helped him open Good Beans left to pursue his desire to be an artist.

“He was always about 100 percent behind it,” VanWagoner said of his ex-partner. “These colors you see here are his colors. He picked them. He chose them. He totally was about certain aspects of this business that I never would have got, I never would have done, and to this day it still works here and that to me is part of what I loved about him and I still do.”

The couple agreed that Flint’s a “tough town” to live in.

“And when you’re a creative person, and he was very creative, still is, it clipped his wings and so he wanted to go and I wasn’t going to make him stay. That was nothing

somebody should do to somebody else. So it was very hard, but I said if you have to go, you have to go. I would like to say that I couldn’t have done it without him and that was true,” VanWagoner said.

It was through that relationship and VanWagoner’s support of his nephew, a musician, that he learned to appreciate the arts – an appreciation that shows in the décor at the coffee shop where local artists are allowed to display and sell their works.

“I was always a numbers man. I never saw the benefit of the arts. I do now. I see how the two have to coexist,” he said. “What I created here was sort of the empty canvass

for them to come and have it be whatever they wanted it to be. I didn’t censor it because I felt like that wasn’t my place either. And I allowed that creativity to express itself organically... and become whatever they wanted it to be.”

Artists host events monthly at the coffee shop, but giving local creatives a space to express themselves is only one reason VanWagoner has endured the struggles throughout the years.

“People say to me all the time, ‘You could have done away with Good Beans but you didn’t and we appreciate that.’ That’s the reason I’m staying. That’s the reason I’m continuing and that’s the reason I did continue.”

Visit the Good Beans Café online <http://thegoodbeanscafe.com> for more information.

“ I don’t own a fancy car. I don’t own a fancy house. I can afford to make it work. But I couldn’t ask anyone to live like I do. ”



The Good Beans Café is located at 328 N. Grand Traverse in Flint. BTL Photo: Jiquanda Johnson



For First Time, Over Half of People with HIV Taking AIDS Drugs

BY MARIA CHENG

LONDON (AP) — For the first time in the global AIDS epidemic that has spanned four decades and killed 35 million people, more than half of all those infected with HIV are on drugs to treat the virus, the United Nations said in a report released July 20.

AIDS deaths are also now close to half of what they were in 2005, according to the U.N. AIDS agency, although those figures are based on estimates and not actual counts from countries.

Experts applauded the progress, but questioned if the billions spent in the past two decades should have brought more impressive results. The U.N. report was released in Paris where an AIDS meeting begins this weekend.

“When you think about the money that’s been spent on AIDS, it could have been better,” said Sophie Harman, a senior lecturer in global health politics at Queen Mary University in London.

She said more resources might have gone to strengthening health systems in poor countries.

“The real test will come in five to 10 years once the funding goes down,” Harman said, warning that some countries might not be able to sustain the U.N.-funded AIDS programs on their own.

The Trump administration has proposed a 31 percent cut in contributions to the U.N. starting in October.

According to the report, about 19.5 million people with HIV were taking AIDS drugs in 2016, compared to 17.1 million the previous year.

UNAIDS also said there were about 36.7 million people with HIV in 2016, up slightly from 36.1 million the year before.

In the report’s introduction, Michel Sidibe, UNAIDS’ executive director, said more and more countries are starting treatment as early as possible, in line with scientific findings that the approach keeps people healthy and helps prevent new infections. Studies show that people whose virus is under control are far less likely to pass it on to an uninfected sex partner.

“Our quest to end AIDS has only just begun,” he wrote.

The report notes that about three-quarters of pregnant women with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, now have access to medicines to prevent them from passing it to their babies. It also said five hard-hit African countries now provide lifelong AIDS drugs to 95 percent of pregnant and breast-feeding women with the virus.

“For more than 35 years, the world has grappled with an AIDS epidemic that has claimed an estimated 35 million lives,” the report said. “Today, the United Nations General Assembly has a shared vision to consign AIDS to the history books.”

The death toll from AIDS has dropped dramatically in recent years as the wide availability of affordable, life-saving drugs has made the illness a manageable disease. But Harman said that “Ending AIDS” — the report’s title — was unrealistic.

“I can see why they do it, because it’s bold and no one would ever disagree with the idea of ending AIDS, but I think we should be pragmatic,” she said. “I don’t think we will ever eliminate AIDS, so it’s possible this will give people the wrong idea.”



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National LGBTQ Task Force Launches Transgender Mental Health Survey

BYLINE BY BTL STAFF

The National LGBTQ Task Force has partnered with Trans Lifeline to launch the nation's first transgender mental health survey. The first-of-its-kind research is intended to provide a deep insight into the mental healthcare experiences of transgender people in order to improve advocacy efforts. All people over the age of 18 living in the United States that identify as transgender are encouraged to take the survey. The survey is conducted exclusively online and can be filled out online at www.transmentalhealthsurvey.org.

"Forty-one percent of transgender people have attempted suicide, yet not enough is known about the experiences of transgender people when seeking or receiving mental health care," said Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan, Trans/Gender Nonconforming and Disability Justice Projects Director, National LGBTQ Task Force. "Thanks to other studies, we have a glimpse into the medical discrimination faced by the transgender community. We wish to expand upon that glimpse. This survey is truly cutting edge as it asks respondents questions that were still a big taboo not too long ago."

According to the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, 33 percent of transgender people report negative experiences with health providers, but it is known how this data correlates to mental health care providers. The U.S. Trans Survey was a follow up to the seminal 2011 National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS), published by the National LGBTQ Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality, which provided insight into lives of transgender people living in the U.S. The transgender mental health survey builds on the work of NTDS by pursuing the subjects that were neglected back then. The data collected will help further advance the Task Force's lobbying around mental health and disability policy.

76 Lawmakers Call for Return of Trans Question in Health Survey

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

A bipartisan group of 76 U.S. House members is calling on the White House to restore to a federal health survey for elders a question the Trump administration has struck out allowing them to identify as transgender.

In a letter dated July 21 and led by Rep. Ted Deutch (D-Fla.), chair of the LGBT Aging Issues Task Force, lawmakers call on the White House Office of Management & Budget to reinstate the question in the National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants, or NSOAAP.

"We have to ensure we are meeting the needs of the most vulnerable among us," Deutch said in a statement. "Study after study has shown that transgender older adults face greater social isolation, food insecurity and disparate health impacts. It is cruel to remove a previously included transgender-specific demographic question and, in essence, send a message to transgender seniors that their needs are not important."

Earlier this year, the Administration on Community Living at the Department of Health & Human Services indicated it would eliminate from the NSOAAP questions allowing LGBT elders to identify their sexual orientation and gender identity. Amid pressure from LGBT rights supporters, HHS agreed



Rep. Ted Deutch (D-Fla.) is calling on OMB to restore a transgender question to an elder health survey. Photo public domain

to restore the sexual orientation, but kept out a question allowing elders to identify as transgender.

NSOAAP is a survey that evaluates whether the billions of dollars in HHS funding for programs assisting older Americans is being effectively. LGBT advocates have said the questions on sexual orientation and gender identity, which first appeared in the survey in 2014, has yielded important data on whether these resources have reached LGBT elders.

A survey conducted this year by the Movement Advancement Project and Advocacy & Services for LGBT Elders, titled "Understanding Issues Facing LGBT Older Adults," found transgender elders report significant rates of discrimination. Twenty-five percent of transgender elders say they've faced discrimination based on their gender identity and nearly

half live at 200 percent of the federal poverty line or lower.

"The current noticed version of NSOAAP erases the experience and challenges faced by the transgender community for no discernable reason," the letter says. "Keeping one additional question in a more than 100-page survey can hardly be viewed as a burden. Simply restoring this demographic question will go far to ensuring the purpose of OAA, ensuring older Americans are able to live out their golden years with dignity and support, is fulfilled."

Among the signers of the letter are co-chairs of the LGBT Equality Caucus: Rep. Jared Polis (D-Colo.), David Cicilline (D-R.I.), Mark Takano (D-Calif.), Sean Patrick Maloney (D-N.Y.), Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) and Mark Pocan (D-Wis.). The sole Republican signer is Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.).

A White House Office of Management & Budget spokesperson said in response to the letter the office historically "does not comment on matters that are under review."

Chris Johnson is Chief Political and White House Reporter for the Washington Blade. This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National Gay Media Association.



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New Trump Communications Chief Scaramucci Backs LGBT Rights



Anthony Scaramucci is the new White House communications director. Photo by Jdarsie11; courtesy Wikimedia Commons

BY CHRIS JOHNSON,
WASHINGTON BLADE

Marking an unusual shift for the Trump administration, the new White House communications chief has declared support for LGBT rights and professed to have donated to LGBT groups.

Anthony Scaramucci, a prominent New York financier, was named White House communications director on July 21, pledging during a news conference to work to reshape Trump's image amid widespread disapproval of his administration.

"I think there's been at times a disconnect between the way we see the president and how much we love the president, and the way some of you perhaps see the president," Scaramucci said. "... To use a Wall Street expression, there might be an albatross spread between how well we are doing and how well some of you guys think we are doing, and we're going to work hard to close that spread."

A Trump fundraiser, Scaramucci is a founder and co-managing partner of Skybridge Capital hedge fund and a former employee at Goldman Sachs. No stranger to defending Trump on cable news, Scaramucci was the host of "Wall Street Week" on the Fox Business Network and a regular contributor to Fox News.

It was not long ago that Scaramucci professed his support for LGBT rights and defended Trump as an LGBT rights supporter.

In November, Scaramucci criticized the progressive movement for instituting political correctness, which he said "the average person" rejects, but nonetheless insisted he's a supporter of LGBT rights and has donated to the Human Rights Campaign and the American Unity PAC, a pro-LGBT Republican group.

"I'm also a gay rights activist," Scaramucci said. "You can look it up. I've given to American Unity PAC, I've given to the Human Rights Campaign, I'm for marriage equality. And by the way, this'll be the first American president in U.S. history that enters the White House with a pro-gay rights stance."

Scaramucci erroneously said during the interview gay singer Elton John would perform at Trump's inauguration. John denied that was the case. Scaramucci later admitted his error on Twitter, but also reiterated his support for LGBT rights.

The Blade has confirmed Scaramucci donated to the American Unity Fund, a non-profit pro-LGBT Republican organization. Scaramucci seems to have misspoken by saying he contributed to the American Unity PAC, a political action committee.

It's hard to say what Scaramucci meant by Trump having a "pro-gay rights stance," let alone being the first president to have that position following the milestone LGBT achievements of the Obama

administration.

Since Trump has taken office, he's rescinded guidance assuring transgender kids have access to school restrooms consistent with their gender identity, failed to issue a Pride proclamation for the month of June and made numerous anti-LGBT appointments. Nonetheless, the White House has said Trump is "respectful and supportive of LGBT rights" and would keep President Obama's 2014 executive order against anti-LGBT workplace discrimination.

The announcement Scaramucci would become White House communications director preceded news White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer resigned over objections to the appointment. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, formerly deputy White House press secretary, has been promoted to Spicer's old role after his resignation.

Also reportedly objecting to Spicer was White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus and White House strategist Steve Bannon. It's unclear whether Scaramucci's positions on LGBT rights were among the views to which Spicer and other administration officials objected.

Scaramucci's support for LGBT rights isn't limited to those remarks. As an organizer of SALT, an annual political and business conference in Las Vegas for hedge fund managers, Scaramucci had invited as a speaker TV personality and transgender Republican advocate Caitlyn Jenner. A report last year in the Huffington Post on business support for LGBT rights quotes him as saying, "We don't want to be on the wrong side of history."

On Twitter, Scaramucci has also criticized North Carolina's anti-LGBT House Bill 2, calling the measure prohibiting transgender people from using the restroom in schools and government buildings "shameful."

Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign, said in a statement to the Washington Blade he sees an opportunity for the Trump administration to reverse course in the aftermath of Scaramucci's appointment.

"Anthony has been strong

supporter of LGBTQ rights in the past, and we hope he is able to influence the Trump administration to abandon their attacks on all those who make up our diverse community," Griffin said.

The Human Rights Campaign didn't respond to an email inquiry to confirm whether Scaramucci was in fact a donor to the organization.

For a supporter of LGBT rights, Scaramucci has made unusual choices in his selection of presidential candidates to back. In 2012, Scaramucci supported Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney. In the 2016 election, Scaramucci initially backed Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, then former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush before moving to Trump.

In a New York Times report last year on the SALT conference, Scaramucci was quoted as deriding Hillary Clinton moving to the left in the Democratic primary, reportedly saying, "You can search and see the weather vane on top of her head."

At the time he was supporting Romney, a 2012 profile in The Daily Beast quoted him as describing himself as "socially progressive, pro-choice, and against the death penalty."

Notably, Scaramucci wasn't among the more than 300 Republicans in 2015 who jointly signed the Republican friend-of-the-court before the U.S. Supreme Court in favor of same-sex marriage.

Scaramucci was initially named head of the White House Office of Public Engagement at the start of the Trump administration. However, that appointment was rescinded months before Trump ultimately named him communications director.

Chris Johnson is Chief Political and White House Reporter for the Washington Blade. This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade www.washingtonblade.com and is made available in partnership with the National Gay Media Association.

 **Anthony Scaramucci** 
@Scaramucci 

North Carolina to Limit Bathroom Use by Birth Gender
mobile.nytimes.com/2016/03/24/us/...




this is shameful. Some of these quotes read like The Onion

10:48 PM - 23 Mar 2016



North Carolina Bans Local Anti-Discriminati...

The move came in response to passage of a Charlotte ordinance letting transgender people use public bathrooms that correspond with their
mobile.nytimes.com

  2 

 **Anthony Scaramucci** 
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That isn't happening. NC called special session of legislature to pass a bill to address a non-existent problem
twitter.com/hadenough100/s...

11:04 AM - 13 May 2016




  4 



Photo: Dennis Leupold

T-Boz and Chilli Talk Gay Sex 101, Being Lesbian-Chased and the LGBT Legacy of ‘Waterfalls’

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

TLC never had to go chasing their gay fans – we came to them. And not just because “Waterfalls,” one of pop history’s most prominent HIV/AIDS-awareness anthems, made a generation of LGBT people more sexually responsible, or because “Unpretty” affirmed you’re fine just the way you are. Ever since their debut dropped in 1992, the self-proclaimed “prissy tomboys” – nobody could wear condoms quite like Lisa “Left Eye” Lopes, Tionne “T-Boz” Watkins and Rozonda “Chilli” Thomas – led us all to embrace our own crazy, sexy, cool selves, gender norms be damned.

But when Lopes, the trio’s swagging rapper, was killed in a car accident in 2002, T-Boz, 47, and Chilli, 46, took a long break from the recording studio to tour and pursue solo ventures. Now, 15 years post “TLC3D,” and thanks to a Kickstarter that funded the project, one of pop music’s flyest girl groups is taking their final bow with their self-titled fifth studio album “TLC” and opening up to their gay fans.

And no, they didn’t just stick to the rivers and lakes they’re used to. During our nostalgic and, ahem, educational interview, TLC talked about how “No Scrubs” gets the queers “crunk”... and, you know, just casually reminisced on that time they got schooled on what it means to be a top and a bottom.

Have you ever been to a gay club when “No Scrubs” comes on? Because you’ve never seen anything gayer or more inspiring.

T-Boz and Chilli: (Laughs)

Chilli: You know what’s funny? One of my friends works for VH1 and, oh my gosh, it’s hilarious. He’s gay and I’m the only girl who could be his play girlfriend he tells me, and he always sends me – and, I mean, he just sent one the other day – video of when “No Scrubs” comes on, and he’s like, “Chilli, I love you!” And he’s singing and showing me everybody singing. It is crunk!

So, I take it you’re aware of your LGBT following?

T-Boz: Oh, very aware. Very, very, very!

The thing I love about our fans is, we’ve grown with them and they’ve grown with us. Some of them have kids now, so we have generations there. But, yes, we are very, very, very aware of the community, honey, ’cause all of our friends let us know. I love it!

When did you first know you had a gay following?

T-Boz: I did a party around (1994’s) “CrazySexyCool” and that was one of the best parties I hosted. I learned so much! Like, I didn’t know there were certain terms and stuff! They hooked me up with a lot more knowledge of stuff that went on than I really realized. I was like, “Ohh?!” It was just such a free, fun party. No judging. No anything. It was just one of the best environments I had ever been in, so I thought that was cool. So, probably around ’95-ish when I was really aware.

What did you learn about the gay community that night?

T-Boz: I learned what a top was, a bottom was. And versatile! (Laughs) I learned all of

those terms! I was like, “Oh my god – this is so cool.”

Chilli: Oh, Lord. Oh, Jesus. I wasn’t at that party!

Sounds like you really missed out, Chilli. When was your gay awakening then? Ha!

Chilli: (Laughs) I don’t know why I feel weird saying it now, ’cause you already said it! The bottom part. And you know... the top. I keep laughing!

Ha! Moving on to the new album: Which songs on it do you hope become gay club anthems?

Chilli: It’s funny that you kind of break it down like that. But really and truly, for me personally, I just kind of feel like when we make our songs, we make them for everybody. I mean, *everybody*. So, you never know who’s gonna like what the most. I guess we’ll find out in time by what song really speaks to whomever and what’s the most popular one that’s being played at certain clubs. It’s kind of harder to gauge that one for me.

INFO

'I Love the '90s – the Party Continues Tour' featuring TLC

7:30 p.m. Aug. 6
DTE Energy Music Theatre, Clarkson
www.palacenet.com

T-Boz: I think "Perfect Girls." The three I've heard mostly from my gay friends have been "Perfect Girls," "Scandalous" and "Start a Fire." Those are the top three. But I think "Perfect Girls" has a message that's been universal no matter what sex you are – anyone who's ever felt like they don't love themselves from the inside out or have a goal they're trying to reach but can't 'cause they're looking at people who they think are perfect. But there's no such thing!

What do you remember of the LGBT community's response to "Waterfalls" when it first came out?

T-Boz: We did a campaign for Pfizer, and there was a new cocktail out. We did seminars and it was really cool because we let it be known that there was a new drug from this company and it could help HIV/AIDS patients. They would come up to us; they felt like we were their voice. It was such an epidemic at the time, so they just felt like we were speaking for them.

Chilli: It was basically about bringing more awareness (to it) because nobody really talked about it. It was kind of just hush-hush, even though these things were happening. It was like, "People are getting sick, they're dying and nobody is really talking about it much."

T-Boz: People even said they thought about committing suicide and it helped save their lives. We started really seeing the seriousness of it, especially when we did charity events. We got a lot of calls for charity events for AIDS benefits, so it started making a really big difference. We basically got one of our wishes through that song, because we always wanted to help change and save lives.

Gay icon Bette Midler covered "Waterfalls" a few years ago – what was it like hearing her rendition?

Chilli: That was an honor. It was an honor because she is legend, oh my god. That's legendary right there! And not only that, but she contributed to our Kickstarter campaign. We were shocked. We couldn't believe, like, "Bette Midler?!"

During "RuPaul's Drag Race," Tatianna showed some TLC love when she did T-Boz drag. Did you tune in for that?

T-Boz: (Laughs) I absolutely saw it and I loved it! I put it on my page; I reposted it.
Chilli: I don't think anybody ever has (dressed up as me). Maybe I'm boring! I'm

not fun, I guess. (Laughs) I just got the long, wavy hair. And I don't hardly wear any wake up, so I don't think I'd be a fun person to dress up as, is what I'm thinking.

T-Boz: Yeah, I've seen T-Boz drag more than once, actually. It's cool to see different renditions of myself. It makes you go, "Oh that's how you see me!" (Laughs)

What do you remember from RuPaul's visit to the set of the "No Scrubs" video in 1999?

Chilli: I remember the first time I saw him – and at first I didn't know even it was him because he wasn't in drag! He was just walking around with no makeup and it was so funny. But then, when he smiled, it was like, "Oh, that is RuPaul." You know that smile anywhere. And he was so sweet too. And really tall! (Laughs)

T-Boz: He just came to show love. He was just there to support us, which I thought was awesome. That was it. He was just showing love.

At the start of your career, you rocked a tomboy look. How intentional was your subversion of gender? And what did that do for your lesbian following?

Chilli: This is how we looked at it: We call ourselves "prissy tomboys" 'cause we're super girly, but we're tomboys at the same time, so we felt like we represented all the girls who did not feel comfortable wearing a tight dress. We represented that crew. Then lettin' everybody know you don't have to wear a tight dress to be sexy – it's the attitude. So, even though we had baggy clothes and all that kind of stuff, we were still feminine. So, again, whoever gravitated toward that and felt comfortable, we helped them feel more comfortable. That's how it was, because we didn't wanna wear tight dresses! We still don't really like dressing like that.

Did your style give the ladies the wrong idea – that you were lesbian? What do you remember of those rumors?


T-Boz: I got most of it! They was always after me, child! (Laughs) All the lipstick lesbians – everybody! Child, I got everything. But that doesn't bother us. Ultimately, no matter what your sexual orientation, we were standing up for anybody that felt like they didn't fit in. We were letting them know you can still be sexy in boy clothes, you can rock this, you don't have to be naked or half-dressed. You can be yourself and be just as fly.

As editor of Q Syndicate, the international LGBT wire service, Chris Azzopardi has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. Reach him via his website at www.chris-azzopardi.com and on Twitter (@chrisazzopardi).

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6 Way Gay Things to Get Into Right Now



cities to meet demand. I'm currently in talks with the league's founder Will Hackner to bring VGL to my part of the world, and if you think your city might benefit from this organized homo-raderie, hit 'em up on Twitter @vglsocial.

3. OUTshine on the Sea

Earlier this year I attended the 10-day OUTshine LGBT film festival in Miami – which featured some of the best LGBT films I have ever seen (not an exaggeration; find French-Canadian film “1:54” and have a box of Kleenex handy) – and I'm pretty pumped for OUTshine on the Sea, the fest's seven-night Eastern Caribbean Cruise (hitting Nassau, Punta Cana and St. Thomas), from February 17 to 23, 2018, aboard Celebrity Equinox. If you're a film and cruise lover – two of my favorite things! – pack your movie-marathon sweatpants and let's gain 10 pounds of popcorn weight on the open ocean together.

4. Hornet App

If you're fed up with all the blatant racism on your gay dating/hookup apps, take a break and zip into Hornet, a gay social-networking app oddly popular in France, Russia, Brazil, Turkey and Taiwan (you want to expand your horizons, right?), but whose user base is consistently growing here at home. Aside from finding likeminded men nearby (the app includes a GPS component just like Gindr and the gang), you can tap into and share LGBT-focused new stories on its companion website UnicornBooty.com; discover local queer hotspots around your home and when you're traveling; and keep your social calendar lit with curated homocentric events.

5. Ascension Asbury Park

After years of false starts and delayed gentrification, Asbury Park, New Jersey is now a full-fledged LGBT destination for gay men and lesbians alike. There's no shortage of “fam”-friendly places to stay (you won't be disappointed with a night at the celebrated Asbury Hotel), dine (upscale Mexi-joint Barrio Costero has margies to die for), and get your swerve on (the pool at Paradise is always poppin' after midnight on Saturdays during the summer). But if you really want to throw your weekend getaway into overdrive, swoop into town for Ascension, Aug. 4 to 6, featuring 11 high-octane events, including tea

BY MIKEY ROX

One of the best parts of my job as an LGBT lifestyle expert is discovering all the dynamic new people, places and things expected to interest the LGBT community. Some do, some don't – I sift through A LOT of duds, in fact (like the travel-size cold-sore medicine one PR hack pitched me for years because he thought it would make a great stocking stuffer at Christmastime) – but every once in a while I stumble upon a few gems to tell you about it. As such, here's what I'm into right now – and you might be too.

1. REVRY LGBT Streaming Service

You have to tip your feathered caps to Netflix, Hulu and other popular streaming services for providing (for the most part) satisfying LGBT programming options, like trans creator Jill Soloway's award-winning “Transparent” over at Amazon. But now you can effectively eliminate all the hetero noise clogging up your queues and go full “queerated content” thanks to REVRY, the first dedicated LGBTQ+ digital streaming platform. Available on Apple TV, Chromecast, Roku, plus iOS and Android devices (with Pluto.tv and Amazon Fire capabilities coming soon), REVRY, which recently celebrated its

first anniversary, features original content like “3030,” a series about platonic black lesbian roommates living in Las Vegas; the newly added Bob the Drag Queen comedy special, “Suspiciously Large Woman”; as well as international shows and movies, like the subtitled “Free Fall,” characterized as the German “Brokeback Mountain.” Spoiler alert: They bang in the woods using nature's lube.

2. Varsity Gay League

When I lived in Manhattan I was a regular on the social sports scene – both “straight” and gay leagues – playing a wide range of activities, including bowling, kickball, dodgeball, trivia and cornhole (and yaaas, competitive cornhole is totally considered a sport, queen). When I left NYC for life in a small beach community on the Jersey Shore, however, being part of these teams was among the things I missed most. That could all change soon, though, as I was recently introduced to Varsity Gay League, which is celebrating its milestone 10th anniversary this year. VGL is the largest sports league in California with more than 8,000 members, and it has outposts in San Diego, San Francisco, Long Beach, Sacramento, Austin, Orlando and Portland, with plans to add other major



dances, beach bashes and glow parties taken to new heights by 14 DJs and thousands of prospective half-night stands.

6. Handmade Sexy Time

My boyfriend and I are adventurous, especially when it comes to our bodies and bedroom activity, and we had an arousing at-home date night with Haus of Betch's hand-crocheted jock straps – it was like Captain America himself was calling me hither in his blue three-starred weiner basket (sorry, no photos) – and an arts-and-crafts project making vibrating dildos of our own dicks with kits from Clone-A-Willy. The latter was a bit stressful because the process

moved ultra-fast – we had to get and stay hard while mixing the plaster at an exact 90 degrees and cast our cocks in under three minutes! – but we shared laughs along the way, amazing sex afterward, and now we've got life-size replicas of our own wieners that we'll probably just use to go fuck ourselves whenever we have a tiff. (Sorry; still no photos.)

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

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Happenings

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If you or someone you care about is experiencing mild memory loss, research has shown that the visual and expressive arts can be good for your mind. "Meet Me at UMMA: A Museum Arts Experience for Persons with Mild Memory Loss and Their Care Partners," from 3-4 p.m. on July 30, invites people with mild memory loss to enjoy a guided gallery experience along with family members or care partners. The University of Michigan Museum of Art is located at 525 S. State St. in Ann Arbor. Call 734-764-0395 or visit <http://umma.umich.edu> for more information. All of UMMA's public areas and galleries are wheelchair accessible.

OUTINGS

Thursday, July 27

Free HIV/STI Testing 5:30 p.m. Everyone welcome. Eligible couples can test together by appointment. Call 313-446-9820. UNIFIED - HIV Health & Beyond, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 800-872-2437. www.goaffirmations.org

Social support group for African American gay HIV+ men 6 p.m. Light refreshments, safe secure atmosphere, confidential. Call Rondoe for information and screening, LGBT Detroit, 2727 Second Ave., **Detroit**. 313-338-5970. www.lgbtdetroit.org

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

LGBTQ Book and Film Club 7 p.m. July book: The Life of Rock Hudson by Charles River Editors and July movie: Biography Of Rock Hudson Bayard Rustin Media Center, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Red Umbrella Support Group 7:30 p.m. For individuals involved in the erotic labor industry. Sex Workers Outreach Project Michigan, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Friday, July 28

30th Anniversary Weekend Kick-off Party 6 p.m. \$10 cover. DJ Melvin "Raw

House" Hill. Billionaire Boys Club, 940 W. McNichols Ave., **Detroit**. <http://gaybe.am/td>

Saturday, July 29

Lez Read Ann Arbor 4 p.m. Book group for lesbians. Email Kerene Moore for more information. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. kerenem@jimtoycenter.org www.jimtoycenter.org

Day at the Park with the Mizrahi's 6 p.m. Hosted by Princess Mami Precious, the new voice of ballroom. 14 performance categories. Check them out online. Cash prizes available. Hotter Than July, **Highland Park**. www.facebook.com/DetroitHTJ/

Men's Discussion Group 6 p.m. Topic: Animal Research Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Tuesday, Aug. 1

Because We Are Worth It (Sex Addicts Anonymous LGBTQ Meeting) 6:30 p.m. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. www.jimtoycenter.org

LGBTQ in Uniform Support Group 7 p.m. Meets the first Tuesday of every month. Open to current and former police, fire, emergency medical personnel and military. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Men's Group Meeting 7 p.m. Perceptions, 123 N. Michigan Ave., **Saginaw**. www.perceptionsmi.org/

Support Group for Parents of Transgender

Youth 7 p.m. Facilitated by Lisa Goyette, social worker, trans activist and ally, and proud parent of a trans teen son. Stand with Trans, 2515 Joslyn Court, **Lake Orion**. 248-330-8493. Lisa@standwithtrans.org www.standwithtrans.org

Wednesday, Aug. 2

New Volunteer Orientation and Training 6 p.m. Guided tour. Learn more about how to support the LGBTQ community at the community center. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. haymer@goaffirmations.org www.Goaffirmations.org

Dykes on Bikes 6:30 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups

Thursday, Aug. 3

Trivia with Terry 8 p.m. Aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor**. www.autbar.com

Friday, Aug. 4

Turn Up Fridays 9 p.m. \$5 for 18+ until 11 p.m., \$10 after. No cover for 21+ until 11 p.m., \$5 after. Music by Klees. Spiral, 1247 Center St., **Lansing**. www.spiraldancebar.com

Saturday, Aug. 5

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-

Editor's Pick

Belle Isle Art Fair

Imagine a trip to Belle Isle that yields buying gifts for family and friends, jewelry for yourself, theater tickets for the fall and opportunities to create art with professional artists' support. All that and more awaits those who visit Belle Isle State Park Art Fair from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. on Aug. 5 and 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Aug. 6. The Detroit juried fine art fair brings in 100 visual artists who sell a wide array of handmade and creative items plus 10 arts and cultural organizations from Detroit. New this year is the Heritage Artists Tent and a Theater Arts tent. Food trucks, fresh lemonade and Detroit-made Italian ice will be available. For the first time, a bar offering local beer and wine will be available to benefit the Detroit Repertory Theatre. For more information, visit belleisleartfair.com.



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

Coming Out Over Coffee 10:30 a.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

Neighborhoods Day 11 a.m. Help beautify LGBT Detroit's #SafeBraveSpace. Free food and drinks provided. LGBT Detroit, 20025 Greenfield Road, **Detroit**. www.lgbtdetroit.org

Jackson Pride March and Parade 12 p.m. Flag raising and rally immediately

following the march in Horace Blackman Park on the corner of Jackson and Michigan streets. Jackson Pride Center, 801 S. Mechanic, **Jackson**. www.facebook.com/Jackson-Pride-Center-342478499468836/

Caregiving Resource Workshop 1 p.m. Please register by phone. Free event. Discuss nutrition, finances, veterans resources, exercise and fitness, and community resources. AARP and DMC, 3990 John R. Road, **Detroit**. 877-926-8300.

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](http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups)

1st Annual Miss Jackson Gay Pride Pageant 2 p.m. Winner takes cash, crown and the title of the first ever reigning queen. Winner will also headline the Drag Queen Extravaganza following the pageant. Registration fee: \$50 Paris Wilson and Jackson Gay Pride, 212 W. Michigan Ave., **Jackson**. www.facebook.com/Jackson-Pride-Center-342478499468836/

Men's Discussion Group 6 p.m. Field trip to Belle Isle, Aquarium, Conservatory Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Editor's Pick

Out Artist, Eric Sauvageau to Appear at Fine Art Show

The Orchard Lake Fine Art Show, presented by HotWorks, welcomes out artist Eric Sauvageau to share his Alliage Art with the community among 150 other participating juried artists. The art fair, which features original and personally handmade art only, is at a new outdoor location at West Bloomfield High School from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. on July 29 and from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. on July 30. Local food from Yardbirds of Keego Harbor, Noodles of Novi, Iridescence of Detroit, and Simply Gourmand of Denton will be available. Parking is free. There will be live entertainment from the One Love Reggae Band and Sheila Landis Duo. For more information, visit www.hotworks.org.



GLBT AA 8 p.m. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. www.jimtoycenter.org

DJ & Dancing 10 p.m. Aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. www.autbar.com

Sunday, Aug. 6

OUTFest & Pride Picnic A community celebration. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. www.jimtoycenter.org/outfest

Love is Love is Love Interfaith Worship Service 4 p.m. Hosted by Jackson Together, Jackson Pride Center, First Congregational Church UCC of Jackson, St. Johns United Church of Christ/United Center, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Jackson and Universalist Unitarian Church of East Liberty. Jackson Together and others, 212 W. Michigan Ave., Jackson. <http://gaybe.am/vi>

LGBTQ Support Group 5 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 6726 Center Road, Traverse City. www.topolostar.org/

Monday, Aug. 7

Brotherhood of Support 6 p.m. For transmasculine identified people ages 16 and older. Group is affiliated with FtM Detroit. FtM A2 Ypsi, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. www.jimtoycenter.org/

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

Transition 2.0 7 p.m. Open to all. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

UNPLUGGED Social and Support Group 7 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. haymer@goaffirmations.org www.goaffirmations.org

Tuesday, Aug. 8

Coming Out Together 7 p.m. A confidential 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

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

MUSIC & MORE

Benefits/Social Events

Light Box "Asylum! A Night of Art and

Performance for Freedom House" Part of the "Twelve Months of Resistance" series. \$5 to \$500 suggested donation online at www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/1762015. Email receipt to Light Box indicating number of tickets, which are also available at the door. Light Box, 8641 Linwood St., Detroit. 8 p.m. July 28. www.facebook.com/events/1249505231839586/

Matrix Human Services "#313 in the D rooftop party" Tickets: \$50. Hosted by Channel 955's Joey Radio from Mojo in the Morning. Heavy appetizers, a welcome drink, cash bar, entertainment by DJ Chris Guyer, dancing, raffles and silent auction. Proceeds benefit The Matrix Center. 3Fifty Terrace, 350 Madison, Detroit. 5:30 p.m. July 27. 313-831-1000. www.matrixhumanservices.org/313inthed/

Film & Video

Aut Bar "Campy Movie Night" . Aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. June 28 - Aug. 30. 734-994-3677. www.autbar.com

Jim Toy Community Center "Movie Night: Hairspray" Domino's pizza, popcorn, pop and water provided. Suggested donation: \$5. All proceeds benefit JTCC. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. Aug. 4. 734-995-9867. www.a2outfest.com

Other

Aut Bar "Women's Music on the Patio" Featuring Marsha Gayle and Debbie Vogel. Aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. June 28 - Aug. 30. 734-994-3677. www.autbar.com

Aut Bar "Live Jazz with the Jesse Kramer Trio on the patio" . Aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. June 27 - Aug. 29. 734-994-3677. www.autbar.com

THEATER

Professional

Dirty Prancing Tickets: \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through Aug. 7. 2485455545. www.theringwald.com

The Seagull Tickets: \$12 . Slipstream Theatre Initiative, Slipstream Theatre, 460 Hilton Road, Ferndale. July 22 - Aug. 13. 3139869156. www.slipstreamTI.com

ART 'N' AROUND

Affirmations "Remix Reframe: the Work of Aimee Michele Coldren" Opening reception Aug. 3 at 7 p.m. Pittman-Puckett Gallery, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. Aug. 3 - Sep. 30. www.goaffirmations.org

Casa de Rosado "Intersections: a Todd Heywood photo exhibit" reporter Todd Heywood shares images of extremist

and hate groups taken in Michigan in the past 15 years. Casa de Rosado, 204 E. Mt. Hope, Lansing. July 16 - Aug. 6. www.facebook.com/Casa-de-Rosado-805030536302750/

DIA "Art of Rebellion: Black Art of the Civil Rights Movement" Explore powerful artworks by African American artists who formed collectives during the Civil Rights Movement of the '60s and '70s. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. July 23 - Oct. 22. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Ferndale Pride "Summer of Pride Art Show" Motor City Pride, Hotter Than July and Transgender Pride. Pittman-Puckett Gallery, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. June 1 - July 28. www.goaffirmations.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Rodin: The Human Experience" Selections from the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Collections Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. June 22 - July 30. 810-234-1695. www.flintarts.org

Hot Works, Inc. "15th Annual Orchard Lake Fine Art Show" 175 juried fine arts and craft artists. Tickets: \$5, 12 and under free. Hot Works, Inc. , 6900 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. July 29 - July 30. 248-684-2613. <http://hotworks.org/orchardlakefineartshow/>

Integrity Shows "Belle Isle Art Fair" Belle Isle Park, 6925 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. Aug. 6 - Aug. 6. 313-821-9844. www.belleisleartfair.com/

Lawrence Street Gallery "30th Anniversary Celebration 1987-2017" 22620 Woodward Avenue, Ferndale. Aug. 2 - Aug. 25. 248-544-0394. www.lawrencestreetgallery.com

Lawrence Street Gallery "Summer Invitational '17" This exhibition features new work by artists we like and admire. Opening reception July 7, 6-9 p.m. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave, Ferndale. July 5 - July 28. 2485440394. www.lawrencestreetgallery.com

MOCAD "99 Cents or Less" A major group exhibition of 99 artists based in the U.S. that addresses Detroit's ongoing economic crisis and its 2013 bankruptcy. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. June 23 - Aug. 6. 313-832-6622. www.mocadetroit.org

Scarab Club "May Contain Fruit" The scientific basis for humanity's fascination with fruit is explored. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. July 20 - Aug. 19. 313-831-1250. www.scarabclub.org

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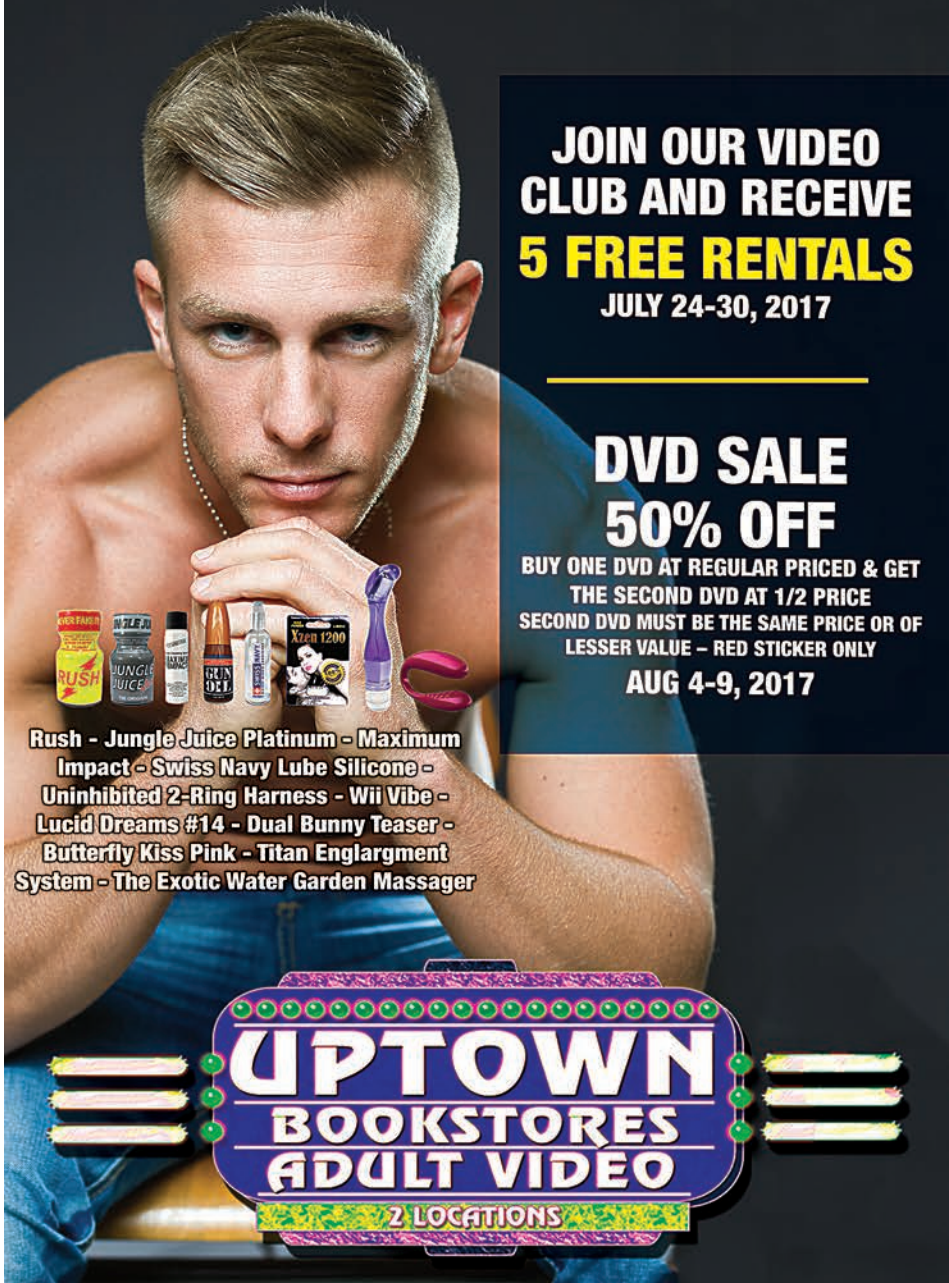
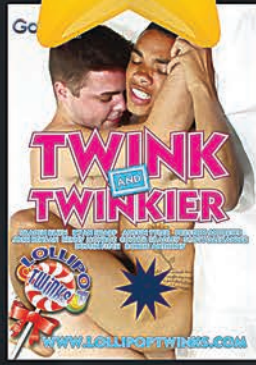


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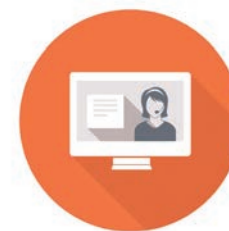
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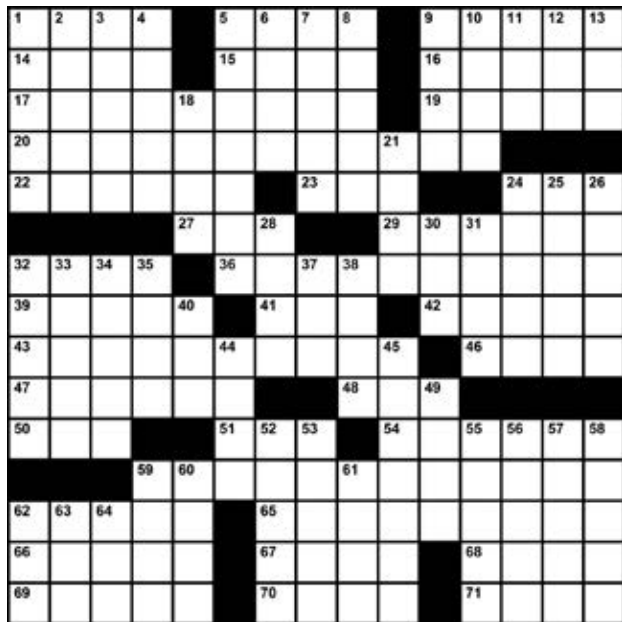


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Q Puzzle



6 Gay Icons

Across

- 1 "I'm not in the ___!"
 5 Left to pirates
 9 "Rubyfruit Jungle" writer Rita Mae
 14 Shakespeare's Hathaway
 15 US citizen
 16 The sound of music?
 17 One who does it just for the money
 19 "___ and tigers and bears..."

- 20 MLK associate and LGBT advocate
 22 Verdi opera
 23 Math degree
 24 "Till There ___ You"
 27 Work unit
 29 Cowboy's job in "The Boys in the Band"
 32 Nine inches
 36 "Zami" author
 39 Star in Perseus

- 41 Leave open-mouthed
 42 Sing part of "The Lonely Goatherd"
 43 San Francisco activist
 46 Daly of "Judging Amy"
 47 Time of frigidity
 48 Gay rodeo affirmative
 50 One who goes after your honey
 51 Jude of "The Talented Mr. Ripley"
 54 Bit of dental work
 59 Stonewall veteran drag queen
 62 On the ocean
 65 Type of leather from a reptile
 66 Lindsay of "Liz & Dick"
 67 Inedible Apple
 68 It's a gas on Broadway
 69 Former congressman Barney
 70 Like young Abe Lincoln
 71 Venus de Milo's lack

Down

- 1 Latin dance
 2 "___ at time!" (serial monogamy motto)
 3 Way to serve your meat
 4 Kid's "tattoo," for example
 5 Eve counterpart on Lesbos
 6 Nicky, in "Funny Girl"
 7 "The Golden Girls" episode
 8 No-tell motel meeting
 9 Start of a song from "South Pacific"
 10 Totally screw
 11 Rene Auberjonois role
 12 Come out on top
 13 Sixty-nine and others (abbr.)

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Detroit Repertory Theatre Announces 61st Season

DETROIT – Michigan’s longest running, nonprofit, professional theatre announces its 61st season. The Detroit Repertory Theatre continues its mission to produce indigenous, diversity centered theatre and to democratize the arts from its legendary inner city stage in the heart of Detroit.

The Detroit Repertory Theatre is one of a handful of neighborhood based, union, professional theatres in this country that still thrives. It has become a model of grassroots artistic development and remains in the forefront of race transcendent casting – casting without regard to ethnicity (unless germane to the play) and when possible, gender.

The mission, to use the unifying power of theatre to prove the power of diversity acting in unity, has united metro Detroiters since 1957.

The four plays on the upcoming season reflect that mission, presenting stories of hope for a better world, relevant to all Americans today, but especially to metro Detroiters. The first – “Swimming Upstream” by Rich Rubin – is a romantic comedy about a young marine biologist’s love of salmon as she tries to convince her Reagan-worshipping mother that climate change is real; second – “Dauphin Island” by Jeffrey Chastang – is a sensuous story written by a Detroit Rep company member about two flawed people with messy pasts thrown together by happenstance; next – “Harmony Park” by Danial Damiano – construction workers building a park where two girls, one white and one black were murdered is a poetic look at race relations in America today; and ending the season is a dark comedy – “Ghost Gardens” by Steven Simoncic – set in a forgotten neighborhood of Detroit, also written by a native Detroit, about the power of community.

The Detroit Repertory Theatre will kick off the 2017/18 season on Nov. 2 with a champagne celebration and toast to the power of theatre and this vital Detroit arts institution.

The Annual Black Tie Gala Awards Night and Homecoming Celebration benefit for the Detroit Repertory Theatre will be Nov. 18. Tickets for this event are \$75 and tax deductible sponsorships are available.

More information may be found at www.detroitreptheatre.com or by calling 313-868-1347. The Detroit Repertory Theatre is located in the center of the city at 13103 Woodrow Wilson Detroit.

New Initiative Will Provide Families Access to Fresh Food

BY BTL STAFF

LANSING – The American Heart Association and the Michigan Healthy Food Access Campaign unveiled a new, statewide program to expand access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The Michigan Corner Store Initiative was created as part of the state budget signed into law this month.

“The Michigan Corner Store Initiative is an innovative program that will provide grants to corner stores in low- to moderate-income areas of the state so they can expand and add fruits and vegetables to their coolers and shelves,” said David Hodgkins, government relations director for the American Heart Association. “This will go a long way in ensuring families and children throughout Michigan have access to fresh, nutritious foods.”

Right now, 1.8 million people in Michigan – including 300,000 children

– don’t have access to fresh fruits and vegetables because they either live too far from a large grocery store, or their nearby corner store doesn’t stock fresh food.

“A proper diet has a profound impact on a student’s academic performance, affecting their thinking, behavior and health,” said Lori Adkins, a child nutrition consultant with Oakland Schools. “Each and every school day I see how a balanced, nutritious diet impacts students in the classroom. However, eating healthy shouldn’t begin and end with the school day.”

“There is no shortage of healthy food to feed Michigan families, but there is often a shortage of places to find it,” said Dave Smith, executive director of the Michigan Vegetable Council. “The Michigan Corner Store Initiative will ensure more families in rural and urban areas throughout the state have greater access to fresh foods – including vegetables grown right here

in Michigan.”

Under the new program, corner stores in low- to moderate-income areas of the state can apply for grants to expand fresh food offerings. Grant money could be used to add new refrigeration units dedicated to fruits and vegetables or for additional shelf space. Stores can also use grant money to add or improve fresh food marketing and signage and for employee nutrition education.

The initiative lays out a series of checks and balances to ensure retailers are using the money as stated. Retailers are also required to apply for the ability, and if approved, to accept benefits provided under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

“We applaud the Legislature for addressing this critical need throughout our state and specifically thank Sen. Peter MacGregor and Rep. Ed Canfield for their leadership on this issue,” said Hodgkins.

Free Outdoor Movies are Back in Ferndale

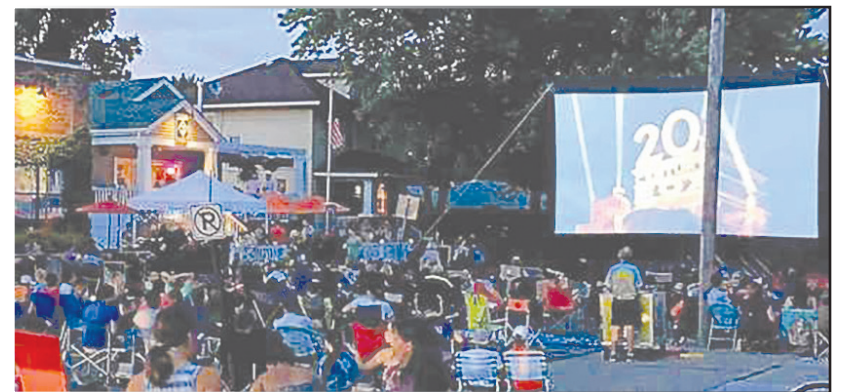
BY BTL STAFF

FERNDALE – For those in and around Ferndale looking for a low-key, fun community event, free outdoor movies have returned to downtown Ferndale before the end of summer.

Hundreds have been gathering since 2013 for the event known as “Get Reel – Outdoor Movies on Vester Street” hosted by the Downtown Development Authority.

Coming up, “Ghostbusters” will show on Aug. 17 and “Pretty in Pink” will show on Sept. 21.

Moviegoers are invited to pick a spot on Vester Street, which is one block north of Nine Mile Road just east of Woodward Avenue to set up their lawn chairs or blankets starting at 6 p.m. Pre-movie entertainment featuring Axis Music Academy starts at 8 p.m.



Tommy Titan, the University of Detroit Mercy mascot, will stop by to socialize. Showtime is around 9 p.m. when it starts to get dark.

According to the DDA, the outdoor event creates a neighborhood atmosphere where people get together to socialize in the street before the movie

begins while enjoying food and drinks. No glass containers are allowed at the event, but picnic food and non-alcoholic drinks are encouraged.

For more events happening in downtown Ferndale, visit the DDA online at <http://www.downtownferndale.com>.



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GLITTERBALL
 9:00PM / THE RONDO

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12

THE MARKETPLACE
 11:00AM / RIVERFRONT PLAZA

GLOW PARTY
 8:00PM / RIVERFRONT PLAZA

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