

MICHIGAN'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993



We Are All Allison Janney

'I, Tonya' Actress on Tonya Harding's Queerness, Girl Crushes & Her Quest to Play a 'Pioneering Lesbian'



Moving Families From Adversaries to Allies

Report of Banned Words at CDC Alarms LGBT Health Experts

Alabama Father Who Protested Roy Moore for Lesbian Daughter Appears on 'Ellen'

The New Generation of

OUT & PROUD

Ferndale Teen Creates Social Media Campaign Celebrating LGBT+ Youth

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What Should I Know About Taking Mytesi

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To report side effects or make a product complaint or for additional information, call 1-844-722-8256.

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FROM ALL OF US AT BTL

2018

Happy New Year!

We will be back on January 4, 2018 when we begin our 25th year of publishing!

Words never banned in BTL:

“vulnerable,” “entitlement,”

“diversity,” “transgender,” “fetus,”

“evidence-based” and

“science-based.”

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BTL Photo: Andrew Potter

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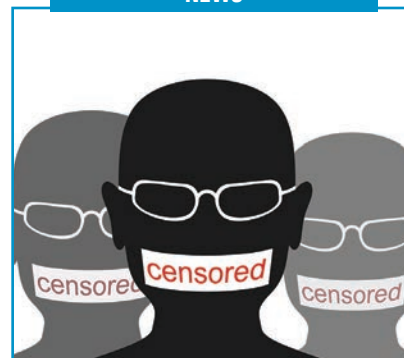


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Ferndale Teen Creates Social Media Campaign to Celebrate LGBT+ Youth

BY DREW HOWARD

While most teens are busy filling their Instagrams with selfies and food portraits, Ferndale High School student Alex Hicks is using her social media to empower others by promoting the voices of young LGBT+ community members.

Hicks' project, called What LGBT+ Looks Like, is a social media campaign that shares the names, faces and stories of LGBT+ youth. The campaign's Instagram account, which has nearly 500 followers, has received and posted more than 100 submissions from individuals looking to share their truth.

Hicks identifies as bisexual. She said she started the project in an effort to meet like-minded people after she came out in eighth grade to mixed reactions.

"As an eighth grader at the time, it was pretty hard to deal with," Hicks said. "No one else in my year was out, and I needed a community to connect with. What LGBT+ Looks Like was created to provide the community I needed. It was created to show young people who are just discovering their sexuality or gender identity that they aren't alone, and that so many people have gone through what they've gone through."

What LGBT+ Looks Like targets younger members of the community. Specifically, those aged 13 - 21. Each post features a photo of the submitter's face in a colorful filter, coupled with a caption that could range anywhere from two words to two paragraphs. Many of these stories celebrate self-acceptance and freedom of expression, themes that are especially refreshing in a social media landscape where negativity often rules the headlines. One participant, 19-year-old Naimah, said that diversity attracted her to the project.

"What drew me to this project was the

diversity. You have the beautiful but hidden faces of queer youth. This project reflects acceptance, representation, self love as well as validation for us," Naimah said. "Queer and LGBT youth are out there, we're loud and proud - we're everywhere and we want to be heard."

Hicks said that this kind of expression is an especially important outlet for youth.

"While it's certainly possible to discover your sexuality or gender identity later in life, I think discovering it as a teenager presents a certain type of problem, because you're already going through so much both physically and emotionally," Hicks explained. "I think the type of support the project brings to others is needed by teenagers, especially if they don't have that type of community where they live."

In addition to telling their own stories, submitters often dish out advice to readers who might relate to their situation. Hicks' favorite story comes from two girls named Ciara and Sophia, a same-sex couple who encouraged others to "let happiness win."

"They were my first, and so far only, couple post," Hicks said. "It's a very cute caption and heartwarming, and I think it reassures followers that even if they feel romantically alone now they will find someone."

The power of labels is a theme that seems to run through many of the posts. You'll find aspiring drag queens, asexuals, pansexuals, demiboy and more, who found solidarity and community in attaching themselves to a word. At the same time, Hicks' page is also full of posts from people happy to admit they're still figuring things out. It's a great testament to the idea that while labels can help build community, those who haven't found theirs are still in a special club of their own.

The very first post on What LGBT+ Looks Like comes from Hicks herself, and serves

as a great example of what the page is meant to represent.

The post reads: "A lot of people think my sexuality is going to disappear when I finally 'pick' a gender, that I'm truly gay or straight and that right now I'm just 'confused.' Which I'm not. Just because I marry a guy or a girl doesn't mean I'll be straight or gay. I'll still be bisexual - not everything is so black and white."

There haven't been any anonymous posts on the page yet, and Hicks would like to keep it that way. She says it's the faces that make her campaign so relatable and different from other online spaces.

"The connection between the face of the person and their story is important, I believe; it makes the story believable," she said. "It's much easier to read the captions and think about them relating to a real person when you can see that person with your own eyes. That's also why I tag their Instagram account -- it shows them as a three-dimensional person."

In addition to its Instagram page, What LGBT+ Looks Like has recently expanded to Facebook and Twitter. Hicks is currently working hard to increase page submissions and possibly collaborate with local LGBTQ organizations like the Ruth Ellis Center (ruthelliscenter.org) or Affirmations (goaffirmations.org). Her end goal is to have the project turned into a physical book, though she admits that may take a while.

For more information on What LGBT+ Looks Like, follow its Instagram [instagram.com/whatlgbtlooklike](https://www.instagram.com/whatlgbtlooklike), Facebook [facebook.com/whatlgbtlooklike](https://www.facebook.com/whatlgbtlooklike) and Twitter twitter.com/whatlgbtlooks accounts. To submit a story, go to [instagram.com/whatlgbtlooklike](https://www.instagram.com/whatlgbtlooklike) and click on the link provided in the description.

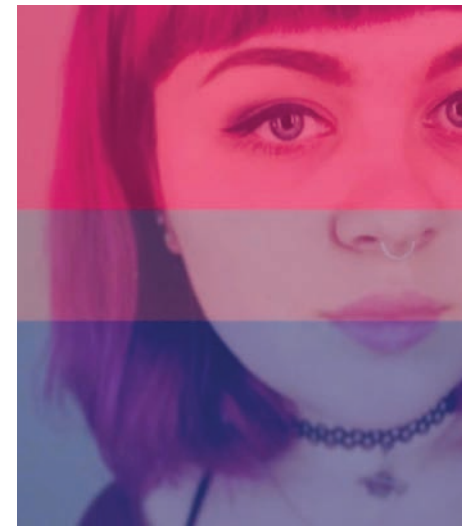
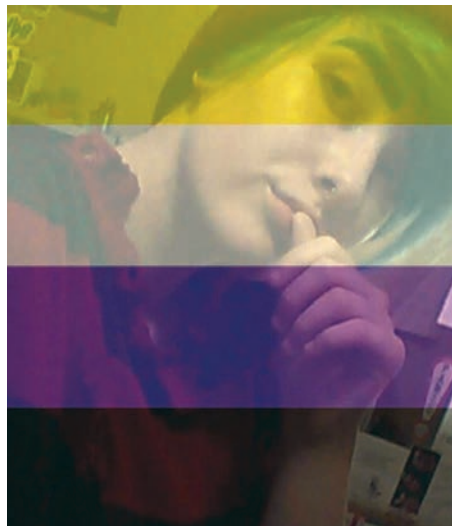
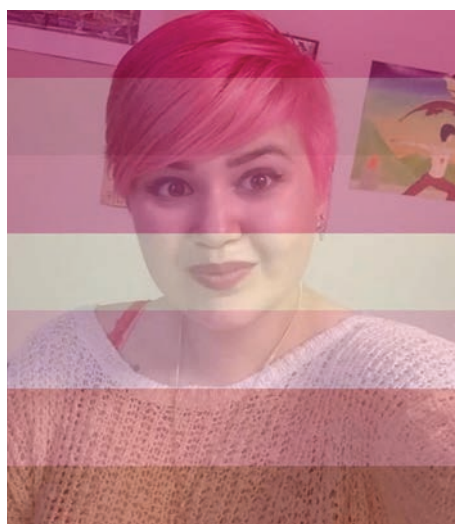


BTL Photo: Andrew Potter

“What LGBT+ Looks Like was created to provide the community I needed. It was created to show young people who are just discovering their sexuality or gender identity that they aren't alone, and that so many people have gone through what they've gone through.”

– Alex Hicks

A few of the many LGBTQ youth who have posted on What LGBT+ Looks Like Instagram page.



Public Health Officials Urge Metro Detroiters to Take Steps Against Hepatitis A Outbreak

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

The Michigan Department of Health & Human Services has reported 610 cases of hepatitis A, 501 hospitalizations and 20 deaths. All of these reported cases are related to an ongoing outbreak of the disease that first happened in August 2016. Although the MDHHS reports no single source as the cause of the illness, like food, beverages or drugs, infected individuals have been cropping up across Southeast Michigan. Part of the reason, according to Corktown Health Center's Medical Director Dr. Latonya Riddle-Jones, is that the symptoms are not always visible.



"The symptoms of the illness are very vague, and some people don't really get sick from it," she said. "The symptoms are abdominal pain, nausea, decreased appetite. It can range from vomiting to having dark-colored urine. Most adults will have some degree of jaundice, but some may not. So, a lot of people are infected but don't even know they are infected."

Symptoms can also include joint pain, pale-colored feces and general fatigue. The danger that comes with infected individuals not knowing they have the virus is great, because HAV is highly contagious. In some cases, it can be fatal.

"If you're immunocompromised or if you already have other kidney disease or liver disease, you have hepatitis B or C, HIV, if you are on hemodialysis it absolutely can kill you," Riddle-Jones said. "That's the most extreme, but it can have long-term effects, especially on people who have immunodeficiency. If you have a pretty healthy immune system, it'll just run its course. You might have some mild symptoms for up to a few months until it'll go away completely. And, you have the antibodies, so if you come across Hepatitis A again, your body will just fight it off and you'd never know it."

Still, Riddle-Jones advises that even healthy people should take steps to get vaccinated. Particularly individuals who are at high risk for catching it, like people experiencing homelessness, gay and bisexual men, illegal drug users and people travelling to countries with high rates of HAV.

"The vaccine is a two-shot series. It is a full dose, so you'd get a full dose today and

then you'd get another dose six months later," Riddle-Jones said. "Once you've done that, you have 100 percent protection. We haven't seen any benefit in being re-immunized, but there are studies that are ongoing right now."

If getting vaccinated isn't a possibility, general hygiene can also go far to prevent getting infected, or spreading the infection to someone else.

“The symptoms of the illness are very vague, and some people don't really get sick from it,” she said. “The symptoms are abdominal pain, nausea, decreased appetite. It can range from vomiting to having dark-colored urine. Most adults will have some degree of jaundice, but some may not. So, a lot of people are infected but don't even know they are infected.”

- Corktown Health Center's Medical Director Dr. Latonya Riddle-Jones

"Hand hygiene is key, because it is transmitted through the fecal/oral route. So, when you go to the bathroom, wash your hands and you want to wash your hands with warm, soapy water with lots of friction for at least 30 seconds," she said. "That will help to at least get the virus off of your hands. You want to make sure that you clean the home environment, or wherever you're working, if you are infected or if someone else is infected."

Riddle-Jones also recommends using chlorine bleach to clean surfaces around the home as a precaution. She said that the bleach should be at a 1 to 100 water to bleach dilution.

Although there is still a way to go before stopping Detroit's HAV outbreak completely, Riddle-Jones said that following these instructions could put a serious dent in its ability to spread.

"It's really important that we get the word out," she said. "We are getting new patients popping up every day in Metro Detroit."



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Moving Families From Adversaries to Allies

Project Marks 15 Years Working to Reduce Risk to LGBT+ Youth

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

As a parent, perhaps one of the most heartbreaking thoughts is that one might lose touch with their child; the relationship growing ever more distant, until one day, the children grow up, and their life doesn't include their parents at all. Although situations like these can be very complicated, Dr. Caitlin Ryan said that as the founder and director of AID Atlanta, she witnessed the resolution of many similar circumstances.

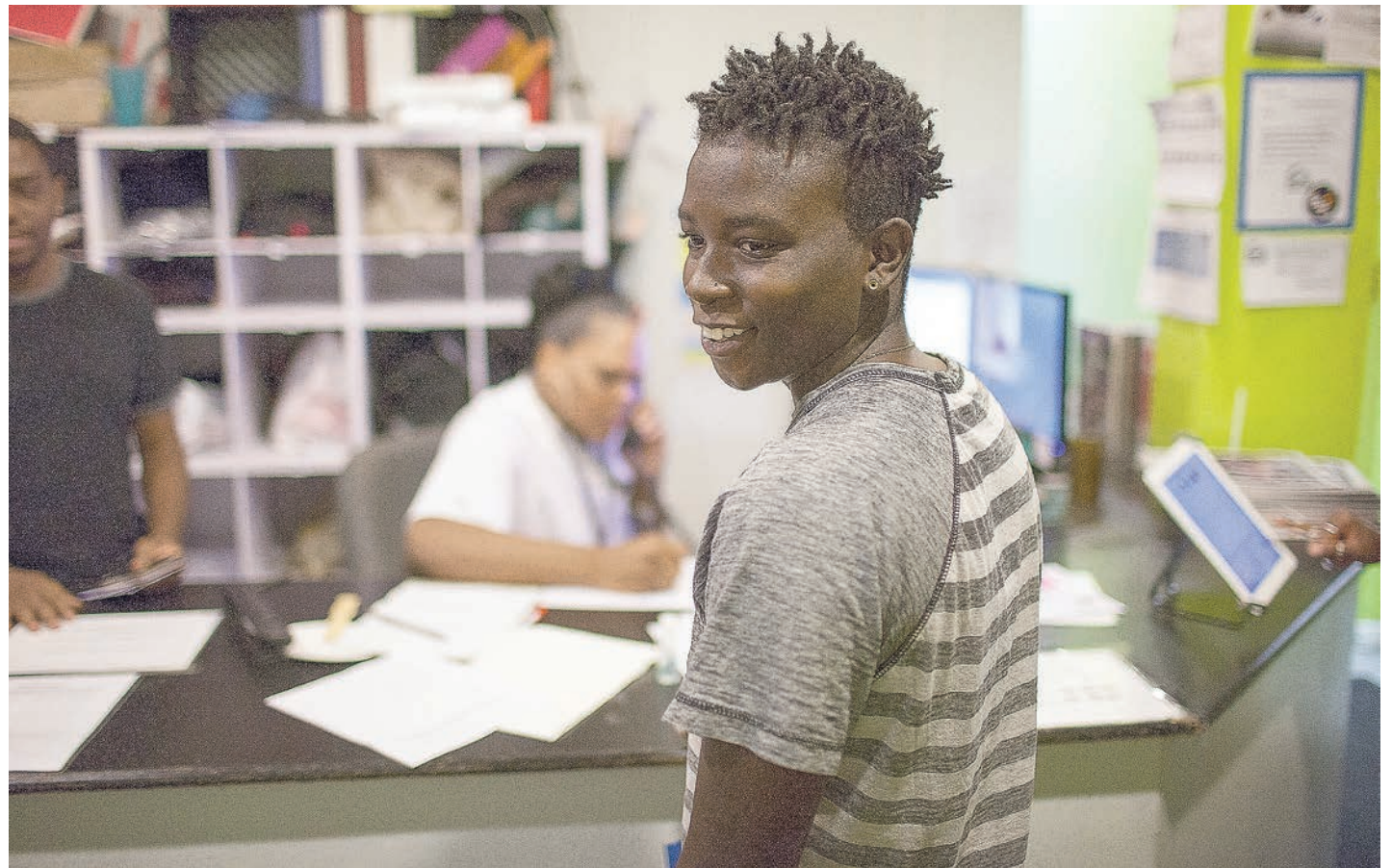
"Part of my role included meeting families of young gay and bisexual men who came from small cities and towns across the south. Parents would come to the bedsides of their children, who were usually in Intensive Care Units in the hospital," Ryan said. "I was there with the parents when they learned for the first time that their child was gay and was dying of AIDS."

The intense circumstances were the reason that many families reunited after years of being apart, or having been excluded from their child's personal life for an extended period of time.

"I saw how devastated they were, how it really came as a shock to many of them, but they really now, with this information, began to figure out that that's why they didn't have a closer relationship with their child, or why their child had left home," Ryan said. "I saw that so many of those parents would have done anything to change the future, but there was no opportunity because there was so little time left."

Though at start of the AIDS crisis, Ryan was already in the thick of her career, she decided that she needed to combat the rift between LGBTQ youth and rejecting family. After partnering with her colleague, Dr. Rafael Diaz, the Family Acceptance Project was born. The two began intensely researching LGBTQ youth and their relationships to their family, from as broad a swatch of backgrounds as possible. Their goal was to create an effective preventative measure to stop outcomes like those Ryan had witnessed at AID Atlanta.

Ryan and Diaz's methods included extended interviews ranging from two to four hours per LGBTQ adolescent, and the individual analysis of each case. Eventually, the two were able to define more than 100 reactionary behaviors that parents and families take on, in order to deal with the knowledge that their child is LGBTQ.



The Ruth Ellis Center helps hundreds of LGBTQ youth annually. FAP's involvement is part of the reason why.

From Adversaries to Allies

"When we founded the Family Acceptance Project 15 years ago, there was no research or model to show the critical role of families in contributing to risk and well-being for LGBTQ children and youth," Ryan said in a press release. "Families were still seen as adversaries, not as allies or potential sources of support for their LGBTQ children, so parents and caregivers were routinely excluded from their LGBTQ children's care"

Since the program's start, in 2002, its reach has been extensive. The program has educated and trained 85,000 providers, families and religious leaders about the importance of LGBT acceptance in the family, printed more than 500,000 booklets to educate interested parties and educated many abroad in China, Latin America and Europe. Ryan has also toured extensively across Michigan to educate families.

Ryan said that although it might not seem like simply working to accept the identity of one's child will have a large impact on their lives, the effects can be far-reaching.

"Family acceptance can prevent things like substance abuse, or reducing the level of depression, preventing suicide, or helping with bullying. And, also not only prevent, but help address those problems when they occur and reduce the severity," she said. "What we discovered with families when we did our intervention work, was that they were incredibly important on the front line, and of course, because the LGBT youth in these programs had not been including them, we were losing a very, very important source of prevention and support."

Jerry Peterson

In January 2011, Ryan's work attracted the attention of Jerry Peterson, a facilitator



REC Executive Director Jerry Peterson.

working for a collaborative of six nonprofits in the Bay Area of California. He said this experience exposed him to the benefits of a whole-family approach to aiding LGBTQ children in need. Eventually, he was offered a position at Detroit's Ruth Ellis Center an LGBT community space that provides housing for youth in need in Highland Park.

"I worked with her for three years, and then when I interviewed for Ruth Ellis, I immediately

applied that work of engaging family, and having family stabilize while working with a child, while we work with many homeless or out-of-home youth," Peterson said. "The youth often end up kicked out, or running away, in child welfare or juvenile justice in large part influenced by the rejection of their family."

REC is contracted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to work with children who have been involved with Child Protective Services. When Peterson joined the center in 2013,



he began to merge the traditional model for children in need, Family Group Decision Making used by CPS, with the Family Acceptance Project's methodology. When he did so, he found an increase in productivity and efficiency in breaking through to families, and empathizing with their situations.

Monica Sampson, the Youth and Family Services Director at REC, used to be employed by CPS. She said that when she started volunteering at REC, her mindset about LGBTQ rejecting parents changed completely.

"Even though our parents do reject their children's LGBTQ identity, it is not because they are LGBTQ. The rejection has to do with the fact that it is their way of trying to protect their child from public humiliation in their understanding," Sampson said. "I never looked at it before like that. In my CPS mind, I was looking at it like, 'These are horrible parents who are just mean, and don't love their children.' And, with working with Caitlin, I no longer believe that at all."

The REC is one of four FAP intervention sites across the country. Since the full

integration of the CPS and FAP programs in 2015, the center has served 70 youth. So far, 10 families have successfully completed the program this year, and 100 percent of the

“ When we founded the Family Acceptance Project 15 years ago, there was no research or model to show the critical role of families in contributing to risk and well-being for LGBTQ children and youth. **”**

– Dr. Caitlin Ryan

families who completed the program have not required their child to be relocated.

Still, Ryan recognizes the program is not a perfect one. Not everyone is receptive to it.

"Because I've now worked with thousands of LGBTQ young people over the years, and so many families, not every family will be responsive. Some families are so rejecting that they're really not capable of being reached to help them understand how their behaviors affect, not only their LGBT child, but also their whole family," Ryan said. "But what I've found, is that if you approach this work from a cultural framework and you're presenting information and guidance in a way that is culturally appropriate for families, they'll respond. They'll know something's wrong and they'll know what to do."

The Ruth Ellis Center is located at 77 Victor St., Highland Park. More information can be found about the center and FAP online at ruthelliscenter.org and at familyproject.sfsu.edu.



Photos courtesy of The Ruth Ellis Center.

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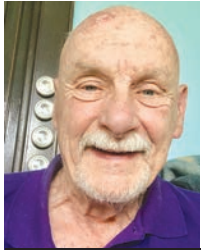
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Repeat the Joyful Sound (Pt. 2)

Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Contrary to rumors circulating for years in Story Bookland Weekly Tabloid there never was any real friction between Dorothy, Cowardly Lion, Tin Woodsman and Scarecrow. (And those horrid pictures of an aging Dorothy are photoshopped.)

Although the famous foursome each went separate ways – Cowardly Lion becoming a respected animal rights advocate; Tin Woodsman, expert on emerging robot technology; Scarecrow, an IRS specialist; and Dorothy – what else? – a big-time diva on the fabled LGBT rainbow circuit – they kept in touch by smart phone and email.

They also made it something of a ritual to get together every 25 years on the occasion of the anniversary of their first Yellow Brick Road adventure to seek out the Wizard of Oz, just to say a friendly hello, to renew little people acquaintances, and to see how things were playing out in Oz.

As spokesperson for the fabled partners, Dorothy messaged, “I know you last texted that we drive to Oz in your new Lexus 017, Tin Woodsman, but let’s play the game as we always have. Waltz the Yellow Brick Road, holding hands. Singing our theme song, “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.”

So, agreed, they met at the red, white and blue neon sign, “This Way to Oz!” But failed in their excitement to note a new flashing purple addition to the sign: “Be prepared for surprises when you get there!”

Midway down the Yellow Brick Road they were stopped. Startled, Tin Woodsman dropped his cell phone, Cowardly Lion waved his cane excitedly, Scarecrow pulled some straw hair out and Dorothy sang a few notes just a hint or two off key.

“Where might you dudes be headed?” demanded a hooded militant type, sporting a big silver badge. Government Oz Police. “What business you got here?”

After brief explanations that the four were old friends of the Wizard of Oz, and after a thorough electronic vetting, they were permitted to continue their journey. As they proceeded with understandable caution, it seemed that the temperature dropped and the sky became overcast. Their singing turned to faint mumbling.

After what seemed like hours of walking not waltzing, Dorothy, Tin Woodsman, Scarecrow, Cowardly Lion (who was visibly trembling) arrived at the entrance of a gigantic, brand-new, Wizard of Oz Tower. “Well, well, well! I’ve been expecting you,” bellowed an imperial broadcasted voice. “You four don’t know me yet! But I’m the newly crowned Wizard of Oz.”

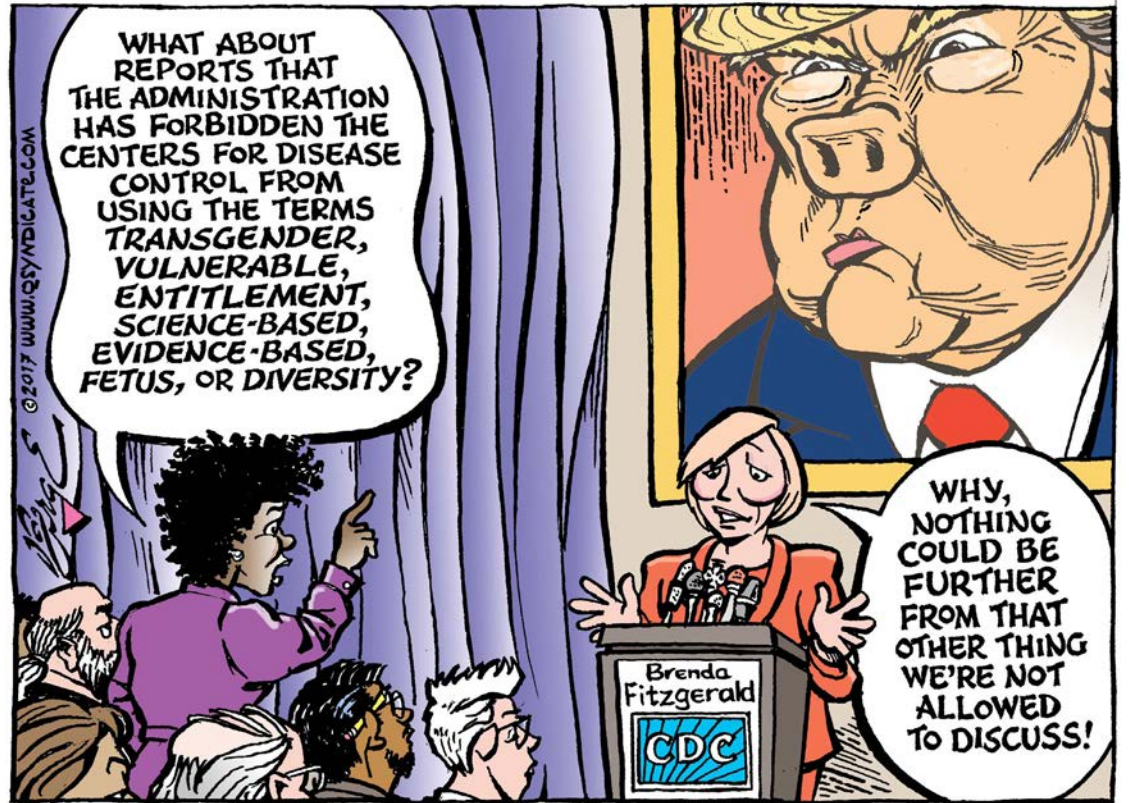
Dorothy, Tin Woodsman, Scarecrow, Cowardly Lion stood stunned. Silent, as an orange neon-halo’d Wizard of Oz trumpeted. “OK, guys! From now on here are your marching orders. Or else! You get me?” He paused for emphasis. “Ready?!”

“Tin Woodsman, you are ordered to make robots who will do my bidding only! Cowardly Lion, listen up. My rights take precedence over all rights. Human. Animal. Political. Religious. Scarecrow, forget about my taxes, past and present. And Dot! You are ordered never, never – no, no way ever – to sing “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.”

“Got that, good buddies! From now on: if ever there was a Wiz Bang who was it’s me.”

Next day, Dorothy texted, “Auntie Em, I’ve had the most gawdawful nightmare. Thank my lucky stars, I’m awake now. And back in Kansas City! (I think).”

Charles Alexander is prolific both as a BTL columnist (700-plus columns) and as a well-known LGBT community artist (1000 Face Book images). He is a Spirit of Detroit Award recipient and an Affirmations LGBT CENTER Jan Stevenson awardee. Connect with him at Charles@pridesource.com.



Viewpoint



BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Why the Fight for Net Neutrality Can't Be Over Yet

Even with the decision to repeal net neutrality on Dec. 14, you probably haven’t seen anything happen to your internet speeds. And you won’t for now. The new rules must be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget and then published into the Federal Register, the official record of the U.S.’s new laws, but consumers might start seeing changes to their internet access as soon as the beginning of 2018.

If you’re wondering how the repeal of net neutrality happened, it first started with the Federal Communications Commission, the organization that regulates interstate and international communications in the entire U.S. and its territories.

Last Thursday, the FCC relinquished regulatory control over internet service providers.

Broadband internet was also reclassified as an interstate information service. This means that internet access will no longer be regulated like a utility, and states cannot make their own rules to keep regulations the same around the country. Perhaps most importantly, three previously restricted practices are now legal:

Blocking: Providers can block any legal content, applications or services they choose,

See next page

► Viewpoint: Eve Kucharski

Continued from p. 8

meaning that they could potentially discriminate against specific content.

Throttling: Providers have the ability to slow internet speeds when transferring data. This also gives telecommunications companies the ability to discriminate against content they dislike.

Paid Prioritization: Service providers can also create “fast lanes,” or accept premium payments from users to give better internet speeds to those who pay more.

According to FCC Chairman Ajit Pai in a New York Times piece, the FCC is, “helping consumers and promoting competition. Broadband providers will have more incentive to build networks, especially to underserved areas.”

But this looks doubtful. Providers like AT&T, Verizon and Comcast now have less oversight, and because the need for reliable internet is necessary, even if they take financial advantage of their customer base, customers who need internet will still purchase it. In fact, telecom companies have been known to violate the conditions of net neutrality before their actions were legal.

For instance, in 2008, Comcast was given a cease-and-desist order after it unlawfully throttled traffic on the file sharing website BitTorrent, or when in 2004, Madison River Communications blocked its landline customers’ access to Vonage and its Voice over Internet Protocol or VoIP. The VoIP system turned landline user’s internet connection into an inexpensive phone line, making them a competitor of Madison River Communications. And more recently, in 2012, AT&T blocked Apple’s FaceTime app

that allows user to video chat. Unless AT&T customers paid more for a better plan, they couldn’t use the application that comes with each Apple phone.

Perhaps the most telling sign that net neutrality’s repeal has opened a Pandora’s box of charges, is that in places like Portugal, where net neutrality rules have never existed, consumers must pay monthly for “packages” that split access to apps U.S. consumers wouldn’t think twice about using for free, like email, messaging, social media and music.

For people who already struggle to pay bills, this could limit their use of the internet, putting them at a disadvantage to those who can pay for fast lanes. And the financial hit might not only affect individual people, small businesses might not be able to afford the same high-speed internet plans as big businesses.

All these reasons and more result in a need for a continued fight against the repeal of net neutrality. Currently, attorney generals from several states led by New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman have plans set in motion to challenge the FCC’s decision, along with a slew of nonprofits and politicians across the U.S. Locally, Sen. Gary Peters is working to introduce a Congressional Review Act resolution to attempt to reverse the FCC’s actions. Ideally, the strengths of the presented arguments will be enough to overturn the FCC’s decision in the courts. Because although a decision has been made, it doesn’t mean that the fight is over, or that it should be.

If you’d like to take action against the FCC’s decision, reach out to your representatives through calls, letters and comments, and continue to stay updated on changes in legislation,

Eve Kucharski recently joined the BTL staff as an editorial assistant. She can be reached at eve@pridesource.com.

Creep of the Week

Kevin Swanson

BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

Welp, Roy Moore (R-Pedophile) lost to Democrat Doug Jones in Alabama, a true Hanukkah miracle, probably prompted from Roy Moore’s wife saying Moore isn’t anti-Semitic because he has a Jew lawyer!



But man are conservatives taking it hard, including Moore himself who as of this writing still hasn’t conceded the race to Jones. Moore is waiting for

God to decide, which He will do by sending Jesus back to earth in order to smite Jones supporters with hanging chads and strict voter ID laws.

Unfortunately for Moore, the joke is on him for not realizing that God is a 14-year-old girl who doesn’t want to touch his private parts.

Even Donald Trump and Steve Bannon have said Moore should accept defeat and move on. After all, the Republican “Sore Winners” brand can’t afford to be tainted by losers.

But not everyone is ready to call Moore a loser. Kevin Swanson, for example, would rather call the people of Alabama the losers. Frantically masturbating losers at that.

“The 2016 assessment of pornography sites have found that the top three states that spend the most time in pornography are Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas,” Swanson says on his radio show Dec. 14.

[Side note: the 2016 Assessment of Pornography Sites was an initiative spearheaded by Jeff Sessions after he was shocked to learn that black men could not only vote, but they could also look at daguerreotypes of naked white ladies on the Internet machine.]

“As we consider the reasons why a state would tip toward Doug Jones,” Swanson continues, “we’ve got to conclude that that state probably has significant sexual problems, especially since Doug Jones is so in favor of sexual perversion, transgenderism and homosexuality. Evidently, the state of Alabama must have a problem with sexuality.”

Yes, a state where over 650,000 people

Weird, but not making Kevin Swanson’s list of “egregious sexual crimes” for some reason is making a 14-year-old girl touch your 30-year-old dick.

vote for a man who has multiple women accusing him of being a sex creep to them when they were teenagers and who was BANNED FROM THE MALL for sex creep behavior definitely does have a problem with sexuality. Especially a woman’s right to control her own.

It is amazing that Swanson can utter the words “Doug Jones is so in favor of sexual perversion” out loud and not be instantly disappear into a poof of sex offender dust.

“There’s a problem with hypocrisy in this country that goes very very deep,” Swanson says without irony. “Unless there is a spiritual awakening, I think these conservative states are going to become liberal in their moral values within another five, 10 or 20 years.”

I vote for five years, though even that feels like too long.

“By the way, the top porn search word in Alabama and Mississippi is ‘lesbian,’” Swanson reveals. “So another indication that the father’s generation is dabbling in porn, the children’s generation will go head over heels for some of the most egregious sexual crimes that men ever engage in.”

Weird, but not making Swanson’s list of “egregious sexual crimes” for some reason is making a 14-year-old girl touch your 30-year-old dick.

“If the fathers are doing pornography, the kids are going to turn into homosexuals,” Swanson says. “The fathers will hide their sin and the children will come out of the closet with it.”

There’s so much wrong with that claim. What does Swanson mean by “doing pornography”? Are “the fathers” porno actors? Is he saying that dads who do porno will have kids who one day stumble onto their Dad Porn and the act of watching it will make them gay? That’s not how that works. Then again, if Swanson wanted to drastically cut the amount of porn the next generation watches, having as many of their dads as possible doing porno would be a good way to accomplish that. So get out there and do porno, dads. For the sake of the children.

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Report of Banned Words at CDC Alarms LGBT Health Experts

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

A recent report in the Washington Post that the Centers for Disease Control is barred from using certain words like “fetus,” “diversity” and “transgender” in budget documents alarmed LGBT and HIV/AIDS health experts, although the agency disputes the characterization of the story.

In an article published Dec. 15, the Post quoted an anonymous analyst who took part in a meeting in Atlanta on Dec. 14 as saying CDC was forbidden to use seven words in documents for the fiscal year 2018 budget request. Those words are “vulnerable,” “entitlement,” “diversity,” “transgender,” “fetus,” “evidence-based” and “science-based.”

The reported ban on those words ignited a firestorm among LGBT advocates in particular of the reported ban on the word “transgender.” The prohibition on the words “diversity,” “evidence-based” and “science-based” also caused concern because of the implications of those words for the LGBT community.

In the view of many LGBT advocates, the report reinforced the widely held belief the Trump administration is seeking to eliminate any mention of LGBT people from public life, which includes efforts this year to eliminate LGBT questions from federal surveys. HHS ended up reinstating a sexual orientation question to a federal health survey for older Americans, but kept out the gender identity question.

Daniel Bruner, senior director of policy for the D.C.-based Whitman-Walker Clinic, expressed uncertainty about the report on the basis the administration is sending mixed messages, but said “we’re very concerned.”

“The CDC is critical for HIV prevention and treatment issues and one of the most heavily affected or really devastated communities by HIV is transgender women, and there’s growing concern about how to address prevention needs in particular of transgender women and the realization that there needs to be a lot more research and a lot more funding going into that community,” Bruner said. “For the CDC to be told when you’re submitting budget documents, don’t talk about transgender people, or even use the term is potentially horrifying.”

Bruner pointed to the CDC’s own estimates on the impact of HIV on transgender women. The U.S. agency cites a 2013 National Institute for Health report that found an estimated 22 percent of transgender women have HIV.

The reported ban on the use of the word “diversity” is also concerning, Bruner said, because it would mark a reversal from the Obama administration when “there was

An anonymous analyst who took part in a meeting in Atlanta on Dec. 14 said the CDC was forbidden to use seven words in documents for the fiscal year 2018 budget request. Those words are “vulnerable,” “entitlement,” “diversity,” “transgender,” “fetus,” “evidence-based” and “science-based.”

kind of a growing realization of the federal government to put a lot more effort and a lot more research into health inequities that affect particular communities...like the LGBT community.”

Carl Schmid, deputy director of the AIDS Institute, said a major concern for HIV/AIDS policy advocates is the reported ban on use of “evidence-based” and “science-based” in budget documents.

“Everything that we do is evidence-based,” Schmid said. “We treat people for HIV, we test people for HIV. How frequently and the messages for sex-ed are all evidence-based. Why do we start treatment early? Why do we get people tested? It’s all evidence-based. And condoms. Everything that we do is scientific and evidence-based.”

Asked what programs in particular would be imperiled if CDC was unable to use the reportedly banned words, Bruner said, “at this point we don’t know enough,” but cited programs that focus on HIV and transgender women as well as programs studying health inequities among LGBT people.

“Just as a general matter, when you have the administration telling one of its chief scientific agencies don’t use the words ‘evidence-based’ or ‘science-based,’ that would really be of great concern,” Bruner added.

But CDC is disputing the account of banned words at the agency in budget documents or in any other capacity.

Brenda Fitzgerald, director for the Centers for Disease Control, said in a statement “there are no banned, prohibited or forbidden words at the CDC – period.”

“I want to emphasize to anyone who may believe otherwise that we continue to encourage open dialogue about all of the important public health work we do,” Fitzgerald said. “CDC has a longstanding history of making public health and budget



decisions that are based on the best available science and data that benefits all Americans – and we will continue to do so.”

Fitzgerald added “confusion” arose from a staff-level discussion at a routine meeting about how to present CDC’s budget, which she said “was never intended as overall guidance for how we describe and conduct CDC’s work.”

Based on conversations he had with Trump administration officials, Schmid said he thinks the seven words might not be banned, but the CDC has guidance in place not to use them.

“I don’t think these words are banned,” Schmid said. “I think people are saying that could be a mischaracterization. I think it was guidance and suggestions, and I think people took it too far, but I think it’s good that the story got out there and there’s a reason why people are acting this way because there has been some editing of documents.”

An analysis by the AIDS Institute found a distinct difference in word usage in budget documents in FY-17, the final budget request for the Obama administration, and FY-18, an early budget request of the Trump years.

The word “transgender” came up 10 times in Obama-era documents, but only once in the Trump era. Additionally, the word “diversity” came up seven times in Obama documents, but only two times in Trump documents. The phrase “evidence-based” came up 119 times in the Obama documents, but only 23 times in the Trump documents.

“Nothing has impacted the programs,” Schmid said. “They’re still doing transgender prevention programs. That has not changed.”

What’s the reasoning for the guidance against certain words in budget documents? Schmid cited speculation they were edited out to appease a Republican-controlled Congress.

Schmid said he was cautious about that reasoning because he doesn’t understand why Republicans would object to “evidence-based”

and “science-based” terminology or resist HIV funding for transgender people because they’re the most in need of treatment.

“It comes back to the whole sex ed controversy and the whole abstinence only until marriage,” Schmid said. “That seems to be an area where the debate over science-based and evidence has been up in the air, debated. It’s not that we debate it, but the politicos debate it.”

Schmid also said “part of the issue” might be social conservatives Trump appointed to administer HHS. Among them is Roger Severino, a former Heritage Foundation scholar who once criticized transgender healthcare, but is now in charge of defending it as director of the Office of Civil Rights.

The White House referred a request for comment to the Department of Health & Human Services, which didn’t respond. The Office of Management & Budget, which prepares budget documents, didn’t respond to a request to comment on whether there was any administration-wide guidance on banned words.

Sarah Kate Ellis, CEO of the LGBT media watchdog GLAAD, said in a statement OMB should follow suit and deny the report to make clear banned words aren’t part of an administration-wide policy.

“The Office of Management & Budget owes this country full transparency about their alleged promotion of dangerous censorship that harkens back to the days that HIV and AIDS research and funding were restricted with deadly effects,” Ellis said. “We cannot and will not allow hateful ideology, bigotry and personal bias determine the health and wellness of the transgender community – which has been serially targeted for erasure under the Trump administration.”

This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.

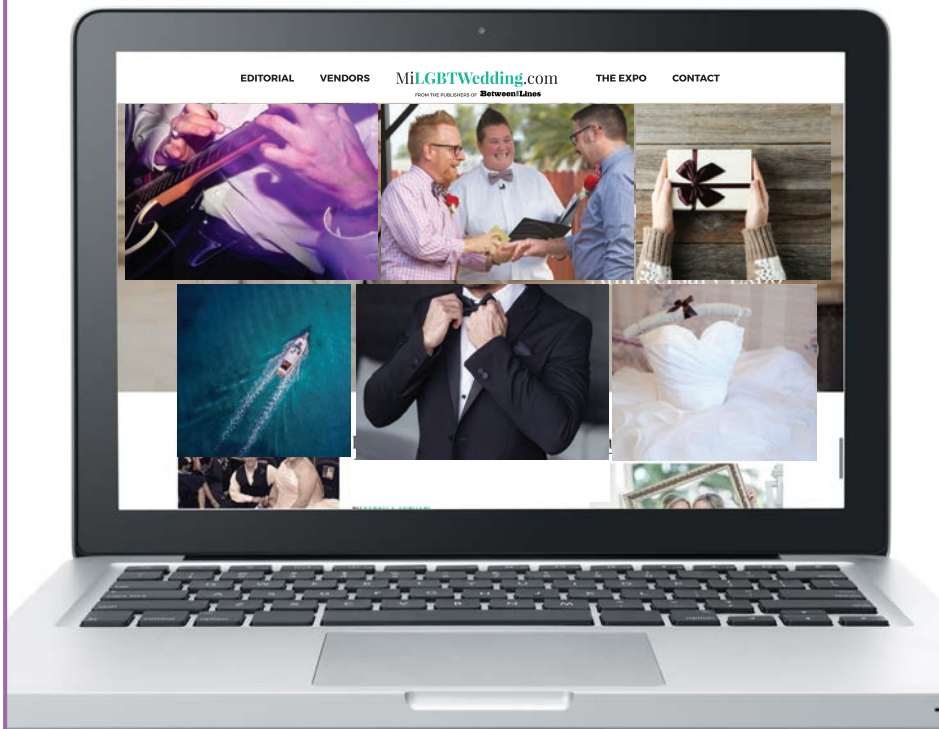
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(Screenshot via YouTube.)

Alabama Father Who Protested Roy Moore for Lesbian Daughter Appears on 'Ellen'

BY MARIAH COOPER

Nathan Mathis, the Alabama farmer who protested Roy Moore's Senate run in honor of his lesbian daughter, appeared on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" on Friday.

His daughter Patti Sue came out as a lesbian when she was a senior in high school. She committed suicide in 1995.

Mathis showed up to Moore's rally with a sign that read, "Judge Roy Moore called my daughter Patti Sue Mathis a pervert because she was gay. A 32-year-old Roy Moore dated teenage girls aged 14 to 17. So that makes him a pervert of the worse kind."

He told DeGeneres that he decided to urge people not to vote for Moore because of Moore's views on the LGBT community.

"And I wondered how Patti'd feel today. Here's a man running for United States Senate who said that gay people are perverts. Gay people commit a crime because they're gay. That's why I did what I did. I wanted people to realize that's serious. A United States Senator that feels that way about people. He's gonna hold his hand up and say 'I uphold the Constitution.' The Constitution said all men are created equal and that's how they should be treated. Gay people have rights, just like people who are not gay," Mathis says.

He admits that he wasn't always an LGBT ally. Mathis explains that when his daughter came to him asking for help to change her sexual orientation he agreed because he was "naive."

"Well, due to teachings I had as I grew up, when I found out Patti was gay, I showed my ass, I really did. I regret it very much," Mathis says. He took Patti Sue to multiple doctors who told them she couldn't change who she was.

As for his thoughts on Moore's loss to Doug Jones, Mathis says he's "very excited."

"The last thing we need is Roy Moore in Washington. Roy Moore needs to be somewhere getting psychiatric help, that's where he needs to be," Mathis says.

At the end, DeGeneres gifts Mathis \$25,000 to the Trevor Project in memory of Patti Sue.

This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.

Judge Who's Against Gay Adoption Misses Disciplinary Hearing

BY BRUCE SCHREINER

LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP) – A Kentucky judge offered no defense Friday at a judicial disciplinary hearing stemming from his moral objections to hear adoption cases involving same-sex couples.

The hearing before the Kentucky Judicial Conduct Commission proceeded without Judge W. Mitchell Nance or his attorney.

Nance had informed the commission in October that he was resigning. The commission still decided to hear the case, even though Nance's resignation takes effect Saturday. Nance heard family court cases in Barren and Metcalfe counties, a rural stretch in south-central Kentucky.

Gay rights activist Chris Hartman said that civil rights supporters had already gotten what they wanted with the judge's resignation but said the commission hearing was still "symbolically significant."

"I think the Judicial Conduct Commission is sending a clear message that this type of discriminatory behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable in the judiciary and they weren't just going to let Judge Nance go quietly off into the good night. That he has to be held responsible for his actions," Hartman said Friday in an interview.

Sitting judges can face possible suspensions or even removal from the

bench in the most extreme cases for flouting judicial rules. But in Nance's case, since he is resigning, he faces a possible public reprimand if the commission determines he violated those rules.

Nance's attorney did not immediately return a call seeking comment on why neither he nor the judge attended Friday's hearing.

Hartman, director of the Kentucky-based Fairness Campaign, said that Nance's failure to appear or send his attorney to the commission hearing was "an insult to the process."

Jeff Mando, an attorney who presented the case to the commission on Friday, laid out the allegations against Nance during the brief hearing.

Mando said that Nance's resignation should not shield him from a ruling on whether he violated judicial canons. "That does not necessarily moot the ... charges that have been leveled against him," Mando said. "We believe the proof ... is sufficient for the commission to take action."

The commission's chairman, Stephen Wolnitzek, said later that a decision could be made before Christmas.

Civil rights advocates had urged Nance's ouster after he declared that "under no circumstance" would a child's adoption by same-sex couples be in the youngster's best interest.

Nance filed an order in April that

signaled his unwillingness to handle adoption cases involving gay and lesbian adults. He ordered attorneys to notify court officials if their adoption cases involved gay adults, so he could take steps to recuse himself.

Kentucky's chief justice blocked Nance from instituting the procedural change that would have let him avoid handling such cases.

The judicial disciplinary commission on Friday reviewed whether Nance's actions violated judicial rules requiring judges to promote the judiciary's integrity and impartiality and prohibit judges from showing bias based on sexual orientation, race, religion and national origin.

Nance had argued earlier that his resignation made the ethics case moot.

Nance had claimed that his recusal from adoption cases involving same-sex couples would ensure a fair outcome for everyone involved. He cited a state law requiring judges to disqualify themselves from proceedings when they have a personal bias or prejudice.

His written response to the charges also had laid out the judge's objections to adoptions by gay and lesbian adults. It cited his "sincerely held religious belief that the divinely created order of nature is that each human being has a male parent and a female parent."

Kentucky law allows gay couples to adopt.

Philippines President is 'For' Same-Sex Marriage

BY MICHAEL K. LAVERS

The president of the Philippines on Sunday said he supports marriage rights for same-sex couples.

The Philippine Star newspaper reported Rodrigo Duterte told members of the LGBT community in Davao City on the island of Mindanao that he wants same-sex marriage in the Philippines, but "we'll have to change the law."

"We can change the law," Duterte reportedly said.

"If that is the trend of the modern times, if that will add to your happiness, I am for it," he added.

The Philippine Star reported Duterte also said he would name LGBT Filipinos to his Cabinet.

"I don't have any problem with that," said Duterte, according to the Philippine Star. "Now find me the brightest here in the Philippines. Give me a bright person. He might be gay, he might be lesbian. I'd like to nominate or appoint somebody upon the nomination."

The Philippine Star reported Duterte in 2015 told a gay television host that same-sex marriage is "good." The newspaper noted Duterte told a group of Filipinos with whom he was meeting in Myanmar that gays and lesbians should not have marriage rights in the Philippines, in part, because Western culture "does not apply to us" and the country is predominantly Roman Catholic.

Dindi Tin, secretary-general of

LGBT Pilipinas, an advocacy group that is associated with the Mayor Rodrigo Roa Duterte National Executive Coordinating Committee (MRRD-NECC), which supports Duterte's agenda, told the Washington Blade on Monday that she welcomes Duterte's latest comments on marriage.

"We are grateful for having a president who has been the very first president in Philippine history to have publicly addressed an LGBT gathering pledging among others, the possibility of adopting same-sex marriage in the county and respect for LGBT rights," said Tin.

Tin also welcomed "with optimism" Duterte's announcement that he will create a commission to oversee LGBT-specific issues in the Philippines.

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WE ARE ALL ALLISON JANNEY

'I, Tonya' Actress on Tonya Harding's Queerness, Girl Crushes & Her Quest to Play a 'Pioneering Lesbian'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Allison Janney shares many of your concerns, like, what's up with the president's wild contradictions and flat-out lies? And what will happen to the LGBTQ community under his administration? And, of course, something we've all wondered from time to time, and an issue she definitely plans on addressing with her agent soon, because it's high time: "Where are all my lesbian roles?"

Though her latest turn in "I, Tonya" is not queer by definition – but, as infamous figure-skating icon Tonya Harding's mother (Harding is played by actress Margot Robbie), one of her very best and most Oscar-buzzy roles, so all is obviously forgiven – the chameleonic 58-year-old actress has delightfully dipped into some impressive gay fare both onstage and in film.

Here, the beloved and soon-to-be-lesbian-somewhere Emmy winner discusses Harding as a queer icon, identifying with the LGBTQ community as an "outsider" herself and kissing "a lot of cool women."

LGBTQ people – we are all Tonya.

Right? Everyone identifies with her. Everyone can identify with Tonya because she's struggling to have a voice, and the powers that be deemed that she was not worthy of having a voice in the figure skating world, didn't think she fit in. It's so classic. And then the press vilified her and we were all told what to believe about her, and we kind of believed it, because it was the advent of the 24-hour news cycle. Just spoon-fed to us every day: Tonya, bad; Nancy – princess, good.

So, to do this movie and to see all the different things that were at play in her life makes you have so much more empathy for her. And I was so excited

to meet her at the premiere. She was there! I just wanted to hug her and hold her. Sometimes I'm not great with words, and I just wanted to hug her.

You play her disapproving monster of a mother, LaVona Golden, which will strike a chord with many people in the LGBTQ community who have experienced parental disapproval because of their sexuality.

Oh, sure!

Tonya has been called a gay icon. Do you see her as a gay icon?

I never have thought about it before, but now that you're saying it, I understand the reasons why she would be.

She wanted to be loved for who she was.

Wanting to be loved for who she was! Absolutely, I can see why it would resonate with the gay community – with women too. With anyone who has felt like an underdog or not felt like they had a voice.

As I talk about this movie more and more to people like yourself, I'm learning more about it and why it's resonating right now. It's also the concept of truth and what that is, and you know, the media told us what to believe was true and we did, and now in this time that we're living in with the president (being) wildly contradictory – it's phenomenal to me what's going on in the country and in our discourse, and (sighs) I just feel it's one of the most divisive, scary times I've



ever experienced in my lifetime, certainly.

You mentioned Tonya as the “underdog,” a word you have also used to describe yourself.

Yeah.

Do you think that has anything to do with why you’ve attracted a doting LGBTQ following?

Maybe that’s it! I was always just told I was too tall to act and told I wasn’t pretty enough, that I didn’t have enough edge. Didn’t have this, that. Everyone in the business told me that, and it was heartbreaking to me; and yet I tried to find other things to do, but this was really the only thing I was really meant to be, this time ’round (laughs).

I think it might also just be the characters that I get to play. Some of them speak to the community because they are that underdog character – now I’m trying to make up a theory out of something I haven’t thought about (laughs). But I also think it’s that I love to bring the humanity to every character I play.

I’m sure that your gay fans also appreciate that you seem to enjoy randomly kissing women.

I do! (Laughs) Oh my gosh, I don’t know if you’ve seen my kiss with Cloris Leachman but that is, like, the best kiss.

Better than Kate Winslet even?

How about that moment?! That floored me. And I just thought, “Did she just say my name?” (Winslet gushed about Janney at the Hollywood Film Awards in November.) It was one of the funniest moments for me, and I thought, “How can I not just go up and kiss her?” I mean, Meryl Streep, Kate Winslet – I’ve kissed a lot of cool women, and men!

In our 2016 interview, Meryl Streep told me kissing you in “The Hours” was a real “perk.”

She said “perk”? I love her!

Is that what all the women say about kissing you?

I don’t know! Meryl is the only one I’ve gotten feedback on. Actually, no, Rosie! I got to kiss Rosie. Rosie said I was a good kisser. And Rosie O’Donnell is a great kisser, I have to say. She’s a very good kisser. On (the CBS sitcom) “Mom,” she plays a woman that I used to have a relationship with and there’s one episode where I kiss her a couple of times and it was really – she’s a good kisser! (Laughs)

What was the moment in your career you knew you had an LGBTQ following?

I feel like (1999’s) “Drop Dead Gorgeous” was the start of that for me. And it was a slow

dawning, awakening, realization that was happening and I thought that was the highest show of honor to be embraced by the gay community. It was like, “OK, you guys know.”

To me, it’s a high honor to be recognized and embraced by the gay community. I don’t want to say something stereotypical, but a lot of the men that I know who are my dear friends have a real appreciation for women who are strong and powerful and kickass. They really, really love strong women. They’re not afraid of women the way that some heterosexual men are. But they love a strong dame. They love a dame! So, that’s high praise. It’s high praise coming from the gays. So I am thrilled that I am in that club.

Of the lesbian characters you’ve played, from Sally in “The Hours” to your lesbian roles in stage productions like Eve Ensler’s “Ladies” and Alan Ball’s “Five Women Wearing the Same Dress,” which do you wish you could’ve gotten to know more?

Probably my character in “The Hours” with Meryl. I would’ve liked to have gotten to know Sally and really explored that relationship. You know, my famous story with her with that kiss is that she gave me a facelift. She didn’t like the way we were lit in the scene and she said, “I’m gonna do you a favor, honey.” So she placed her hands on the side of my face and lifted it ever so gently. When you watch it next, look at that – it’s pretty great. A little Meryl lift. I got a little lift from Meryl. It was fantastic.

If you were to play another lesbian role, who would be your ideal co-star?

Whoa. Well, I kind of have a girl crush on Margot Robbie right now! (Laughs) She is so talented and so friggin’ beautiful – it’s kind of remarkable. I just find myself staring at her, like, how can anything be that beautiful? And she’s a really good actress, and you know, why not? Margot is on my mind right now, so I’m saying Margot.

There have been Tonya Harding impersonators, and after this film, I fully expect a few LaVona Golden queens.

Oh my god, do you really?

Her name alone is made for the stage at some gay bar, don’t you think?

It is a great name: LaVona! There was already someone on Halloween who dressed as LaVona. It was on Twitter and it made me laugh. It was a guy who dressed as LaVona, with the bowl haircut and the bird and the fur coat. It’s a real unique look.

See Allison, page 23

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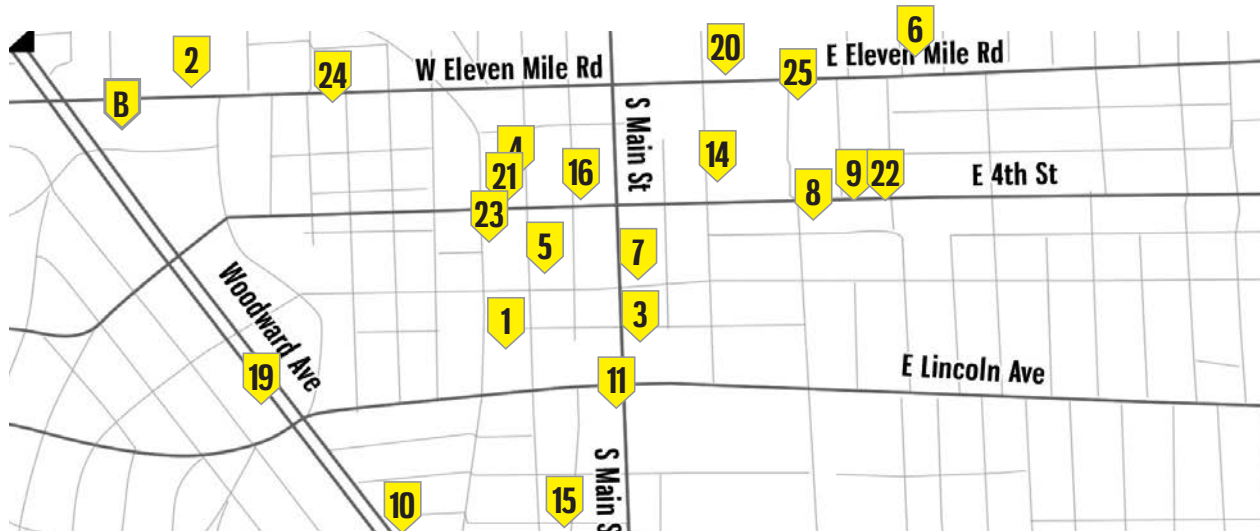
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BTL Cool Cities Royal Oak

Royal Oak Set to Finish Parking Structure by Year End

Royal Oak residents have probably noticed a new addition to their skyline: the construction of a brand-new parking structure. The structure has been under construction for almost a year, and is slated to open on Dec. 27. The parking deck was purchased by the city at a price tag of \$15 million.

Parking rates will be the same as at other parking structures across the city:

Two hours of free parking begin at 3 p.m. Parking for longer than two hours at a time costs 50 cents per hour. This rule is in effect Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After 5 p.m. from Monday through Saturday, visitors will pay a \$5 flat rate.

Residents can look forward to more than 500 new parking spots with the construction of the seven-story building, which was built on top of a former parking lot. It's addition to the city's parking decks will make it the fourth such structure in Royal Oak. Entrances and exits to the building faces Center Street and Washington Avenue. It adjoins an older, four-story parking structure, and has spots reserved for retail space on

its first floor. The retail space faces Second Street, across from the U.S. Post Office.

In an interview with the Daily Tribune, the head of the Department of Public Services, Greg Russel said, "We anticipate most of the traffic will be using the entrance on Center Street. Currently, the Center Street deck is the most popular deck in the city."

The parking structure will also provide a bit of city beautification, said Royal Oak Community Engagement Specialist Judy Davids.

"There is all new landscaping around the new deck. And that includes trees and rain gardens."

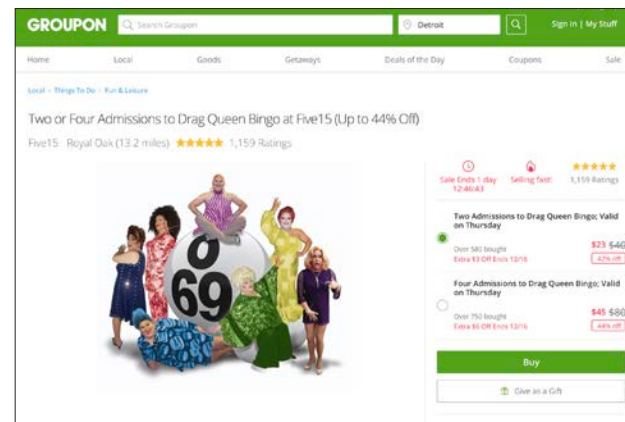
The building was funded by the DDA and the city auto parking fund.

Two or Four Admission Groupons to Drag Queen Bingo at Five15

Anyone who has relegated the game of bingo to a boring activity for nursing homes residents clearly hasn't met a drag queen. Carmella Marcella Garcia, Miss Carol Lee, Miss Angel Sheridan, Miss Addison Taylor, Trixie Deluxxe and Sabin flip that stereotype on its head weekly at Five15's Drag Queen Bingo.

Now, you can enjoy the show at a discounted rate, with a Groupon for 36 percent off regularly-priced tickets for \$26.

Attendees aged 18 and up are welcome to reserve spots Thursday through Sunday for a comedy show that holds nothing back. But latecomers beware, Five15's FAQ page



warns that, "Latecomers risk the wrath of the entertainers and public ridicule, enter at your own risk (But it sure adds to the spice of the show)." Although the drag queens take center stage, attendees can also expect their fair share of attention from the performers. Winners can earn a variety of Five15 merchandise, as well as photo opportunity with performers. Bingo usually lasts 90 minutes to two hours, and provides a variety of finger foods for guests like pizzas, flatbreads, burgers and chicken fingers. For bingo-goers looking for a larger meal, Sunday performances feature a brunch option. Five15 is Royal Oak-based independent store that sells books, music, movies and gifts that it describes as a "Left bank" feel. Reservations must be made in advance.

Groupon information can be found at: <http://gaybe.am/OJ>. Regularly priced tickets start at \$20 for shows Thursday through Saturday, and \$30 for Sunday brunch. Five15 is located at 515 S. Washington Ave., in Royal Oak. Regular reservation information can be found online at five15.net/reservations.

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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Dec. 21

45+ Club 12:00 pm Activity and community group for persons age 45 and up. Play games and socialize in the Affirmations' Game Room. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org>

Connections Youth Group 6:00 pm For youth ages 13-18 OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

Gender Non-Conformists 7:00 pm 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 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Polyamory Network 7:00 pm Open and inclusive community of people living polyamorously, people interested in polyamory and people of, friendly to and curious about polyamory. Welcomes diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867 <http://www.jimtoycenter.org>

Friday, Dec. 22

Alcoholics Anonymous Brownbaggers 11:30 am Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Alter-Abilities Support Group 3:00 pm For alter-abled or "disabled" LGBTQ people. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

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Saturday, Dec. 23

Smart Recovery 10:00 am 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 Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Coming Out Over Coffee 10:30 am 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 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Open LGBT AA Meeting 11:00 am Grace Episcopal Church, 341 Washington St., Traverse City. <http://www.tcpolestar.org/>

Friends and Families 12:30 pm Support group for friends and families of LGBTQ identifying persons. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org>

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

Smeared Lipstick 3:00 pm A discussion group for self identified feminine lesbian women to identify issues specific to them. The group also does a monthly community service project to increase their visibility in every community. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

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

Own Your Gender 7:00 pm For transgender, non-binary and gender and gender questioning people Grand Rapids Pride Center, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. <http://www.grpride.org>

GLBT AA 8:00 pm Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867 <http://www.jimtoycenter.org>

Sunday, Dec. 24

Transcend 4:00 pm For transgender and gender non-conforming individuals OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

Pride AA Weekly Meeting 6:00 pm OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

Pride NA Weekly Meeting 7:00 pm OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

Monday, Dec. 25

Alcoholics Anonymous Brownbaggers 11:30 am Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

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

Sexual Addicts Anonymous 7:00 pm Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

FTM Detroit Support Group 7:00 pm Support is limited to transmasculine, AFAB people who no longer identify as female, or are questioning, and their guests. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://ftmdetroit@gmail.com>

Whole Lives, Healthy Lives Adult Support Group 7:00 pm This one-of-a-kind program in Berrien County helps attendees support each other in healthy ways through active listening and caring feedback. OutCenter, 132 Water St., Benton Harbor. 269-925-8330 <http://www.Outcenter.org>

Tuesday, Dec. 26

Support for Queer, Transgender, and GNC Community Members 3:30 pm Group is free and meets every Tuesday. Mid-Michigan Recovery Services, Inc., 913 W. Holmes Rd Ste 200, Lansing. 517-887-0226 <http://mmrsinc.org>

Sexual Assault Survivors Groups 4:00 pm Youth group, ages 13-17, meets at 4 p.m. Adult group, ages 18 and over, meets at 5:15 p.m. OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

Transgender Life Support 7:00 pm An open discussion group for people identifying as transgender and their allies. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Coming Out Together 7:00 pm 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 <http://www.goaffirmations.org>

Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Wednesday, Dec. 27

Alcoholics Anonymous Brownbaggers 11:30 am Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Senior Koffee Klatch 1:00 pm A discussion and networking group for people 45 years of age and older. Various discussion topics, social outings and potlucks are incorporated throughout the year. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

The Pastor is In 3:30 pm Pastor Dani Veenstra, local United Church of Christ faith leader and ally to the LGBTQ community hosts this free service every Wednesday. OutCenter, 132 Water St., Benton Harbor. 269-925-8330 <http://www.outcenter.org>

Students Affirming Youth 4:00 pm A secular group for youth in grades 8-12, which functions as a community-based gay-straight alliance. Email for group details. The Giraffe Cafe at First Congregational Church, 403 S. Jefferson, Saginaw. <http://www.perceptionsmi.org/>

Youth Group 7:00 pm For youth ages 13-17 Grand Rapids Pride Center, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. <http://www.grpride.org>

Support Group for Transgender Individuals and Allies 7:00 pm Facilitated by Paulette Niemiec, a

licensed counselor in the state of Michigan. Contact Niemiec at 800-842-2954, ext. 122. St. Phillip Lutheran Church, 1790 Fort St., Trenton. 734-676-7141 <http://www.transgendermichigan.org>

Support group for parents and guardians of LGBTQ people 7:30 pm YWCA, 25 Sheldon Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. <http://www.grpride.org>

Thursday, Dec. 28

45+ Club 12:00 pm Activity and community group for persons age 45 and up. Play games and socialize in the Affirmations' Game Room. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org>

Connections Youth Group 6:00 pm For youth ages 13-18 OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

Gender Non-Conformists 7:00 pm 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 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Men's Social Group 7:00 pm Grand Rapids Pride Center, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. <http://www.grpride.org>

Support group for parents and transgender youth 7:00 pm Youth meet in the "youth lounge." Parents meet in room 100. Second and fourth Thursday of each month. Orchard United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, Farmington Hills. 248-739-9254 <http://www.standwithtrans.org>



Editor's Pick

New Year's Eve Bash: The Music of Michael Jackson

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra invites members of the community to Detroit's hottest New Year's Eve party featuring the music of Michael Jackson at 10 p.m. on Dec. 31. Countdown the end of 2017 while reliving each era of Michael Jackson's celebrated career conducted by Brent Havens and featuring a live rock band fronted by vocalist James Delisco. Tickets start at \$50 for the event at the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Music Center - Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave. in Detroit. Call 313-576-5111, email info@dso.org or visit www.dso.org/ for more information.



Red Umbrella Support Group 7:30 pm
For individuals involved in the erotic labor industry. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org>

Friday, Dec. 29

Alcoholics Anonymous Brownbaggers 11:30 am Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

Alter-Abilities Support Group 3:00 pm For alter-abled or "disabled" LGBTQ people. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org>

Saturday, Dec. 30

Smart Recovery 10:00 am 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 Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org/programs-services/support-discussion-groups>

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Friends and Families 12:30 pm Support group for friends and families of LGBTQ identifying persons. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105 <http://www.goaffirmations.org>

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

GLBT AA 8:00 pm Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867 <http://www.jimtoycenter.org>

Sunday, Dec. 31

Pride AA Weekly Meeting 6:00 pm OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

Pride NA Weekly Meeting 7:00 pm OutFront Kalamazoo, 340 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo. <http://www.outfrontkzoo.org>

New Years Eve A Night To Remember 7:00 pm \$60.00 per person includes food & beverage (open bar) Midnight toast and more!! Please call 734-678-9993 or 734-945-7512 for tickets and lodging information Golden Gate Banquet Hall, 8599 N. Lilley Rd., Canton. 734-678-9993 <http://Website>

New Years Eve Dance 7:30 pm New larger venue-Dinner-Open Bar-DJ-Dancing and more! Call for ticket prices and reservations. Vintage House Banquet & Catering, 31816 Utica Rd, Fraser. 248-943-2411 <http://www.womenoutandabout.net>

MUSIC & MORE

Strategic Staffing Solutions "Wild Lights at The Detroit Zoo" The Detroit Zoo is lighting up the night again this year with Wild Lights, a spectacular light display throughout the front half of the zoo. Tickets \$10-\$16/Parking \$7. The Detroit Zoo, 8450 W. 10 Mile Road, Royal Oak. Nov. 18 - Dec. 31. <https://detroitzoo.org/events/zoo-events/wild-lights>

THEATER

Beau Jest Contact Theatre for ticket prices. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Through Dec. 23. 517-655-SHOW. www.williamstontheatre.org

Professional

A Year Without Panto Claus 2017 was a bummer of a year. When Santa gets depressed, he decides to pack it in and disappear. Two of his elves search far and near looking for some genuine Christmas cheer. Contact for ticket info. Theatre Nova, 410 W. Huron Street, Ann Arbor. Through Dec. 31. 734.635.8450. www.theatrenova.org

Swimming Upstream Tickets: \$20. World Premiere by Rich Rubin, Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through Dec. 23. 313-868-1347. www.detroitreptheatre.com

The Year Without a Panto Claus Tickets: \$20 for adults, \$10 kids (ages 16 and under). Theatre NOVA, 410 W. Huron, Ann Arbor. Through Dec. 31. 7346358450. www.artful.ly/theatre-

See Happenings, page 22

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Editor's Pick

Urban Bush Women: Hair & Other Stories

Founded by Jawole Zollar, the company burst onto the dance scene in 1984 and has made an indelible mark on the field with bold, innovative, and demanding works. Hair & Other Stories is a multidisciplinary evening-length work at 8 p.m. on Jan. 12, 2018 that addresses matters of race, gender identity, and economic inequality through the lens of hair, primarily that of African-American women. Purchase tickets (\$26-48) for the performance at the Power Center for Performing Arts, 121 Fletcher St. in Ann Arbor. Call 734-764-2538, email umstix@ums.org or visit <https://ums.org/performance/urban-bush-women/> for more information.



▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 21

[nova/store/events](#)

ART 'N' AROUND

Detroit Institute of Arts "Church - A Painter's Pilgrimage" One ticket sends you on two artistic adventures -- Monet: Framing Life and Church: A Painter's Pilgrimage. Travel to distinct places and time in history to experience the world as these two artists did. Check website for details! Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit.

Nov. 9 - Jan. 14. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Monet - Framing Life" One ticket sends you on two artistic adventures -- Monet: Framing Life and Church: A Painter's Pilgrimage. Travel to distinct places and time in history to experience the world as these two artists did. Check Website for more info. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 9 - March 4. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Flint Institute of Arts "The Art of Containment" 50 plus Vessels from Bloomfield Hills resident Sidney Swidler's Collection, curated & amassed over 30 years! Tickets: Adults \$7, Kids \$5, Senior Citizens \$5, Free under 12, FREE

SATURDAYS! Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Oct. 11 - March 18. 810-234-1695. <https://flintarts.org>

Flint Institute of Arts "Size Matters" Big and small works from the FIA Collection Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Sep. 16 - Dec. 30. 8102341695. flintarts.org

Lawrence Street Gallery "Think Small '17" Think Small an all media show celebrating diminutive art. Opening Night, Friday, Dec 1 6-9PM [info:www.lawrencestreetgallery.com](http://info.www.lawrencestreetgallery.com) Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Avenue, Ferndale. Nov. 29 - Dec. 22. 2485440394. www.lawrencestreetgallery.com

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Allison Janney as LaVona Golden in "I, Tonya." Photo: NEON

► **Allison**

Continued from p. 15

Does looking the part help you get into character?

Oh god, yes. With that, especially. It was three hours of hair and makeup getting that look with the bird, and it was really liberating too. I thought I was gonna be horrified and not be able to look at myself in the mirror, and it was fascinating – I wanted to look at myself all the time! I was like, "God, this is so cool!" It felt just so different, and I didn't see myself. I felt really confident in doing what I had to do. The look was so perfect and so great, and it made me excited to do my scenes.

I hope you got to keep a piece of LaVona.

I didn't! But I was thinking about seeing if that bird could be adopted because I kind of fell in love with him. He lives in southern Georgia and he's so lovely. But I do have three dogs and I don't want there to be an unfortunate situation there.

Yeah, maybe give it to somebody who doesn't have an animal that will eat it.

Yes! That's always something to think about before you get a bird. (Laughs)

You've said you like to use your platform and acting to support important causes, which you've done in projects like 2009's "Funny or Die's Prop 8 – The Musical." Do you recall the point in your life or career when you became passionate about queer issues?

I have so many gay friends in my world, and having such close friends in the gay community made me more aware of different issues. So, I'd naturally get involved through my friends. It happened when I came out to L.A. and I was doing "West Wing." Once you start becoming someone – you know, a celebrity person – you realize, "Actually, I could help just by showing up there and by doing this." It was a wonderful thing to realize, that I could use my name for something good other than the acting.

Does it feel even more important right now to take on projects that can make a difference?

Yes, yes! It really does. And I don't know what I'm gonna be asked to do next, but I hope that I will be able to contribute.

I think now is the right time for another lesbian role, just sayin'.

OK, alright. I'm gonna start looking for one. Will you start looking for one for me? Should I do a biopic of – I'm trying to think, what lesbian should I play? I think it's gotta be a character that's not written yet.

Considering your trove of lesbian parts, I'm surprised lesbian roles aren't just rolling in for you.

I don't know – I don't think so! I'm gonna have to call my agent: "Where are all my lesbian roles?" Oh, a pioneering lesbian! Amelia Earhart. I don't know if she was. I'm gonna get on that though. I'm gonna start looking. That's a good thing to put in my head.

As editor of Q Syndicate, the international LGBTQ 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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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Find over 300 Non-Profit Listings Serving Michigan's LGBTQ Online @ www.pridesource.com

Editor's Note: This is a sampling of the hundreds of Michigan non-profits working with the LGBTQ community across the state. From time to time this print resource will emphasize different sectors as space permits.

AIDS/HIV

There are dozens of AIDS/HIV organizations and resources listed at www.PrideSource.com. Here are just three of them:

AIDS Walk Detroit

Contact info@aidswalkdetroit.org or 248-399-9255 for more information. The walk takes place this year on Sunday, Sept. 15, 8:30 a.m. at the Royal Oak Farmers Market

Macomb County STD Clinic

27690 Van Dyke
Warren, MI 48093
586-465-9217
<http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-HPDC-HIVAIDSCounselingTesting>

Matrix Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program

120 Parsons Street
Detroit, MI 48201
888-226-6366
248-545-1435
www.matrixhumanservices.org/programs/ryanwhite/

UNIFIED - HIV Health and Beyond

3011 W. Grand Blvd. Suite 230
Detroit, MI 48202
313-446-9800
www.miunified.org
Michigan HIV/STD Hotline
800-872-2437

Advocacy

Equality Michigan

19641 W. 7 Mile, Detroit, MI
313-537-7000
equalitymi.org
[Facebook.com/equalitymichigan](https://www.facebook.com/equalitymichigan)

Campus

Currently there are 19 organizations listed as active online at www.pridesource.com/ yellow pages. The following are some in

the southeast Michigan area:

U-M Ann Arbor

Spectrum Center
Spectrumcenter@umich.edu
<http://spectrumcenter.umich.edu>
734-763-4186

Oakland University Gender & Sexuality Center

gsc@oakland.edu
www.oakland.edu/gsc
248-370-4336

Eastern Michigan University

LGBT Resource Center
emich.edu/lgbtrc
734-487-4149

The Lawrence Tech LGBT Resource Center

ltu.edu/student_affairs/lgbt.asp

Wayne State JIGSAW

[Facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW](https://www.facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW)
wsujigsaw@gmail.com

Community Centers

Michigan has nine active LGBTQ community centers, with a tenth planned in Lansing. Here are three of them.

Jim Toy Community Center

Ann Arbor
www.jimtoycenter.org
www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter
or follow them on Twitter @ JimToyCenter.
319 Braun Court
Ann Arbor, MI
734-995-9867

LGBT Detroit

Detroit
www.lgbtdetroit.org
www.facebook.com/lgbtdetroit
or follow them on Twitter @ LGBTDetroit.
20025 Greenfield Road
Detroit, MI
Phone: 313-397-2127

Affirmations

Ferndale
<http://goaffirmations.org>
www.facebook.com/Affirmations/



or follow them on Twitter @ GoAffirmations.
290 W. Nine Mile Road
Ferndale, MI
248-398-7105

Legal

American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan

See Resources, page 26

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► Resources

Continued from p. 25

Jay Kaplan, Staff Attorney, LGBT Project
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313-578-6800

Fair Michigan

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Plymouth, MI 48170
877-432-4764, 313-556-2300
fairmichigan.org
Facebook.com/fairmichigan2016

Know Your Rights Project

Outlaws U-M student group
outlawlegal@gmail.com
734-995-9867

Older Adults

SAGE Metro Detroit

290 W. Nine Mile Rd. Ferndale, MI
313-578-6812
sagemetrodetroit.org
Facebook: SAGE Metro Detroit

Political

The LGBT and Allies Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party

Facebook.com/TheLGBT-
CaucusoftheMDP

Stonewall for Revolution

www.facebook.com/
stonewall4revolution

Professional Groups

Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 32446
Detroit, MI 48232
detroitlgbtchamber.com
1-800-DET-LGBT

Ties Like Me

Professional networking events
third Weds. 5:30 - 8 p.m.
TiesLikeMe.org

Suits And The City

Lansing, MI
suitsandthecity@gmail.com
www.suitsandthecity.org

Transgender

FtM Detroit

https://www.facebook.com/
FtMDetroit/
ftmdetroit@gmail.com.

FtM A2 Ypsi

ftmannarborypsilanti@gmail.com
https://www.facebook.com/
ftma2ypsi/

Transgender Michigan

23211 Woodward Ave.
Ferndale, MI
info@transgendermichigan.org
www.transgendermichigan.org
800-842-2954

Trans Sistas of Color Project

19641 W. 7 Mile Rd. in Detroit
313-537-7000 Ext 107
info@tscopdetroit.org
www.facebook.com/TSCOPD/

Youth

Ruth Ellis Center

77 Victor Street, Highland Park,
MI 48203
info@ruthelliscenter.org
Facebook: Ruth Ellis Center
313-252-1950

Ozone House

102 N. Hamilton Street
Ypsilanti, MI
734-662-2265
734-662-2222

Stand With Trans

Farmington, MI
www.standwithtrans.org
248-739-9254

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You can add or update any listing by going to www.PrideSource.com and clicking on Yellow Pages. Once you submit your listing, our staff will contact you to confirm your information.

You can add your event to the Pride Source Calendar online and in print by going to www.PrideSource.com and clicking on Calendar, then "Add Event." Send any press releases and announcements to editor@pridesource.com

Find these resources online

Find a digital version of *PrideSource Magazine* online under *LGBT Yellow Pages*

- | | |
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| Adoption Services | Museums |
| AIDS/HIV Hotlines | Music Groups |
| AIDS/HIV Organizations | National Organizations |
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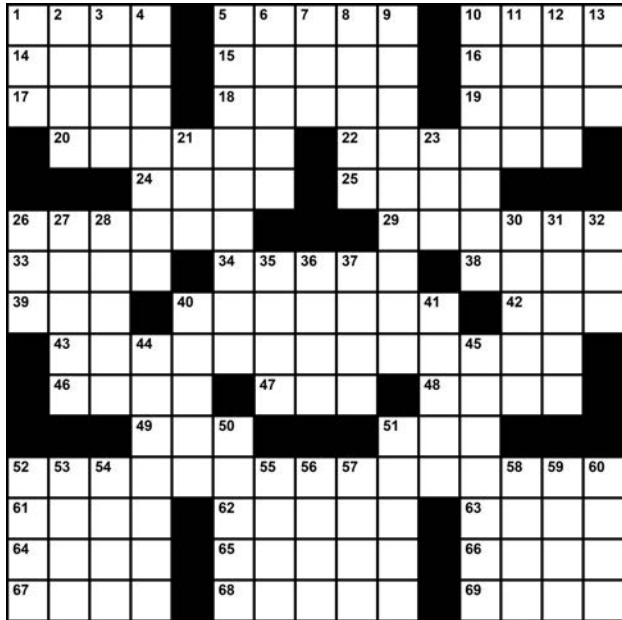
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Q Puzzle



- 40 Of the body
 42 Come out on top
 43 More of the quote
 46 Since, to J. M. Barrie
 47 Gas additive
 48 Former Minnesota governor Carlson
 49 Shine, in some ads
 51 Bill written by Alice Paul
 52 End of the quote
 61 Heavy horn
 62 Targets for Patty Sheehan
 63 Land of Sinead O'Connor
 64 Othello was one
 65 Writer Dykewomon
 66 Foot fetish target
 67 Watched intently
 68 Ready for action
 69 Vehicle for a snow queen?
- 13 Copies of a feminist mag.
 21 "The Last King of Scotland" character
 23 "Men Behaving Badly" writer Simon
 26 Fed. property manager
 27 Froot ____
 28 Like Benjamin Britten, pitchwise
 30 Dubuque denizen
 31 Bear
 32 Word on a lavatory door
 35 Mingo portrayer Ed
 36 Nutty as a fruitcake
 37 Lone Star State sch.
 40 Took part in a bee
 41 Danes of "Romeo + Juliet"
 44 Fencing phrase
 45 Lacking support?
 50 Colette's "The ____ One"
 51 "A Room of One's Own," e.g.
 52 Melissa Etheridge's "Don't Look ____"
 53 Channel marker
 54 Penetrating reed
 55 "Hi" to Lorca
 56 Liberace's style, for example
 57 Get better
 58 One of Bernstein's strings
 59 Gardner of mystery
 60 Rank Billie Jean, e.g.

Down

- 1 Barrier breaker of old
 2 The Seattle Storm, for one
 3 Earthen pot
 4 Fudge ____ (top NFL team?)
 5 Deserting one's post, to Cammermeyer
 6 Inevitable online claim
 7 Barely make, with "out"
 8 Tickles pink
 9 Rita Mae Brown's cat
 10 Most pink
 11 Source of oil-based lubricants
 12 Katharine's "Butch Cassidy" role

Find solution to this puzzle at www.pridesource.com

Another Transgender First

Across

- 1 Start of a quote from 22-Across
 5 Sharon of "Queer as Folk"
 10 See 22-Across
 14 Ward of "Once and Again"
 15 Like some old buckets
 16 Picks out, with "for"
 17 Soft rock for bottoms
 18 "Love Affair" costar Dunne
 19 Gets hard
- 20 More of the quote
 22 With 10-Across, the first openly transgender person elected to a state legislature
 24 Beat barely
 25 Actress lone
 26 "I Will Survive" singer Gaynor
 29 Album of Etheridge
 33 Mama's boys
 34 Make into balls
 38 Shakespearean soliloquy start
 39 NASA "thumbs-up"



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'Office Hours' at Tipping Point Giggles with Absurd Days at the Office

NORTHVILLE – In the program notes for Tipping Point Theatre's "Office Hours," one of the actors mentions being proud to help "you escape into genuine laughter" during these stressful times. And sheer silly escapism is exactly what the show has to offer.

The play, by prolific Ontario-born writer Norm Foster, is a series of vignettes which gradually become more than separate brief one-acts. Each cleverly ties together plot-lines and characters from the other segments.

The entire show takes place in one afternoon in six offices around a city, among various goofy entertainment folk, as well as the world's worst psychiatrist. It's the kind of nuttiness where a just-stabbed character worries most whether the knife was dirty, washed-up or never-there film people delude themselves that their great concept is not already a legendary story and harried executives and a salesman's life revolve around their precious "Week-at-a-Glances."

An energetic five-person cast fills multiple roles. Wayne David Parker is a bundle of



compressed intensity ranging from a skittish, angry employee to a goofy alcoholic film director to a bemused father with an interesting secret. Kyle Mitchell Johnson ably takes on a diverse quartet of characters whose lives

closely overlap.

Terry Heck is both a slightly diffident film producer (the woman in the room who knows better than the men who ignore her) and a mother whom no one can ignore. Sarah

Hawkins Moan channels a trio that includes one of Those Bosses (you know them) to a betrayed wife to that terrible shrink.

And Ryan Carlson gets some scene-stealing moments, especially as a hapless but still somehow likable oaf who just can't quit his dream job, no matter how ill-suited. His physical presence and mannerisms dominate the small room where he's being fired.

Speaking of that intimate Tipping Point space, the staging also includes clever scene changes handled by the actors themselves. Director Beth Torrey has successfully conducted the cast through its quick paces.

Office Hours will not change the world. But give in to its farcical silliness, and it will help you escape the world of the stress and occasional absurdity of our work lives for a couple of hours.

"Office Hours" runs through Saturday, Dec. 23. More information about tickets can be found online at tippingpointtheatre.com

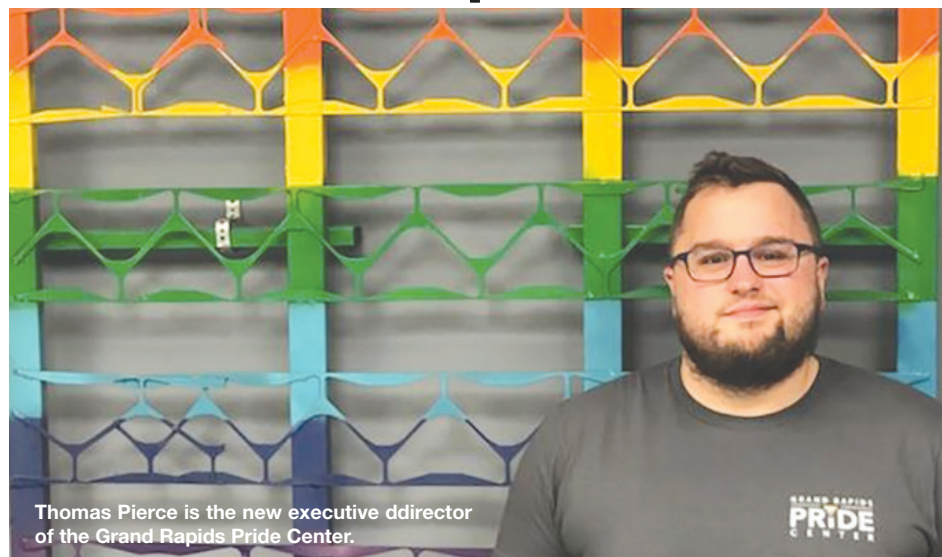
Local LGBTQ Organization Expands; Grand Rapids Pride Center Hires Executive Director, Sets Goals to Expand Services and Partnerships

BY BTL STAFF

GRAND RAPIDS – The Grand Rapids Pride Center (GRPC) has hired a new Executive Director, Thomas Pierce, LLMSW, MPA, effective Jan. 2, 2018. The position is the second paid, full-time position at the GRPC, and will oversee all operations and strategic direction for the organization.

Pierce has a master's of social work degree from Spring Arbor University, and a master of public administration from Grand Valley State University. He has worked with Hope Network since moving to Michigan in 2012, most recently serving as the Director of Children's Residential Services. He has served on the Grand Rapids Pride Center's Board of Directors for the past two years.

"I am beyond excited to announce the hiring of Thomas Pierce as Executive Director of the Grand Rapids Pride Center," said Grand Rapids Pride Center Board President, Mike Hemmingsen. "Thomas has shown his dedication to the LGBTQ community over the last two years with his involvement with our Pride Festival, growing our Safe and Supported program, and becoming a member of our Board of Directors. Effective Jan.



Thomas Pierce is the new executive director of the Grand Rapids Pride Center.

2, 2018, Thomas will take the reins of the Grand Rapids Pride Center and continue our efforts to empower our LGBTQ community through supportive services and awareness. We look forward to how Thomas will grow our organization in the coming years."

Pierce came to the Board with a detailed 30-, 60-, and 90-day plan to assess the day-to-day operations of the organization. Among Pierce's long-term goals for the GRPC are:

- Strategic placement of the GRPC to better

align with the unique needs of the Grand Rapids LGBTQ community.

- Continued advocacy and support through expanded services offered at the GRPC.

- Engagement with community initiatives and projects that will work to further support our Grand Rapids LGBTQ community and impact policies in support of equality.

- Increased partnerships with communities beyond our own, across Michigan and beyond. "These are exciting times for the GRPC and

I believe we are poised to grow significantly in the next three to five years as we begin to form new partnerships and expand our services bring offered. I'm looking forward to getting the internal operations working smoothly and effectively, and building upon the great work that our staff and volunteers have already been doing!" said Pierce.

About Grand Rapids Pride Center

Sanctioned in 1988 as The Lesbian Gay Community Network, The Grand Rapids Pride Center (GRPC) strives to empower West Michigan's LGBTQ community through supportive services and awareness. GRPC aims to be the center of a vibrant and inclusive community that supports all LGBTQ individuals. The organization hosts several support groups, community education and sensitivity trainings, and leadership and volunteer opportunities. For more information on the Grand Rapids Pride Center, visit grpride.org.

For more information on this appointment, and the Grand Rapids Pride Center, visit grpride.org.

Inspired Life Counseling Offers Couples Counseling

Lauren Tatarsky has been deeply involved in spiritual guidance and therapy for a while now. She has been a Hatha yoga teacher since 2010, and received a master of arts in spiritual guidance from Sofia University. Tatarsky is a spiritual counselor who offers a variety of different sessions through Inspired Life Counseling, ranging from one-on-one sessions, group workshops and couples counseling. Tatarsky said its efficacy surprises people.

"A good friend of mine, and fellow counselor, told me recently that on her birthday, she made sure to schedule a couples counseling session with her partner and their therapist," Tatarsky said. "We laughed because maybe it takes a counselor to understand why that's the best birthday gift ever. If you find that strange or worse, I'll tell you it's because having a guide that deepens your connection to and understanding of the person you love is far more powerful than you might think. It's also nourishing and awakening, which makes for a great birthday gift if you ask me."

She said that counseling can be useful to anyone who attends, even for those couples who aren't going through a rough patch.

"I believe we all should have couples counseling. I think we all need it because there are always issues that arise in relationships and if we have support and skills to work through them in conscious ways, they can be the most transformative and impactful moments of personal growth," Tatarsky said. "Personal growth shared with an intimate partner is powerful in ways that are hard to explain. Seeing one another deeply, understanding what is beneath the surface and bringing it to view, supporting one another in our pain and in our deep human needs are all things that show up when we engage with our partner in the presence of a strong facilitator."

So, if this holiday season, a spouse or significant other presents their partner with a session at Inspired Life Counseling, it doesn't mean that the relationship is weak. It could mean they are attempting to get even closer.

"And like my friend," Tatarsky said, "even in times of smooth sailing, couples counseling can deepen your intimacy and love in seriously nourishing ways."

Inspired Life Counseling offers a variety different sessions. For more information, go online to inspiredlifecounselinga2.com. The counseling center is located at 2350 Washtenaw Ave., Suite 3, Ann Arbor.




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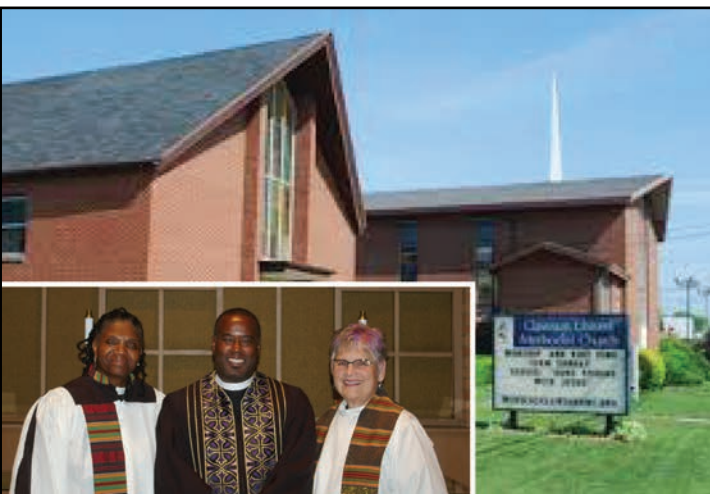
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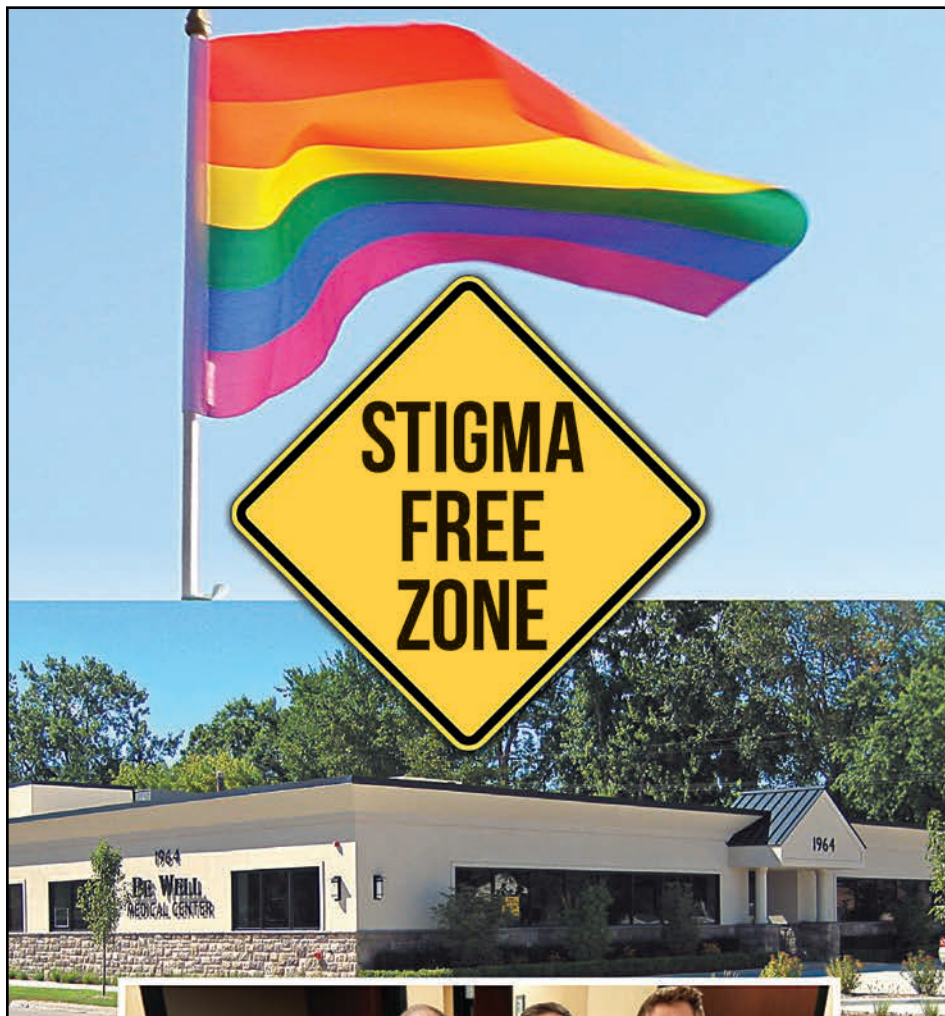
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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

The 'Queer Eye' reboot is right around the corner

Remember the old days, the early 2000s, when "Queer Eye For The Straight Guy" was on TV and you watched it and thought out loud, "I would never wear what Carson is pushing on that poor hetero man" and also, "Why does the straight bear have to shave his back?" Well, you don't have Carson to push around this time because there's an entire new cast of makeover gays to yell at through your screen when Netflix's "reimagined" version of the show launches in February 2018. The shtick is the same: slobby straight guys get themselves "zhuzhed" by a team of homosexuals whose specialties are fashion, grooming, design, cooking and culture. Word is this time around the intrepid queers are invading Red State territories, which kind of raises the question of why we would even want men who voted for Trump to dress better and blend in with decent society. But apparently the producers have some kind of Better World ideals, so we'll just wait and see how it all plays out.



New 'Queer Eye' cast. Photo: Netflix

then you're most likely not obsessed with war history or conversant in early 20th-century professional baseball. But here's what this fascinating figure did: he was a catcher for a variety of pro teams up until the late 1930s, was an Ivy League graduate, a lawyer, spoke nine languages, and, oh yeah, was also a spy for the United States Office of Strategic Services during World War II. A "confirmed bachelor" who was probably bisexual, he is also the subject of the new film, "The Catcher Was a Spy" from filmmaker Ben Lewin ("The Sessions"). Based on a book of the same name, the film follows Berg's career (he's played by Paul Rudd) as he slips in and out of treacherous situations with the aim of giving the U.S. the upper hand against the Nazis as both countries race to build an atomic bomb. The movie co-stars Guy Pearce, Jeff Daniels, Paul Giamatti and Sienna Miller, bows at Sundance 2018, and will probably sneak into your local multiplex later next year.

Epstein and Friedman's 'End Game' is ready to play

There can't be a discussion of LGBT documentary filmmaking without the inclusion of Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman. Whether individually or collaborating, they've been responsible for landmark queer films like "Word is Out," "The Times of Harvey Milk," "The Celluloid Closet," "Common Threads" and "Paragraph 175." Their latest, set to premiere at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival, is called "End Game." This one seems to be taking a detour from queer subject matter, though, as its logline explains the subject to be "visionary medical practitioners working on the cutting edge of life and death." We're going to guess that this has something to do with becoming immortal, which any queen on "RuPaul's Drag Race" will tell you is already part of her long-range career plan. Either way we're in because these two directors have a flawless pedigree, and because we don't have to travel to snowbound Utah to see it: Netflix has already picked up the film to begin airing on May 4.

'The Catcher Was a Spy' gets Sundance slot

Moe Berg. Ever heard of him? No? Well,

'My Brother's Husband' is the must-see anime of 2018

Japanese comics artist Gengoroh Tagame is, among fans in Western countries, one of the most well-known creators of queer comics, or "manga," and his recent manga series, "My Brother's Husband" – published in one volume in the U.S. by Pantheon Books – is the story of a single Japanese father name Yaichi, his young daughter, and Mike, who is Canadian and is the widowed husband of Yaichi's late twin brother Ryoji. The story is groundbreaking for Japan because it deals with subtle homophobia, familial estrangement, and ideas about marriage to foreigners. And now it's going to be a live-action limited TV series. Set to air in March 2018, it stars Japanese actor Ryuta Sato as Yaichi and 6-foot-6 Estonian sumo wrestler Baruto Kaito as Mike (this fits: Gengoroh Tagame specializes in manga about very large and bearish gay men). Given Tagame's current popularity in English-speaking countries, and the heartwarming qualities of the source material, it's a safe bet that this series finds a home on specialty streaming or home video not long after.

Romeo San Vicente is suddenly a fan of Estonian sumo wrestlers

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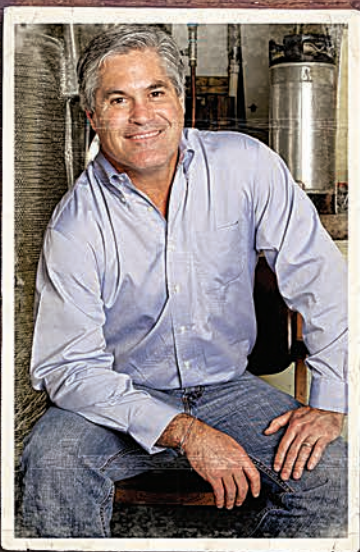
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