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## Barney Frank Comes to Michigan In Support of Dana Nessel

Energetic, Impressive Candidate  
Turnout at LGBTQ Democratic Caucus



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BTL Endorsements  
as of Aug. 29

## BTL Endorses Pro-Equality Candidates

Between The Lines endorses the following statewide candidates and ballot issues that will appear on the ballot Nov. 6. We encourage our readers to support these equality candidates with your volunteer time and donations.

Watch upcoming issues of BTL for in-depth interviews and analysis of the candidates and issues, and be sure to check out [www.MiVoterGuide.com](http://www.MiVoterGuide.com) for a complete list of candidates and ballot initiatives as we update it throughout the election season.

Governor and Lieutenant Governor  
of Michigan

Gretchen Whitmer and Garlin Gilchrist II

U.S. Senator  
Debbie Stabenow

Michigan Attorney General  
Dana Nessel

Michigan Secretary of State  
Jocelyn Benson

Michigan Supreme Court Justices  
(2 positions)  
Sam Bagenstos  
Megan Cavanaugh

Ballot Initiatives  
Voters Not Politicians (gerrymandering  
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Vote YES

Promote The Vote (make voting more  
accessible)

Vote YES

The 2018 BTL Progressive Voters' Guide will be soon be available online and in print, with a comprehensive list of all the candidates and ballot initiatives, complete with endorsements from Between The Lines and our progressive partners that focus on LGBTQ rights, environmental issues, women's health and labor. We will be updating this Guide from now right up to the election, so be sure to check it out at [www.MiVoterGuide.com](http://www.MiVoterGuide.com) for your personalized ballot!

# Energetic, Impressive Candidate Turnout at LGBTQ Democratic Caucus

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

On Saturday, Aug. 25, thousands gathered at East Lansing's Kellogg Hotel & Conference and Breslin Centers to vote at the Michigan Democratic Party's Nominating Convention. Before casting their ballots, however, many delegates attended caucuses throughout the day to get candidates' thoughts on a variety of important issues. At the LGBT and Allies Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party, appearances were made by a variety of notable candidates like gubernatorial candidate Gretchen Whitmer and U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow. First to speak was openly lesbian attorney general hopeful Dana Nessel, who vowed to make Michigan an LGBTQ-friendly state by amending the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, stopping state-funded adoption agencies from discriminating against LGBTQ couples and more.

"Next, I open a hate crimes division in the office of Michigan Attorney General to make certain that LGBTQ people are protected everywhere in this state. And how 'bout I do everything I can to expand the definition of gender in the Ethnic Intimidation Act to also include sexual orientation and gender identity, so that we can charge people who can commit hate crimes against the LGBTQ population with ethnic intimidation?" Nessel said, adding that she would use her office to be firm on anti-bullying policy. "And last, but certainly not least, I will absolutely do everything in my power as Michigan Attorney General to fight as vigorously (and) as tenaciously as possible against any efforts to discriminate against the LGBTQ community by the Trump administration."

Soon after Nessel's address, Sen. Stabenow made her appearance at the caucus, emphasizing the importance of fighting against the appointment of U.S. Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh. She said that if he were to gain a seat, it would be a hugely negative, long-term consequence of the 2016 election.

"This is not someone that should be on the United States Supreme Court and we are in a situation now where if we can't muster and be loud — if you know folks in Maine, if you know folks in Alaska that can approach their Senators we need them to be as loud as possible — about what is at stake. I just want you to know that I know what is at stake on every front, and we have to reach out to everyone," Stabenow said. "Elections have consequences, and we're living through (the) horror of the consequences of 2016 and we've got to turn that around."

However, Stabenow also mentioned that the candidates for the 2018 were looking especially strong. She said she felt energetic about this



U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow and State Rep. Jeremy Moss address the LGBTQ Caucus at the Democratic Nominating Convention Aug. 25. If elected, Moss would be the first openly gay person to serve in the State Senate. BTL photos: Todd Heywood.

year's nominees.

"I'm so excited about the ticket top to bottom. We have wonderful people everywhere and I'm so excited about the commitment and energy to getting this thing done in the right way," she said. "I am laser focused and understand what is at stake, not after the election but right now in the United States Senate."

That point was echoed by openly gay Michigan State Senate candidate Jeremy

Moss, who lauded Michiganders for turning out at the polls in record numbers this year. His speech encouraged supportive voters to increase turnout even further by reaching out to undecided members of the community.

"This State Senate seat that I'm running, four years ago, it was a contested primary; 29,000 voters in my district participated. Just a few weeks ago, in this primary, in this seat, 51,000 people voted. (The) highest turnout of

# Game On in Gov. Race

## Whitmer, Gilchrist Ready to Fight for Election

BY TODD HEYWOOD

**T**hey may be playing different card games, but gubernatorial candidate Gretchen Whitmer and her running mate Garlin Gilchrist II are playing the highest stakes of their lives. That's because they're the Democrats at the top of this fall's general election ticket.

Whitmer rose through the ranks with service in the state house and the state senate, where she served as the minority leader, and won the Democratic primary in August. She beat out Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, the former director of the Detroit Health Department, and millionaire Shri Thanedar for the nomination.

Last week, she introduced Gilchrist to her potential constituents. Gilchrist is a progressive firebrand who grew up in Detroit, where the 35-year-old recently returned with his family after serving the Obama campaign as a technology leader as well as working for the political organization Move-On.org. He served in Detroit City Hall for a time and aided the city with its social media outreach before jumping into the race for Detroit City Clerk. He lost that position to incumbent clerk Janice Winfrey after a last-minute surge in absentee balloting. Though he lost, Gilchrist ran a campaign that was focused on transparency and ethics related to administering elections. That's something Whitmer said she felt is important.

"There's no question in my mind that I really wanted a running mate that was going to add something to this ticket," Whitmer said in an interview on WILS 1320's Capital City Recap last week. "Garlin has a phenomenal background in technology and ethics and organizing. He is a Michigander, like me, who loves his state."

Additionally, she said that she appreciated his hardworking and tenacious qualities.

"I wanted someone who's got my back, someone who works as hard as I do, that has integrity and knows how to get things done. And Garlin Gilchrist fits all those requirements to the max," Whitmer said in a Detroit Free Press report. "He's the exact kind of partner I need to make this state government work for the people again."

Whitmer has a long history fighting for the LGBTQ community and women's rights. She's well known for accusing lawmakers of creating a "license to discriminate" in state anti-bullying legislation, and for taking to the

Senate floor to tell her story of being sexually assaulted to oppose requiring women to carry separate health insurance for sexual health care, including abortions.

And Gilchrist didn't hold back in addressing the needs of the LGBTQ community either. Not during Capital City Recap interview and not in his stump speech to the Democratic LGBT and Allies Caucus last Saturday in East Lansing.

He trumpeted his work with Move-On.org to push campaigns to bar discrimination in employment and housing in "several states" and to push "marriage equality" as evidence of his support for the LGBTQ community.

"Imagine if we had a unified government that was unified toward progress and not toward hatred, imagine what that can do for our community. It's that imagination that must motivate us to step up, to step out, to organize, to make phone calls, to send text messages, and to invite me to your events, I want to come," Gilchrist said in his LGBT caucus address. "Why is it that it is still legal to fire someone in the state of Michigan because of their gender identity or sexual orientation? That is 2018, and that is the civil rights struggle that we continue to fight and I am proud to have a courageous fighter and warrior to work alongside in Gretchen Whitmer."

Both said they would push hard to amend Michigan's nondiscrimination law, the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, to explicitly include the LGBTQ community. Such a move would bar discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Earlier this year, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission adopted a controversial interpretive statement in which investigation of discrimination claims regarding sexual orientation or gender identity were allowed. If discrimination was found to exist, it was treated as a violation of the law's prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex. The move was heavily opposed by Schuette in his role as Attorney General. He issued an opinion arguing that the Commission, which is a Constitutionally-created and independent body in the state, overstepped its authority. The Commission has not backed down and has announced it will continue to accept and investigate complaints based on sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination.

"Every person deserves (equal treatment),"



Gretchen Whitmer, Democratic candidate for Governor and her Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II, addressed the LGBTQ caucus on Aug. 25 in Lansing.

Gilchrist said. "It's part of what every person deserves. Our diversity is beautiful. I will be a ally fighting to make that happen in Michigan."

Whitmer noted that Michigan is lagging behind the country regarding acceptance.

"We've made huge strides in this country in the last five years. Here in Michigan we've slid backwards," she said.

She underscored that point when she brought up Gov. Rick Snyder's move to sign legislation to ban universities from offering same-sex partner benefits.

As a self-defined "fierce" card player, Whitmer and Gilchrist said they will be ready to face any new attacks from Schuette the GOP. When Gilchrist was first announced, a PAC that is aligned with Schuette called it the most liberal ticket ever.

any primary in the state of Michigan in a state senate seat," Moss said. "So, I can get you 22,000 more votes for November, but can each of you deliver 10,000 more votes in your community? Can each of you work to get 10,000 people in your neighborhoods, in your cities, in your counties, to vote? Because we will have a Democratic landslide that will give us a Democratic majority in the state senate in 2018."

With Moss appeared state Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr., who is running for his second term in the Michigan Senate who said that the most important thing in this election will be "putting Jeremy in the majority."

"I have never seen the amount of energy and excitement that I have seen this year. I've travelled all over the state, I've been to Kalamazoo, Monroe, the UP, down to Oakland County, from Bay City to Muskegon. Every place I go, Democrats are on the margin, Democrats are going to win," Hertel Jr. said. "You won't see us for 30 days. We'll put cots there. We'll undue eight years of Republican rule."

Whitmer also made sure to make an appearance at the caucus with her running mate Garlin Gilchrist at her side. She focused primarily on diversity while addressing the crowd.

"We've got a massive opportunity here. This race is not just about the governor's race, although I will tell you, I think that's the most important one," Whitmer said. "You know, the governor sets the agenda, writes the budget, makes the appointments from boards and commissions to a cabinet, and it is about darn time that we a cabinet that is reflective of this state, of the gender diversity of this state, of the racial diversity, of the religious diversity, the sexual orientation diversity. How we identify, none of that matters and yet, it matters a great deal."

Whitmer underscored her point when she brought up the lack of diversity in the decisions that started the internationally-known Flint water crisis.

"When the decision was made to switch the Flint water, there was not a person from Flint sitting around the table, there was not a person of color sitting around the table, there was not a woman sitting around the table," Whitmer said. "Diversity is a strength and real empowerment is what I'm interested in."

Gilchrist said that voters who are still undecided about whether to choose gubernatorial candidate Bill Schuette or Whitmer should examine the civil rights struggles that still exist in the state.

"This choice could not be more clear this November; you literally have bigotry in opposition with partnership ... you literally have someone who wants to take our rights away, versus people who are ready to work alongside and expand rights," Gilchrist said. "Why is it that it is still legal to fire someone in the state of Michigan because of their gender identity or sexual orientation? This is 2018, and that is the civil rights struggle that we continue to fight, and I am proud to have a courageous fighter and warrior to work alongside in Gretchen Whitmer."

# Barney Frank Comes to Michigan In Support of Dana Nessel

## Former Congressman Says ‘Every LGBT Person Should Become an Advocate to Get Other People to Vote for Candidates Who Support Us’

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

The most prominent gay politician in the U.S., Barney Frank, will be the special guest at an LGBTQ fundraiser for Dana Nessel, Democratic candidate for attorney general, at 7 p.m. on Sept. 6 at the home of Jason Misleh, 18695 Fairfield in Detroit.

“I am humbled and honored to have Rep. Barney Frank, an icon of Congress, support my candidacy for Michigan attorney general,” said Nessel, who like Frank, if elected, will make history in the state as Michigan’s first openly gay statewide office holder.

Frank, who came out as gay in 1987 as a member of Congress, served as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Massachusetts from 1981 to 2013.

“Also like Rep. Frank,” Nessel said. “I intend to use the office to support the LGBTQ community while simultaneously protecting the civil liberties of all our state’s residents, including members of our most vulnerable minority groups who so badly need a state actor committed to protecting them from discrimination.”

Nessel said she wants people to understand that equal protection is not a “zero-sum game.” “When one group of people gain more rights, others do not lose their rights. We are all Michiganders, we are all Americans, and everyone in our great state is entitled to equal protection under the law,” Nessel said. “Barney Frank has always understood this notion. I hope to follow his lead as the top law enforcement official of Michigan.”

To help Nessel achieve this goal, support from members of the community is needed, according to Michael Einheuser, one of the hosts and estate planning attorney at Einheuser Legal, P.C. in Bingham Farms.

“The general election is going to be a very, very hard-fought campaign. We know that there will be a great deal of negative advertising put against her and we know that there will be a great deal of outside money from some very conservative sources, and if there was one time that the LGBTQ community should put aside any internal disagreements, it should be around this campaign,” he said. “The idea is to see if we can get the LGBTQ community to close ranks and help fund Dana’s campaign ... and we’re grateful that Congressman Frank is coming by to help us out.”

Beyond being a role model as “America’s only left-handed, gay, Jewish congressman,” Frank’s legacy is tied to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which imposed financial reforms after the recession.



BTL spoke with Frank on Monday, Aug. 20 about why he is attending this fundraiser, what he thinks about the political environment and what members of the LGBTQ community can do in addition to voting in the next general election..

### Why should members of the community come out to support Dana Nessel?

Having out members of our community in public office is very important on two levels. Obviously, it’s also important to be supportive of straight people who have been supportive of us — we’re a minority and we need allies. But there is an element of being out that is important on two levels. First of all, while we’ve made a great deal of progress in diminishing prejudice, there still are people who have the prejudice. There are still young LGBT people who are intimidated by the prejudice. So for both cases, having people who are out, who are talented and able and intelligent, that’s very important. It helps to repudiate the prejudice and it also helps to inspire younger people that they shouldn’t allow the prejudice to intimidate them. Secondly, there are issues that are going to come up — look, when you’re in office, you can’t do everything you would like to do all the time. You have a limited amount of time, you have a limited amount of money at your disposal. You have a limited amount of political issues you can press in terms of where they are and it is important for us,



especially now, to have people who are LGBT themselves in the position to make that point because we now have in Donald Trump and the Supreme Court, unfortunately, probably — although I hope we can fight it — the most hostile attitude towards our rights in a long time.

### What do you mean?

He’s not going to undo, for example, marriage. I don’t think they want to, politically, but what they are going to do without rolling back specific rights is to increase the exceptions to those rights. Particularly, they’re going to be seeking to empower anybody who says they

*“When one group of people gain more rights, others do not lose their rights. We are all Michiganders, we are all Americans, and everyone in our great state is entitled to equal protection under the law. Barney Frank has always understood this notion. I hope to follow his lead as the top law enforcement official of Michigan.” – Dana Nessel*

don’t like us for religious reasons to be able to deny recognizing our rights and that’s a legal battle where the states can get involved and the states, for example, can enforce — the attorney general can reinforce state anti-discrimination laws. So, we’re in a major legal battle with Donald Trump, not just on issues across the board like the environment, but on LGBT rights and whether or not we’re going to have those rights fully or they’re going to be eroded.

### Is that what’s at risk with Brett Kavanaugh’s appointment?

Oh, absolutely. It’s totally at risk. It’s outrageous what they got away with and I am very disappointed in Justice Kennedy. On the specific issues of LGBT rights he’s been very good, but he quite deliberately timed his resignation and I have to say it makes me doubt the depth of his commitment to our being treated fairly because he clearly timed his resignation to make sure that Donald Trump would be able to appoint his replacement — making sure for instance that he does it before there might be a Democratic senate. So it was a great disappointment by Kennedy. There are now going to be five anti-LGBT votes. ...

### Does this political environment remind you of any other time - generally and with respect to LGBTQ rights?

No, because there has not been a previous point where we were in danger of losing our rights because, frankly, we didn’t have them. The history of LGBT rights in the last 50 years has been an improvement. This is the first time that we’ve had somebody threaten to go back. We had problems obviously with both Bushes. There was the danger that we wouldn’t go forward. Now, again, he’s not going to roll them back in general, but the danger is these religious exceptions.

### Aside from attending fundraising events like this and voting, what should LGBTQ people do now through 2020 to protest Trumpism?

# Poll: Tammy Baldwin in Dead Heat with GOP Opponent in Wis. Senate Race

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

A new poll from Marquette University shows Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) in a dead heat with her Republican challenger Leah Vukmir, showing a tightening race as Election Day approaches.

The poll from Marquette University Law School finds a plurality of 49 percent likely Wisconsin voters support Baldwin, but Vukmir is two points behind in the race at 47 percent.

Moreover, 3 percent of respondents in the poll said they were undecided, which would be enough to put Vukmir over the edge if they entirely side with her on Election Day.

The poll is made public shortly after the Wisconsin primary in which Vukmir, the GOP establishment candidate, came out on top in the Republican primary against the Steve Bannon-backed Democrat-turned-Republican Kevin Nicholson.

The Marquette University poll stands out among other polls in recent weeks that had Baldwin with a significant double-digit lead over Vukmir.

Among all registered voters in Wisconsin voters as opposed to likely voters, the polling



Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) and Wisconsin state Sen. Leah Vukmir (R-Milwaukee Co.) are in a dead heat, according to a new poll. (Washington Blade photo of Baldwin by Michael Key; photo of Vukmir public domain)

is more consistent with earlier numbers. Baldwin has a commanding lead of 51 percent compared to 43 percent for Vukmir.

The new polling could be reflective of the continued TV ads aired in Wisconsin against Baldwin funded by Koch brother-backed Super PACs, which see Baldwin as vulnerable and have spent millions in the race to unseat her.

The Marquette University poll also found incumbent Republican Gov. Scott Walker now in a 46-46 dead heat with Democratic candidate Tony Evers. Following the two is Libertarian candidate Phil Anderson with 6 percent of the vote and 2 percent who are undecided.

dangerous candidate for reelection. There's no question Pence would be worse than Trump.

## Pundits have said the Democrats are split - is the rift real or a creation of the pundits?

What rift? Actually, the Democrats are pretty united. ... Yes, the press is trying to make more of it about candidates on the left versus candidates more centrist and the answer is, as you would expect in a Democracy, people to some extent reflect their districts. There are some Democrats in districts that are overwhelmingly Democratic with a lot of people who are strongly on the left and they're to the left of Democrats from districts that are more swing districts — but it's not a serious issue in terms of hobbling us. In terms of opposing Trump, the Democrats have been very united.

The event is hosted by *Between The Lines* Publishers Susan Horowitz and Jan Stevenson. Along with Michael Einheuser, Jason Misleh, Michael Rowady, Todd Pleiness, Roland Leggett, Dan Vermeersch, Rick Bowers, Dan Treder, Matt Clayson and Kim Ross-Clayson. For more information about Nessel's campaign visit [dana2018.com](http://dana2018.com). To RSVP to the upcoming event, contact Michael Einheuser at [meinheuser@](mailto:meinheuser@)

## ► Barney Frank

Continued from p. 6

Get other people to vote. I think the thing to do is to say we've made great progress now, and our friends and our relatives in the fight against prejudice of the people close to us; we've made great progress. But I think what you need to do now if you're an LGBT person is to talk to everybody who says they love you, they're your friend, they value you, and say "You know what, if you love me, you can't vote for people who are going to treat me like crap." So every LGBT person should become an advocate to get other people to vote for candidates who support us. By the way, that's the most effective kind of political campaigning — person to person. Look, if you care about me then you're going to vote to protect my interests against these people who are trying to take them away.

## Some people fear potential president Pence more than Trump. What do you think?

They're right. Pence is personally much more bigoted than Trump probably because of the way he interprets religion. Trump's just opportunistic. I think he would be a more

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Paul Benson, D.O. is a Board Certified Family Medicine physician and Medical Director of the Be Well Medical Center.  
 Learn more about Dr. Benson: [doctorbewell.com](http://doctorbewell.com)





# Man Arraigned in Shooting of Trans Woman in Detroit

## Fair Michigan Successfully Argues to Add Charge of Ethnic Intimidation Based on Gender

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

The 29-year-old was Deonton Rogers, arraigned in 3rd Circuit Court in Detroit on August 15. Accused of pulling a gun on a trans woman in a gas station on the city's west side and shooting her while in a scuffle. Rogers is charged with discharging a firearm causing serious injury, felonious assault, being a felon in possession of a firearm, fourth-degree child abuse and ethnic intimidation based on gender and a felony firearms violation.

Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy issued the charge after consulting with the Fair Michigan Justice Program.

FMJP is a program that assists Michigan law enforcement officers and prosecutors in solving serious crimes against LGBT persons. This is the first gender bias hate crime in Michigan involving a transgender woman who was assaulted. Lesbian and gay persons have no hate crime protections in the state of Michigan.

"The Ethnic Intimidation Act – Michigan's hate-crime law – penalizes hate crimes committed because of a victim's sex," said Fair Michigan President Dana Nessel. "Judge [William] McMonico decided that a hate crime against a transgender person because she is transgender falls within the scope of the law. Fair Michigan instituted the Justice Project to provide the LGBT community with this kind of strong advocacy in the criminal justice system."

The incident dates back to July 23, when Rogers allegedly approached a trans woman in a Mobil gas station at the corner of Seven Mile and Greenfield Roads. After she identified herself as being transgender, it is said that Rogers pulled a gun on her and that in attempt to wrestle the gun from him, the trans women, whose identity has not been released to the public, was shot. The injury, while not life-threatening, did require surgery to treat.

"We just paid for her prescriptions last week," said Jey'nce Poindexter Mizrahi, transgender victim's advocate for Equality Michigan. "She's stable and recovering. She had surgery the other day."

One local trans activist is very happy with Judge McMonico's ruling.

"I think what Fair Michigan is doing is a good thing," said Michelle Fox-Phillips, executive director of the Gender-Identity Network Alliance. "Considering that here in state of Michigan gender identity and sexual orientation are not covered under hate crimes ... to use ethnic intimidation. Hey, whatever works."

# Adopting 'Check Your Blind Spots'

## Flagstar Bank Prioritizes Diversity in the Workplace

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

In an instant, a snap judgment can change everything; a negative one, even more so. In the case of Kiri Stewart, an openly transgender woman, an angry reaction could mean bodily harm. So, for her, hypervigilance is often a necessity. That's why when she went to Flagstar bank to apply for a mortgage, she steered herself for the worst.

"I got all of my information gathered, all of my reports and bank statements and everything, and I took it to Flagstar," Stewart said. "Well, of course all of that stuff is under my previous name. It's all the things I've accumulated over my life, which has only pretty recently changed. So, I was very nervous about going in there and having to apply for a mortgage and then, basically, being forced to come out during that process."

Stewart's assigned loan officer was Assistant Vice President of Sales Kim R. Kretowicz. Stewart said she felt a bit of relief when Kretowicz immediately referred to her as female, but began to hold her breath again when it came time for her to present her driver's license; her gender marker and previous name had not yet been updated. But Kretowicz "didn't miss a beat."

"He looked at it, made the realization in his mind what was happening and he typed it into his computer, and then he asked me how I would like to be referred to," Stewart said. "He said, 'So, I see that this says your legal name. Would you like to be referred to as Kiri?' I said yes, and for the rest of the time he just did it; correct pronouns, everything. There was no teaching moment, there was no adjustment period or whatever. He just dropped right into it like it was nothing, and it made me feel so good. It made me feel so normal [laughs], which is unusual sometimes for trans people."

Even though he temporarily had to use Stewart's previous name for the loan application, she is now the proud owner of a home with the correct documentation. According to Kretowicz, he just wanted Stewart to feel comfortable during the process, and was surprised when she became visibly emotional.

"Kiri definitely was attired as a woman with a handbag and makeup and knowing she was a woman, I said, 'How do I address you on the

loan application, because I have to enter male or female to run the credit report?' That's when Kiri really just broke down crying, and she just said, 'Thank you, thank you, for recognizing that I'm transgender in the midst of changing things,'" Kretowicz said. "I didn't think anything of it."



Photo courtesy of Kiri Stewart.

*"They gave me acceptance and helped me find a home, which I think are two of the greatest gifts a trans person can get."*

Kretowicz then brought in Alison Evanzo, a relationship banker at Flagstar, to explain some of the bank's other services. She, too, made Stewart feel at home.

"I really enjoyed Kiri and I just treated her as a human being, as I would want to be treated," Evanzo said. "Actually, for me, I'm thrilled that people have choices and an accepting society where people can evolve and become who they want to be."

Stewart went home relieved and felt compelled to share her story on social media. She made a Facebook post and it

gained so much traction that it even caught the attention of Flagstar's CEO Alessandro P. DiNello.

"I think the experience Kiri had at Flagstar is a real-life example of how everyone wins in an inclusive environment – employees, customers and the community. I'm not sure I can say that the outcome for Kiri would have been the same if Flagstar had not put D&I (diversity and inclusion) front and center as a company," DiNello wrote to BTL. "In this case, our customer belonged to the LGBTQ+ community, but she could just as easily been part of another group that some label as 'different.' Kiri is now busy moving into her new home, which means we have a satisfied customer. And how is this good for the community? It has a new homeowner."

Now that she's busy settling in to her home, Stewart said that she's looking forward to being a homeowner.

"When you start getting pieces of paper with your name on them, it feels amazing. And now, to have my own home, with the mortgage in my name is one of the best feelings in the world," Stewart said. "I've had some bad experiences being trans with service professionals, too, but my experience of being seen, respected and I think genuinely cared for by Alison and Kim at Flagstar is one that I will never forget. They gave me acceptance and helped me find a home, which I think are two of the greatest gifts a trans person can get."

DiNello said that Flagstar will continue to work to maintain its inclusive environment to ensure that all future interactions with the LGBTQ community and other minority groups go just as smoothly. Just last Wednesday, Aug. 29, the company kicked off its portion of the "Check Your Blind Spots" tour. It's an event that is part of a national coalition called CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion in which hundreds of executives seek to create an environment where acceptance is a main focus of company culture.

"We are constantly looking for opportunities to reinforce Diversity & Inclusion as a cornerstone of our culture," said DiNello. "This program is just another step toward cultivating a workplace that supports an open dialogue on complex, and sometimes difficult, conversations about diversity and inclusion."

To learn more about Flagstar Bank's diversity and inclusion efforts visit [flagstar.com/diversity](http://flagstar.com/diversity).



# 16 States Urge Supreme Court to Rule Workers Can be Fired for Being Trans

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

A coalition of 16 states led by Nebraska Attorney General Douglas Peterson is urging the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse a federal appeals court decision in favor of a fired transgender funeral home worker and determine workers can be terminated for being transgender.

The states filed a friend-of-the-court brief before the Supreme Court last week in response to a petition urging justices to take up and reverse the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals' ruling in *Harris Funeral Homes v. EEOC*, which held anti-trans discrimination is unlawful under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bars sex discrimination.

Alliance Defending Freedom, an anti-LGBT legal firm, filed the underlying petition seeking Supreme Court review and reversal of the Sixth Circuit decision.

Although the Supreme Court is in recess for the summer and has yet to decide whether to take up the case, the states argue anti-transgender discrimination remains lawful despite the Sixth Circuit ruling on a federal basis.

"Unless and until Congress affirmatively acts, our Constitution leaves to the States the authority to determine which protections, or not, should flow to individuals based on gender identity," the brief says. "The Sixth Circuit ignored this fact and essentially rewrote federal law, engaging in policy experimentation."

The brief points to writings from the late U.S. Associate Justice Antonin Scalia to argue Congress didn't intend to cover transgender people under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bars sex discrimination in the workplace.

"The term 'gender identity' does not appear in the text of Title VII or in the regulations accompanying Title VII," the brief says. "In fact, 'gender identity' is a wholly different concept from 'sex,' and not a subset or reasonable interpretation of the term 'sex' in Title VII. The meaning of the terms 'sex,' on the one hand, and 'gender identity,' on the other, both now and at the time Congress enacted Title VII, forecloses alternate constructions."

The filing stands in contrast to mountains of case law that determined anti-trans discrimination amounts to sex discrimination is therefore unlawful under Title VII. In fact, many of those court rulings are based on the Supreme Court decision written in 1998 by Scalia in *Oncale v. Sundower Offshore Services*, which determined courts should construe protections under Title VII broadly, even in cases of same-sex harassment.

The brief was filed in case involving Aimee Stephens, a transgender worker who was



Nebraska Attorney General Doug Peterson is leading 16 states in urging the Supreme Court to rule workers can be fired for being trans. (Photo public domain)

terminated from her position at Harris Funeral Home in Michigan after she announced she would transition on the job. The owners objected to her continued employment, citing religious concerns.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission chose to represent Stephens based on its findings in the 2012 case of *Macy v. Holder*, although the American Civil Liberties Union later took up representation of Stephens.

Although the trial court ruled in favor of the funeral home and found the Religious Freedom Restoration Act permitted Stephens' termination, the Sixth Circuit reversed that and agreed her termination was illegal under Title VII.

Joining Peterson in signing the brief are attorneys general from Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Wyoming as well as the governors of Kentucky, Maine and Mississippi.

Harper Jean Tobin, director of policy for the National Center for Transgender Equality, condemned the brief in a statement, saying the signers of the filing "are acting in a complete state of ignorance."

"This brief is a political attack on the humanity of transgender people," Tobin said. "It ignores decades of law and the realities faced by transgender workers across this country. Ms. Stephens' case is the textbook definition of sex discrimination, and court after court has already shown this to be true. All Americans deserve a fair shot at their jobs, and the desperation of officials from these 16 states to legalize discrimination is despicable."

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

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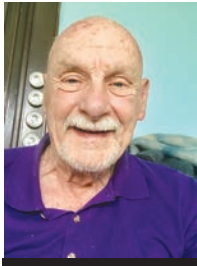
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## Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

### A Chance Encounter with Dr. Heath

As a gay teenager I hung out at the Hub Grill in downtown Detroit, a greasy spoon of a place, located on the corner of Farmer and Bates Streets. It was in convenient walking distance of four quite popular gay bars, City Hall and the 1st Precinct Police Station.

Just out of high school I was eager to find work, and a gay friend named George “Butchy Trapezoid” Trapper told me that Harper Hospital, where he worked, was hiring high school grads to be trained as OR Techs – operating room technicians.

That sounded like a great lead for many reasons, one of which was that I was born at Harper Hospital (at the time, I hadn’t the slightest idea that my OR training would lead to what might well be the first coincidence of its kind).

**Harper Hospital (at the time, I hadn’t the slightest idea that my OR training would lead to what might well be the first coincidence of its kind).**

I got my training started immediately and it lasted two months. I learned how to wash my hands with antiseptic, gown without breaking sterile scrub, how to identify and pass surgical instruments and chromic sutures, how to keep detailed records, use the autoclave, do sponge counts and, once, deal with a dying patient.

OR Techs all wore green scrub uniforms like physician interns, surgeons and medical students on learning assignments if, a patient called me doc or doctor I did little to dissuade them from the vicarious honor so accorded me. Suffice it that OR Techs wore no telltale stethoscope).

In time, I passed instruments for several caesarian section births, witnessed a four-holed drilled craineotomy, circulated during dozens of tonsillectomies and attended while a patient died on the operating table. I and another OR tech ID tagged his right-hand thumb and toe, and took his body three flights down for temporary freezer storage. Our first experience with death, we sought to dispel the unexpected shock by touches of tension-easing humor.

The shortage of operating nurses during World War II – an understandable critical need – led at the time to the training of lay persons to fill the open positions. In the late ‘50s, there was also an extensive surgical nurse need in metropolitan hospitals, and lay persons – high school grads, conscientious objectors to avoiding war service – were trained.

As a Harper Hospital OR Tech I made mental notes about who might be gay or lesbian. I suspected the rather butch nurse

See **Headline**, continued on p. 11



DENNIS JACOBS

## Viewpoint

### The First in Michigan: Part 2

*Editor’s Note: Dr. Dennis Jacobs and his partner were among the first openly gay couples to adopt a child in Michigan. This editorial piece is a continuation of Jacobs’ original submission to BTL which detailed the first part of his story and ran in our July 26 issue. To read the first part of this story go online to [pridesource.com](http://pridesource.com).*

My partner and I adopted two special needs children in 1994. Raising two little boys as gay men was a challenge, but raising two little boys with disabilities in a homophobic environment was even harder. Both boys, each in their own way, had serious behavioral problems.

Our 2-year-old refused to speak, preferring to point and

grunt, while his 4-year-old brother was very verbal – and a real mischief maker. We enrolled both boys in a Montessori school, and I would get a call almost daily that our older son had called somebody a name or hit someone. Thank God for Miss Mary, the school’s director who went way above the call of duty to support our family.

Yet, troubling as our start was, it’s amazing what a good haircut will do, some Gap Kids clothes and a healthy diet. What helped the situation was that we were living in our dream home called Thistle Brook Farms. It sat far back from the road and overlooked an ever-changing marsh. We had horses, goats, chickens and dogs, along with a terrific organic vegetable garden. As the boys began to settle in to their new life, they

See **The First**, continued on next page

## Evangelical White House Dinner Guests

Food poisoning sucks, y'all. I just vomited with such force that I'm fairly certain some major internal organs have left my body along with my soul. And, to top it off, I just got a spam text from some "horny single woman" telling me she's all alone tonight and wants to suck my you-know-what. Mind you, I'm sitting here dehydrated, saltine crumbs all over my shirt, but hey, nice to know I've still got it. If I had the strength I'd get up off the couch to show these texts to my wife.

Alas, she'll have to read about my new girlfriend in this column along with the rest of you. So what to do on a night like tonight? Well, I'm following Jeremy Hooper on Twitter (@goodasyou) as he essentially live tweets the awful evangelical jamboree happening at the White House right now. While I was clutching the toilet bowl and praying for Jesus to take me, Trump and his family, including LGBTQ "allies" Ivanka and Jared, were rubbing elbows with some of the most hateful anti-LGBTQ figures alive.

This is, of course, not a surprise. Trump needs these folks in his corner. A Republican really can't win without the evangelical vote these days. It's also not a surprise that these so-called Christians are falling all over themselves to worship Trump as their God. Mind you, it seems like a contradiction for folks who claim to be culture war warriors to fawn over a man who literally embodies the opposite of all the things they claim to hold dear. But if you've been studying this crowd as long as I have, well, it's fitting.

As Hooper puts it, "If you're surprised that political evangelicals would show up to this White House despite the many reasons to not, you haven't been paying attention for four decades. Rank hypocrisy in service of their desired outcome is, was, and always will be their m.o."

True story.

I'd like to point out the often trotted out complaint about Democrats, that they need to stand for something, not just against Trump. Never mind that this complaint completely ignores the fact that Dems actually have a whole slew of actual policy proposals rooted in the principal that we should give a shit about

fellow human beings.

This complaint does, however, fit radical evangelicals perfectly and helps explain their love of Trump. As Hooper points out, we've watched for the past 40 years as evangelicals work against LGBTQ people, women, people of color (shout-out to Jeff Sessions). They have used their power and influence to diminish all who dared demand equality. The fight for marriage equality is the most recent high-profile example. It's a fight that a lot of people thought we'd "won" given the 2015 Supreme Court ruling and all. And yet here we are, an anti-LGBTQ judge nominated and ready to tip the court against equality. Just three years later, and we could see marriage equality evaporate. And that is terrifying. And so wrong.

*“As Hooper puts it, 'If you're surprised that political evangelicals would show up to this White House despite the many reasons to not, you haven't been paying attention for four decades. Rank hypocrisy in service of their desired outcome is, was, and always will be their m.o.'”*

As Hooper tweets, "I realize some might not understand why I and likeminded activists focus so much on the marriage stuff when there is SO MUCH MORE. What you must realize is we paused our lives for over a decade to fight a 'culture war' that they waged against us on this sole subject"

Marriage equality was, and is, a BFD. Who sits on our courts is a BFD. Which is why evangelicals have no problem looking the other way when Trump breaks any and all commandments. Now if you'll excuse me, I have some saltines to regurgitate. Oh, and I also hope everyone at the evangelical dinner gets sick AF.

### ► The First

Continued from p. 10

could take advantage of the exploration-worthy 17 acres on which our farm sat. And once the boys felt safe, they quickly adapted to their new life. It was truly magical. To this day, the boys talk about the time they spent on the farm. Unfortunately, as perfect as our time was, it wasn't permanent.

Both boys ended up staying in Montessori for as long as they could, and when it was time to graduate we had to make a decision: should we try to send them to public school or find a private school? In the end, we chose the public school option. We figured that because my partner was an attorney and I was a psychologist, it would be easy for us to deal with any problems if they arose. Boy, were we wrong.

Our older son in particular was harassed from the beginning. Not only was he biracial and darker than most of the kids who attended his school, but he also had two gay dads. One time, some kid stood up in the back of the bus and yelled at the top of his lungs, "Your dads are fags!" Another time, he came home in tears saying that all the kids on the playground were calling each other fags.

I had had just about enough, and called the middle school principal. When I described to her what was going on, her response to me was,

**Our older son in particular was harassed from the beginning. Not only was he biracial and darker than most of the kids who attended his school, but he also had two gay dads.**

"Well, that's just what fifth graders do." I simply asked her, 'What would happen if they were calling each other the N-word?' She almost dropped the phone. It was at that point that I knew my partner and I were fighting an uphill battle; one we weren't going to win.

The final straw was at the school's Christmas pageant. Both boys were cast in the play, and when we drove over to see the show we arrived a little late. We were forced to stand against the gym wall, and it became increasingly uncomfortable as one teacher after another poked her head around the curtain to get a look at us as if we were aliens from another planet. We learned later that we were the first and only gay parents to ever enroll their children in this school.

We decided to sell the farm.

*Dr. Jacobs is a retired clinical psychologist and the former CEO of a large behavioral health organization.*

physician admitted to standing on the truant sponge. Was it an accident or an OR prank? Whatever! Hemostats were passed. Chromic O sutures tied. The wound sealed with relief by one and all at the operating table (Hey! Don't look at me, Mary!).

And! What may well be an item for the Guinness Book of World Records. I had the privilege of scrubbing with the doctor who brought me into the world, Dr. Leonard Heath (his name was on my birth certificate, "Oh, my God! You're right. That's my signature. Lucky guy!").

Whether or not I was his first gay baby birth is not known. It was, however, I'm sure a memorable experience for me and, presumably – R.I.P. – Dr. Heath.

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

### ► Parting Glances

Continued from p. 10

responsible for keeping surgical tools sharp, honed and sterile was a lesbian.

We techs were also warned about the head of anesthesia. Not to accept rides on his summer yacht. There were at the time 13 operating rooms at Harper, numbered one through 14. There was no number 13.

Once I attended my third surgical go-around the sight of blood no longer bothered me. I also found out that surgery often was subject to participant talk about sports, touches of humor, and tension-dispelling banter among the interns, residents, and surgical chiefs.

Each surgery ended with what was called a "sponge count." No surgical opening could be sewn shut until the blood-absorbing sponges were accounted for. None left in the patient.

Alas, one surgery a sponge was missing. We recounted and recounted. Finally, a resident

## Priest Urges Vatican Family Conference to Welcome Gays

BY NICOLE WINFIELD AND LEO ENRIGHT

DUBLIN (AP) – One of the Catholic Church's leading advocates for gays told a Vatican-sponsored conference Thursday that LGBT Catholics deserve to be loved, listened to and welcomed by the church and not ostracized and condemned.

The Rev. James Martin received a standing ovation after his presentation on welcoming LGBT Catholics at the church's World Meeting of Families, which Pope Francis will be closing out this weekend.

Martin told the audience that LGBT Catholics "have often been treated like lepers by the church" despite Christ's example of welcoming and loving all those on the margins of society.

"By not welcoming, by excluding LGBT Catholics, the church is falling short of its call to being God's family," Martin said. He specifically urged Catholics to not focus on gays and their sexual morality while giving the sex lives and marital status of straight Catholics a pass.

That Martin was even invited to speak in Dublin was significant given he has had talks canceled in the U.S. because of pressure from conservative groups who oppose his ministry and advocacy.

In recent weeks, a petition was launched by conservatives demanding Dublin organizers cancel his speech. The calls only increased following revelations of sexual misconduct by a disgraced U.S. cardinal involving seminarians.

Martin didn't refer to the new scandals and took no questions, sticking instead to what Catholics can do in their own parishes to make sure gays and their families feel welcomed and loved. He urged them to remember gays are Catholic, that they don't choose their orientation and have gifts to offer the church.

Catholic teaching calls for gays to be treated with dignity and respect, but considers homosexual acts "intrinsically disordered."

"Many if not most LGBT Catholics have been deeply wounded by our church," Martin said. "Apologize to them."

He stressed that he was speaking to church ministers, especially. "You can apologize. It doesn't solve everything, but it's a start."

# Irish Prime Minister Raises LGBTI Issues During Papal Visit

BY MICHAEL LAVERS

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar raised LGBTI-specific issues during Pope Francis' two-day visit to the country. Varadkar, who is openly gay, on Saturday in a speech in front of Francis at Dublin Castle pointed out same-sex couples can legally marry in Ireland. Varadkar also noted Irish voters in May voted overwhelmingly to legalize abortion in the country.

Divorce became legal in Ireland in 1996.

"The Ireland of the 21st century is a very different place today than it was in the past," said Varadkar. "Ireland is increasingly diverse."

"One in six of us were not born here, and there are more and more people who adhere to other faiths, or who are comfortable in declaring that they subscribe to no organized religion," he added. "We have voted in our Parliament and by referendum to modernize our laws – understanding that marriages do not always work, that women should make their own decisions, and that families come in many forms including those headed by a grandparent, lone parent or same-sex parents or parents who are divorced."

Consensual same-sex sexual relations were criminalized when Pope John Paul II visited Ireland in 1979.

Varadkar told an Irish television last week that he planned to tell Francis LGBTI people, women and those who are divorced "feel excluded from the church." The Washington Blade has reached out to Varadkar's office for comment.

## Clergy sex abuse overshadows papal visit

Francis on Saturday met with Irish President Michael D. Higgins and visited Dublin's St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral. Francis on Sunday visited a Catholic shrine in western Ireland and celebrated Mass at Dublin's Phoenix Park that marked the end of the World Meeting of Families 2018 before he returned to Rome.

Francis traveled to Ireland less than two weeks after a Pennsylvania grand jury released a report that says Cardinal Donald Wuerl of the Archdiocese of Washington and other church officials covered up clergy sex abuse of children for decades.

Wuerl, who was the bishop of Pittsburgh from 1988-2006, was scheduled to attend the World Meeting of Families in Ireland, but he cancelled his trip after the grand jury released its report. The National Catholic Register and other Catholic media outlets on Saturday published a letter from Archbishop Carlo



Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar with Pope Francis in Dublin on Aug. 25, 2018. (Photo courtesy of Twitter)

## Consensual same-sex sexual relations were criminalized when Pope John Paul II visited Ireland in 1979.

Maria Viganò, a former Vatican ambassador to the U.S., in which he said Francis knew about the sex abuse allegations against then-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the former archbishop of Washington.

Viganò in his letter that urges Francis to resign said the pontiff rescinded the sanctions against McCarrick that Pope Benedict XVI had previously imposed against him.

McCarrick in June resigned from the College of Cardinals. The disgraced former archbishop of Washington has been ordered to a "life of prayer and penance" before the church tries him on the allegations.

Viganò in his letter states "the seriousness of homosexual behavior must be denounced" and "homosexual networks present in the church must be eradicated," even though there are no links between pedophilia and homosexuality.

Viganò in 2015 invited Kim Davis, the Kentucky county clerk who went to jail for refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, to meet with Francis at his D.C. home during his trip to the U.S.

Francis had a private meeting with Yayo Grassi, a former student, and his longtime partner, while he was in D.C. The Vatican downplayed the pontiff's meeting with Davis.

Francis meets with clergy sex abuse survivors

The Vatican Press Office said Francis on Saturday met with eight people "who have suffered abuse of power, of conscience and sexual abuse."

The press release also notes Francis acknowledged the "grave scandal caused in Ireland by the abuse of young people by members of the church." The Vatican Press Office and media reports also indicate Francis expressed shame at the church's response to the sex abuse scandal in the country and around the world.

Francis in May met with Juan Carlos Cruz, a gay man from Chile who is among the hundreds of people who were sexually abused by a priest in the country's capital of Santiago, at the Vatican. All of Chile's Catholic bishops submitted their resignations the same month amid lingering outrage over the clergy sex abuse scandal that has rocked the South American country.

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



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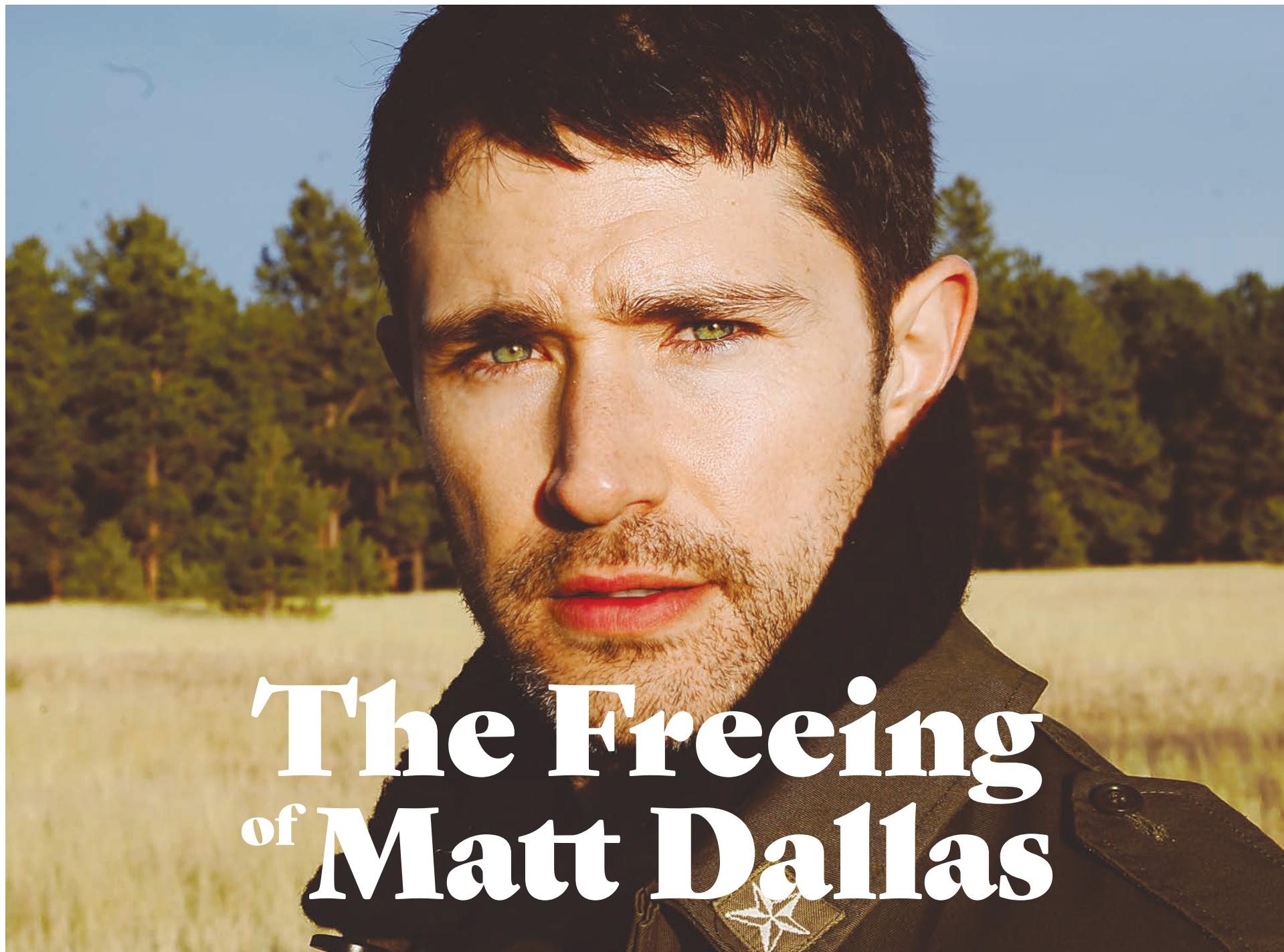


Photo: Gravitas Ventures

# The Freeing of Matt Dallas

'Kyle XY' Alum Talks New Film, Living in the Hollywood Closet and Leaving L.A. to Focus on Fatherhood

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

**M**att Dallas can laugh now, but his former life as a gay man living as a straight man wasn't a joke.

Dallas was told to stay in the closet after moving to L.A. to pursue acting at 18, particularly while portraying the boyishly cute titular character with the non-existent navel on ABC Family's 2006-launched teen sci-fi drama "Kyle XY." Other roles followed: he starred alongside Hilary Duff in ABC Family's 2010 TV film "Beauty & the Briefcase," and also played Katy Perry's war-vet boyfriend in her 2009 "Thinking of You" music video and, that same year, Rebecca Romijn's love interest, Chad, on ABC's supernatural dramedy "Eastwick."

And then in 2013, Hollywood closet be damned, Dallas came out publicly, matter-of-factly announcing his engagement to now-husband Blue Hamilton. In 2015, they adopted their son, Crow.

Dallas' latest project, "Along Came the Devil," is a fresh horror-genre venture for the 35-year-old actor, who starred in a glut of slasher films at the onset of his career, including 2005's "Camp Slaughter" and 2008's "Babysitter Wanted." In this demonic endeavor he plays a pastor, the kind you know only exists in the movies (if only they were this hot in real life).

Here, Dallas opens up about denying being gay on "The Howard Stern Show" ("the worst day of my life"), how coming out freed him and moving to Colorado to put family first.

**What about horror appeals to you?**

Honestly, I had done horror films early in my career and felt like I maxed out on doing horror films, but when I read this screenplay I was excited about it because it wasn't necessarily a slasher film. It wasn't just straight-up horror; it was such a throwback to the exorcism films of the '60s and '70s, so I was excited to get to do something that played in a different world. And it played with demons, and I loved the whole spiritual aspect of it, and to play a pastor was something so different for me, so it was an exciting way to come back to the genre.

**What are you looking for in projects at this point in your career?**

I recently moved to Colorado, and my life has taken such a lifestyle shift. But it's getting to play roles that I haven't gotten to necessarily play in the past, whether it be a pastor or a villain or just things that are a part of myself that I haven't gotten to explore. That, for me, is the biggest attraction to a project now.

**How is life in Colorado?**

Life is very different in Colorado.

**Is this what happens when you become a father? You move to Colorado?**

Honestly, that was a big part of it. I was going back and forth between L.A. and Phoenix – I grew up in Phoenix; my family's there – and there was a part of me that felt like I

wasn't ready to necessarily totally walk away from L.A. So, we sold our house in Phoenix and went back to L.A. for a few months and we were there for seven months. That seven months was exactly what I needed to let my time in Los Angeles be what it was and move onto the next chapter in my life.

And it was a lot about being a father. Having a child in L.A., life was so much more difficult; that city is really just so consumed by industry that I wanted to shift my priorities so that it was family first, and let work be something that I love and enjoy, but not something that consumes my life. It was a lot easier to do outside of Los Angeles, and yeah, my husband grew up in Colorado and it was always his dream to live in the Rocky Mountains. And I love the mountains. It just seemed like a natural next step for us.

**Earlier this year you did a throuple episode of your vlog "Matt and Blue" with model-director Max Emerson. A lot of strong opinions were shared on the internet about you two exploring being a throuple in that video. Is that something you've seriously considered?**

We actually did a whole series where we're like, "We're gonna just have fun and script some things." And it was supposed to be for fun, but it's crazy how many people really took it seriously. But no, being in a throuple is nothing we'd ever really considered. We just wanted to make something that is very true in the gay community and something that is very relevant, and have fun with it.

**Do you think it's easier now for actors to be out from the get-go?**

One-hundred percent. I should say, I don't know. It's definitely a different time. When we were shooting "Kyle XY," I still had agents at the time and people telling me that I had to hide being gay and had to work with a speech coach and go on carpets with a girl on my arm. We were just in a very different point in society than we are now. I was in my early 20s, I had finally just had my first taste of real success, and felt like I could accomplish what I had come to L.A. to do but like it was all being taken away from me. I was so afraid of that happening, because I had so many people in my head telling me how to act and how to behave.

I was afraid to come out. Sure, people still are today. But I do think as a society and an industry we have come so far. Now, we celebrate individuality. Especially in the industry, we still have a ways to go. We still don't see openly gay actors play leading men roles. You have "Love, Simon," but we don't have an openly gay actor playing a superhero yet or playing a "Mission: Impossible" character.

**In 2006, you appeared on "The Howard Stern Show" and denied claims Perez Hilton had made**

**that you were gay. Have you followed up with Howard on this?**

(Laughs) No. That was the last time I spoke to him. Dude, that was just the worst day of my life. I woke up – it was 3 a.m. Los Angeles time – to do this interview. I was so unprepared to go on "Howard Stern," and I should've known better. My publicist told me at the time – promised me, swore up and down – that he would not bring up the whole gay thing. It wasn't even a minute or two, and the whole interview became about it.

**Fifteen minutes of you being asked how many women you'd slept with.**

It was brutal. I remember sweating and being so nervous the whole interview because I was just not prepared to handle that. I was so naive, everything. And I literally hung up from that and went and crawled in bed under the blanket and would not get up that entire day. I just should not have taken that interview to begin with, but I was like, "Howard Stern! My dad loves Howard Stern! I'm gonna do his show!" And I was most embarrassed for my dad to hear it, more than anybody else. I was just like, "Ugh, my dad listening to me go on for 15 minutes about all the girls I slept with in high school." (Laughs) I can laugh about it now.

**Do you think LGBTQ actors are still forced to stay in the closet by Hollywood handlers?**

Yeah, I'm sure, but we're in a different place now. As a society, we're more used to talking about it. So, these actors have seen other people go through this already; there are a lot more openly gay actors and more options of how to handle it now than there was then, when it was so swept under the rug. There was no blueprint.

**How did coming out change your career?**

It freed me. And it allowed me to just give less a fuck. It was very freeing as an artist, as an actor and just as a human being, and it changed a lot in that way. It also changed in that, now, most of the roles I get sent are for gay roles. Unless my team is actively going after another role that's not gay, the ones that come to me are mostly all gay roles.

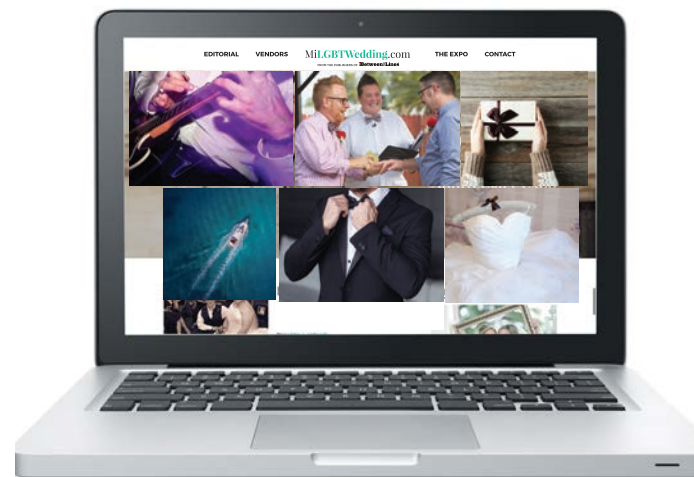
**How do you feel about that?**

It doesn't bother me. I'm glad there are a lot more gay roles than there used to be. I do think I should be — in the same way that every straight actor is considered for every gay role, gay actors should be considered just as much for straight roles. We're on the path to that.

*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](http://www.chris-azzopardi.com) and on Twitter (@chrisazzopardi).*

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# Five15 Offers Sip, Swish & Stroke Painting Classes

BY BTL STAFF

Known for its popular Drag Queen Bingo events, Royal Oak's Five15 Media, Mojo, & More store is now offering a more creative outlet: Sip, Swish, & Stroke. Attendees are invited to bring an open mind as an instructor walks them through how to paint a picture on a canvas.

The cost of the event is \$20 per person and must be purchased online in advance of the event. Five15 is offering two September Sip, Swish, & Stroke events, one on Wednesday, Sept. 12 at 6:30 p.m. and another on Sunday, Sept. 16 at 2 p.m. In addition to its new painting classes, Five15 regularly hosts community events.

"Since its inception, Five15 has hosted numerous complimentary events for the creative class including cabaret, author signings, DVD releases, poetry readings, scrip readings and art shows," writes its website.

*Five15 is located at 600 Washington Ave., Royal Oak. More information about the store can be found online at [five15.net](http://five15.net).*



# Royal Oak Barktoberfest Starts Sept. 15

BY BTL STAFF

The Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce invites attendees to discover Barktoberfest, a fall festival for dogs and dog owners. Centered around locally-brewed craft beer and music, this dog-friendly event is designed to bring together the community.



"Barktoberfest encourages you to leash up your pooch pal and come out to enjoy a locally brewed beer, food and live music while you browse vendor booths with everything from pet-related products to locally made crafts to bottlecap creations and cool wearables for craft beer collectors," write event organizers. "Dogs can compete in the Howl-a-ween Costume Contest, a weiner dog race and more."

Guests are encouraged to bring their dogs, but human friends are welcome, too. There is a \$5 entry fee, but children 10 and under are free. IDs are required. Live entertainment will also be included in the event. The event will be held at Royal Oak's Memorial Park, located at 13 Mile Road and Woodward Avenue.

*Those interested in exhibitor or sponsorship opportunities should call Jennifer at 248-547-4000. Visit [royalokchamber.com](http://royalokchamber.com) for more information.*



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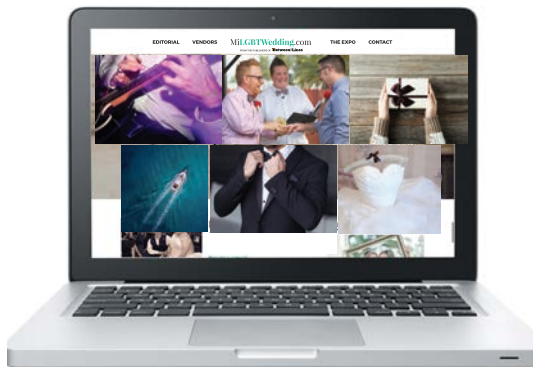
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# Arts, Beats & Eats Continues for 21st Year

BY BTL STAFF

This year marks the 21st annual Ford Arts, Beat & Eats festival. Presented by Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort, this year there will be more than 200 performances that will be held across nine stages located in downtown Royal Oak. Attendees are welcome to attend from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. from Friday, Aug. 31 through Sunday, Sept. 2, and from 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 3. Last year, the festival hosted nearly 400,000 visitors and raised \$350 thousand for local charities.

"The festival was designed to provide outstanding family entertainment at a very low cost," write event organizers. "Past music performers at Arts, Beats & Eats have included Brian McKnight, Montgomery Gentry, Live, The B52's, Wilco, The Isley Brothers, Collective Soul, Paul Rodgers of Bad Company, Martina McBride, G Love & Special Sauce, David Benoit, Jodee Messina, Blues Traveler, 38 Special, Rick Springfield and many more. The festival has something to offer to everyone, in a child-friendly, safe and secure environment."

This year, musical headliners will include Everclear, Rival Sons, Awolnation and Chris Janson, while art mediums will range from ceramics to fabrics. Food vendors will include Achatz Pies, Atomic Coffee, Sweetwater Tavern and more.

*Festival admission is \$3 until 3 p.m., \$5 after 3 p.m., and \$7 after 5 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday & Monday. Ford Arts, Beats & Eats is free to enter until 5 p.m. on Friday only. Admission on Friday after 5 p.m. is \$7.*



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# Happenings

## Detroit Jazz Fest

The Detroit Jazz Festival is a free event that has nearly a 40-year history. This year marks the event's 39th iteration, and it will run from Friday, Aug. 31 to Monday, Sept. 3. Attendees can see dozens of performers over the festival weekend, featuring such highlights as Dr. Valades Brass Band led by Shannon Powell, Chick Corea and the Julian Lage Trio. For more information about the weekend-long event, visit [detroitjazzfest.org](http://detroitjazzfest.org) or reach out to [info@detroitjazzfest.org](mailto:info@detroitjazzfest.org).

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## OUTINGS

### Sunday, September 2

**Stand with Trans Wyandotte Support Group for Trans Youth and Parents of Trans Individuals** 4pm There is no fee to attend the groups. This group meets the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month @ St. Stephens Episcopal Church. For Parent Support Group information, contact facilitator Kim Tooley, 734-747-4363. St. Stephens Episcopal Church, 2803 1st Street, Wyandotte. 734-747-4363 <http://www.standwithtrans.org>

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Adrian-Lenawee County** 6:30 p.m. FREE and OPEN to the community. For parents of transgender kids, this group

meets the 1st Sunday of each month @ Hilltop Counseling For Trans Youth Support Group information, contact facilitator Socorro Sevilla, MSW: [socorro@hilltopcounseling.org](mailto:socorro@hilltopcounseling.org) Hilltop Counseling, 115 W. Maumee Street, Adrian. 313-909-5408 [www.standwithtrans.org](http://www.standwithtrans.org) <http://www.hilltopcounseling.org>

### Tuesday, September 4

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Lake Orion / Oakland County** 7pm FREE and OPEN to the community. For parents of transgender kids, this group meets the 1st Tuesday of each month @ St. Mary's In-the-Hills Episcopal Church. Parent Support Group Facilitated by Lisa Goyette, ally, activist. St. Mary's In The Hills Episcopal Church, 2512

Joslyn Court, Lake Orion. 248-391-0663 [www.stmarysinthehills.org](http://www.stmarysinthehills.org) <http://www.standwithtrans.org>

### Saturday, September 8

**Detroit: You're So Unusual Bus Tour** 12pm This fun, quirky Detroit bus tour goes beyond the familiar local landmarks and showcases the cool, curious, unfamiliar, and forgotten sites of interest located within the city's vast 139 square miles. Join us for an 2934 Russell Street, 2934 Russell St, Detroit. 313.757.1283 [marionchristiansen@comcast.net](mailto:marionchristiansen@comcast.net) <https://citytourdetroit.com/detroit-youre-so-unusual-bus-tours/> <https://citytourdetroit.com/detroit-youre-so-unusual-bus-tours/>

### Monday, September 10

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Macomb County** 6:30 p.m. Macomb Teen/Youth Support Group: All youth are welcome to attend this FREE group. Come and meet other trans\* youth and teens and support each other through your journeys. Dakota High School, 21051 21 Mile Road, Macomb. 586-723-2700 <http://www.chippewavalleyhighschools.org/schools/high-schools/dhs/>

### Wednesday, September 12

**Stand with Trans Youth Support Group – Flint – Genessee** 6:30 p.m. Free to all, Trans Youth Support Group meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month @ Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Flint. Facilitator Sara Griffin, MA, LPC

## Editor's Pick

### Werq The World Takes Detroit

Fan-favorite stars from the popular TV show "RuPaul's Drag Race" will head to Detroit on Wednesday, Sept. 12 for a unique performance that highlights each of the queens' unique drag talents. The show will also include Aquaria, the season 10 winner of the competition show's grand prize. More information about the showtime and ticketing information can be found online at [vossevents.com](http://vossevents.com).



# Editor's Pick

## Bruno Mars Comes to Detroit

Fans of Bruno Mars' unique blend of funk, pop, hip-hop and rhythm and blues now have two options to see the 11-time Grammy Award winning artist in concert. He will be performing two back-to-back shows at Detroit's Little Caesars Arena on Saturday, Sept. 15 and on Sunday, Sept. 16. Both show are at 8 p.m. and more details can be found online at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).



stage presence, her subject matter ranges from the delightfully absurd to the monumentally serious. Rolling Stone Fountain Street Church, 24 Fountain Street NE, Grand Rapids. 616-459-8386 [donelle@pridesource.com](mailto:donelle@pridesource.com) <https://www.fountainstreet.org/> <https://fusionshows.com/events/tig-notaro-09-29-18-fountain-street-church/>

## MUSIC & MORE

**Life Tour – Boy George and Culture Club and The B-52s @ DTE Energy Music Theatre** August 30, 7pm HUGE news, 80s music fans!! Boy George and Culture Club are reuniting in 2018 for a huge North American tour with “The World’s Greatest Party Band,” The B-52s. DTE Energy Music Theatre, 7774 Sashabaw Road, Clarkston. 248-377-0100 <http://www.dteenergymusictheatre.org/> <http://www.dteenergymusictheatre.org/events/boy-george-culture-club/#.Wyqus6dKiUk>

**21st Annual Ford Arts, Beats & Eats Returns to Royal Oak!** August 31, 11 a.m. The festival offers more than 200 performances on nine stages, a highly ranked Juried Fine Arts Show, and local restaurants with some of the finest cuisine in Metro-Detroit. Downtown Royal Oak, Main St/Washington/Lafayette, Royal Oak. <http://artsbeatseats.com/>

**Matrix Theatre Presents the 7th Annual Cabaret Fundraiser** September 14, 7:30 p.m. Kate Brennan and Harvey Reed are back for their 7th annual cabaret and this year's theme is “Tears and Laughter.” Hop on this emotional roller coaster and enjoy an evening of memorable songs that span Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley St., Detroit. 313-967-0599 [info@matrixtheatre.org](mailto:info@matrixtheatre.org) <https://www.matrixtheatre.org/> <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?actions=4&p=34>

**Health is The Gift You Give Yourself** September 18, 6:30 p.m. Health begins to decline for most Americans when they reach middle age. Yet this doesn't happen in areas of the world where a Whole Food Plant-Based lifestyle is the cultural norm. Groves High School, 20500 West 13 Mile Road, Beverly Hills. 248-919-8726 [www.pbnsq.org/events](http://www.pbnsq.org/events)

**10th Annual Fall Fundraiser – An Evening with Ozone House** 6:30 p.m. Ozone House, based in Ann Arbor, is a non-profit organization that works to “meet the needs of runaway, homeless, and high-risk youth and their families. Domino's World Resource Center, 30 Frank Lloyd Wright Drive, Ann Arbor. 734-930-3030 [hruud@ozonehouse.org](mailto:hruud@ozonehouse.org) <http://www.dominos.com/http://ozonehouse.org/calendar-old/evening-with-ozonehouse/>

[www.motorcitycasino.com/soundboard.aspx](http://www.motorcitycasino.com/soundboard.aspx) <http://www.ruthelliscenter.org/get-involved/attend-an-event/>

### Friday, September 28

**Tig Notaro at Masonic Temple** 6:30 p.m. Tig Notaro is a groundbreaking stand-up comedian, actor, writer, producer, and director. Hailed for her effortless storytelling and fearless stage presence, her subject matter ranges from the delightfully absurd to the monumentally serious. Detroit Masonic Temple, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., #1100, Detroit. 800-854-2196 [donelle@pridesource.com](mailto:donelle@pridesource.com) [www.themasonic.com/events.php](http://www.themasonic.com/events.php)

### Saturday, September 29

**Mega March for Animals, Presented by Sellers Subaru** 9am Join an estimated 1,000 supporters of the Michigan Humane Society and their dogs as they walk up to two miles along the scenic Detroit RiverWalk. Detroit RiverWalk, Cullen Plaza (formerly Rivard Plaza), Detroit. 313-566-8200 [events@michiganhumane.org](mailto:events@michiganhumane.org) <http://detroitriverfront.org/riverfront/east-riverfront/cullen-plaza> <http://www.MichiganHumane.org/megamarch>

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**Tig Notaro at Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids!** 7:30 p.m. Tig Notaro is a groundbreaking stand-up comedian, actor, writer, producer, and director. Hailed for her effortless storytelling and fearless

Resource Center, 30 Frank Lloyd Wright Drive, Ann Arbor. 734-930-3030 [hruud@ozonehouse.org](mailto:hruud@ozonehouse.org) <http://www.dominos.com/http://ozonehouse.org/calendar-old/evening-with-ozonehouse/>

## ART 'N' AROUND

**Star Wars and the Power of Costume** 9am Star Wars™ and the Power of Costume explores the challenges in dressing the Star Wars universe from the Galactic Senate and royalty to the Jedi, Sith and Droids™. Featuring more than 60 hand-crafted costumes. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-833-7900 <https://www.dia.org/starwarsattheDIA>

**21st Annual Ford Arts, Beats & Eats Returns to Royal Oak!** August 31, 11 a.m. The festival offers more than 200 performances on nine stages, a highly ranked Juried Fine Arts Show, and local restaurants with some of the finest cuisine in Metro-Detroit. Each year international, regional and local attractions. Downtown Royal Oak, Main St/Washington/Lafayette, Royal Oak. <http://artsbeatseats.com/>

**Saline Antiques Market** September 9, 9 a.m. Since the Saline Antiques & Vintage Market debuted a few years ago, it has been our goal to offer a quality monthly market for your buying enjoyment. Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor. 734-761-2796 [salinemarket@gmail.com](mailto:salinemarket@gmail.com) [www.foodgatherers.org](http://www.foodgatherers.org) <http://www.salineantiquesmarket.com/>

**Have We Met: Dialogues on Memory and Desire** September 21, 6pm Curated by Srimoyee Mitra. Artists include Rudolf Baranik, Al Loving, Michele Oka Doner, Emory Douglas, Stephanie Dinkins, Brendan Fernandes, Chitra Ganesh, Carole Harris, Maren Hassinger, Josh MacPhee,

Native Art Department International and more. stamps gallery, 201 S. Division Street, Ann Arbor. <https://stamps.umich.edu/exhibitions/detail/have-we-met>

## THEATER

**Wicked is Flying Back to Detroit!** 8pm Back By Popular Demand!! WICKED, the Broadway sensation, looks at what happened in the Land of Oz ... but from a different angle. The untold true story of the Witches of Oz transfixes audiences. Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. 313-237-SING <https://www.broadwayindetroit.com/shows/wicked>

**A2CT Auditions for Arsenic and Old Lace** September 4, 7:30 p.m. Auditions for Arsenic and Old Lace, directed by Alexandra Duncan, will take place on Tuesday, 9/4 and Wednesday, 9/5 at 7:30 p.m. at the A2CT Studio. More info [www.a2ct.org/audition](http://www.a2ct.org/audition). A2CT Studio Theatre, 322 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor. 734-971-2228 <http://www.a2ct.org/audition>

**A2CT Presents: Dirty Rotten Scoundrels** September 6, 7:30 p.m. Based on the 1988 movie of the same name, this hysterical musical comedy with a delightfully jazzy score lets audiences tag along to the French Riviera. Lydia Mendelsohn Theatre, 911 North University, Ann Arbor. 734-763-3333 <http://www.a2ct.org/shows/dirty-rotten-scoundrels>

**The Totalitarians by Pete Sinn Nachtrieb** September 7, 8pm Politician Penelope Easter is a disaster of a candidate: impulsive and crass, with a closet full of skeletons. Theatre NOVA, 410 W. Huron, Ann Arbor. 734-6358450 [A2TheatreNOVA@gmail.com](mailto:A2TheatreNOVA@gmail.com) <http://www.theatrenova.org>

## Happenings

Continued from p. 20

is a psychotherapist and a parent of a transgender son, [elgriff@aol.com](mailto:elgriff@aol.com) Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Flint, 2474 S. Ballenger Hwy, Flint. 810-232-4023 <http://www.uuflint.org> <http://www.standwithtrans.org>

### Thursday, September 13

**Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce Merge & Mixer** 6:30 p.m. Michigan Employee Resource Groups for Equality (MERGE) Monthly Networking Event. All are welcomed to network. Host by: Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce. Check website for monthly location, RSVP is Required. Soho, 205 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-542-7646 [info@detroitlgbtchamber.com](mailto:info@detroitlgbtchamber.com) <http://www.ferndalesoho.com> <http://www.detroitlgbtchamber.com>

### Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups

– Farmington Hills – Oakland County 7pm All youth are welcome to attend this FREE group. This group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at Orchard United Methodist Church. Oakland United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, Farmington. 248-626-3620 <http://www.oaklandumc.org> <http://www.standwithtrans.org>

### Toastmasters International SpeakOUT!

**LGBTQ Meeting** 7pm Professional & personal communication skills development. With better communications skills, you'll better your leadership style as well as your relationships. Warm & welcoming members. Find out what Toastmasters can do for you. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann

Arbor. 734-995-9867 [lawrencemoeb@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencemoeb@gmail.com) <https://speakout.toastmastersclubs.org/>

### Saturday, September 15

**U.P. Pride Fest** 12pm Join us for Upper Michigan's FIFTH ANNUAL PRIDE FEST. This year's event will feature a deaf speaker, kids activities, a drag show, and lots of other entertainment and vendors! Tourist Park, Marquette. [uprainbowpride@gmail.com](mailto:uprainbowpride@gmail.com) <http://www.uprainbowpride.org/> <http://www.uprainbowpride.org/pridefest2018-mainpage>

### Tuesday, September 18

**Health is The Gift You Give Yourself** 6:30 p.m. Health begins to decline for most Americans when they reach middle age. Yet this doesn't happen in areas of the world where a Whole Food Plant-Based lifestyle is the cultural norm. Groves High School, 20500 West 13 Mile Road, Beverly Hills. 248-919-8726 [www.pbnsq.org](http://www.pbnsq.org) <http://www.pbnsq.org/events>

### Wednesday, September 19

**Stand with Trans Support Groups – Livonia – Wayne County** 6:30 p.m. Free to all, group meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month @ Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Parent Support Group Facilitators Karen Sessler, [ksessle@yahoo.com](mailto:ksessle@yahoo.com) or 734-673-3590 and Scott Sessler, [pastorsscott@emmanuel-livonia.org](mailto:pastorsscott@emmanuel-livonia.org) or 734-673-2485. Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 34567 7 Mile Road, Livonia. <http://www.standwithtrans.org>

### Thursday, September 27

**2018 Voices – A Detroit Legacy** 6pm Save the date for 2018 Voices, VIP Reception at 6pm, Main Event at 7pm. Tickets available at [www.ruthelliscenter.org](http://www.ruthelliscenter.org) Motor City Casino Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 313-309-4700

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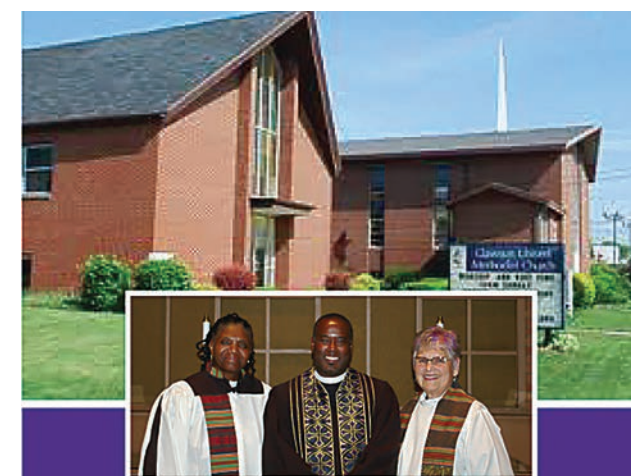
Thrice.

734-302-3600 [www.LindaLom.com](http://www.LindaLom.com) 323 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor [Linda@LindaLom.com](mailto:Linda@LindaLom.com)

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[www.mccdetroit.org](http://www.mccdetroit.org)

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## Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

### Documentary Now!' loves 'Company'

We see you out there, those of you devoted to "Documentary Now!" You're not the mainstream TV viewer, to be sure, but you know a good Bill Hader-as-Spalding Gray segment and Errol Morris parody when you see one, and that means you deserve some kind of television entertainment. Well, the upcoming season of the acclaimed IFC series, created by former "Saturday Night Live" cast members Fred Armisen, Seth Meyers and Hader, which in each episode parodies a different classic documentary – from "Grey Gardens" to "Stop Making Sense" – is going to get even more specific. They'll be tackling D.A. Pennebaker's 1970 film, "Original Cast Album: Company." It featured the first cast of Stephen Sondheim's legendary musical – Dean Jones, Elaine Stritch, Beth Howland, Donna McKechnie – as they spent all night in a recording studio working on the cast album for that show. The "DN!" version of this will be called "Original Cast Album: Co-Op" and will feature guest stars Taran Killam ("SNL"), James Urbaniak ("Venture Bros."), comedian John Mulaney, Tony Award-winning star of "Hamilton," Renee Elise Goldsberry, and "School of Rock"'s Alex Brightman. We'll be watching, if for no other reason than to see who'll be singing the fake version of "Ladies Who Lunch."



Lisa Cholodenko.  
Photo: KathClick

("Fracture"). We're hoping it's a nice period 1982 series, with all the fashion adventures and new wavey details that promises. And it had better be bleak, like no-holds-barred, really, really, bleak. Otherwise you might as well just watch "Degrassi."

### 'Silent Life' explores bisexual golden age

"Twin Peaks" Audrey Horne, actress Sherilyn Fenn, has a new role. She's playing bisexual silent film star Alla Nazimova in what's being called a "fantasy biopic" about Rudolph Valentino (translation: maybe it happened, maybe not, probably not, but it's fine). From director Vladislav Kozlov, "Silent Life" will explore cinema's first male sex symbol in a story that toggles from past to present.

It co-stars Isabella Rossellini, Franco Nero and director Kozlov as Valentino, but we're most excited about Fenn's character, the legendary Nazimova. The acclaimed Russian stage actress moved to Hollywood and earned a lot of money in silent films, eventually opting to produce and write them, too. She was also notorious for her Hollywood lesbian clique, known as the "Sewing Circle," and for the wild parties she threw at her mansion called "The Garden of Alla." In post-production now, expect this one sometime in 2019.

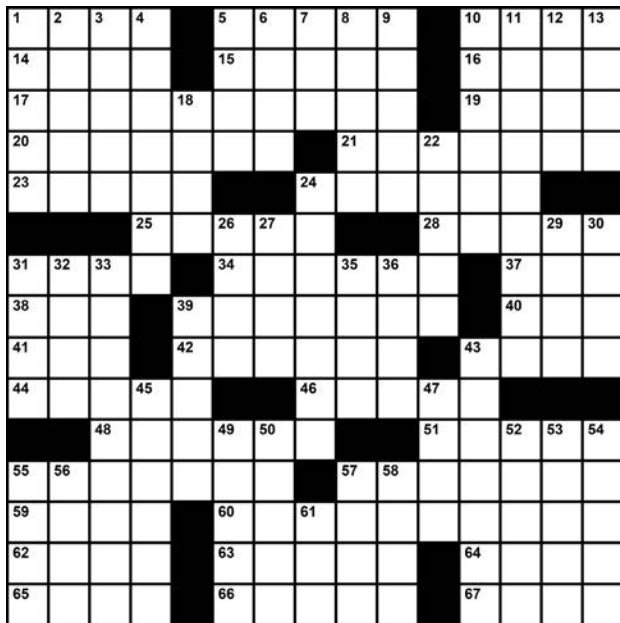
### 'Toni Erdmann' loses Nicholson, gains Cholodenko

Update time: that American version of "Toni Erdmann" is still happening, but everything has changed. We loved the critically acclaimed German comedy from filmmaker Maren Ade. It's about an unhappy, middle-aged woman stuck in a joyless, dead end corporate job, and her elderly weirdo of a father who keeps trying to jolt her out of her miserable rut by forcing her to participate in a series of pranks played on the world around them. The English-language version went into development almost immediately, with Lena Dunham attached to direct, and Kristen Wiig and Jack Nicholson to star. At this point, however, Wiig is still in, Nicholson has dropped out, as has Dunham, and Lisa Cholodenko ("The Kids Are All Right") is now slated to direct. We think Cholodenko is a wise choice here; the story requires a strong female perspective. And though we're a little bummed not to see Nicholson make his comeback here, because the role seems tailor made for him, now the field is wide open for any number of older actors looking for a chance to go very, very odd. Somebody call Gene Hackman.

Romeo San Vicente stans for "Poseidon Adventure"-era peak Hackman swagger.

### Brace yourself for more 'Less Than Zero'

If you were around during the 1980s, you remember "Less Than Zero," the shocking novel that exposed the depraved lives of a bunch of fictional rich kids in Los Angeles. There were things in that book that cannot be described in polite company even now, and it put its young author Bret Easton Ellis on the map. Then came a hilariously dorky just-say-not-to-drugs-and-behave-yourself film version in 1987 starring Andrew McCarthy, Jami Gertz and Robert Downey Jr. What endures from that debacle is a very cool soundtrack album and a cult following of snickering Gen Xers. Now Hulu has decided to give it another go, this time as a TV series from "Lost" writer-producer Craig Wright. It'll star "The Walking Dead"'s Austin Abrams as Clay, the bisexual drug-addicted college freshman home for Christmas break contending with his equally drugged friends, as well as Lily Donoghue ("The Goldbergs") and Cooper Koch



## Power Couples

## QPuzzle

### Across

- 1 Large openings
- 5 Disconcert
- 10 Allen Ginsberg's affirmative
- 14 Warhol pal \_\_\_ Sedgwick
- 15 Coastal city of Portugal
- 16 Give up what sounds like sperm?
- 17 Partner of Alex Niedbalski
- 19 Processes wine or cheese


- 20 Prepared it for safe intercourse
- 21 Turn tail
- 23 Eager beavers
- 24 Evasive maneuver by a bottom?
- 25 Like Machu Picchu
- 28 Visitors at advocate.com
- 31 Makes tats
- 34 Defeated George Frenn
- 37 Kanga's baby
- 38 Turtleneck alternative

### Down

- 1 Sounded like Sneaky Pie
- 2 Hersey's bell town
- 3 Recoil from too much S&M
- 4 David of "Naked" fame
- 5 Altar spot
- 6 "Gay Priest" author Malcolm
- 7 Where to find a bear pair
- 8 Like a master, to a slave
- 9 Cheated, slangily

- 39 Middle name of Harris, partner of David Burtka
- 40 Ambulance letters
- 41 Cartoon prince's son
- 42 Vidal essay collection
- 43 Poet \_\_\_ Wu
- 44 "Forget about it!"
- 46 It goes on top in a trattoria
- 48 At a future time
- 51 Like rival divas
- 55 Ann-\_\_\_ of "Grease"
- 57 What teams do when balls are kicked at them
- 59 Poker pot input
- 60 Partner of Jane Wagner
- 62 Cleopatra's eyeliner
- 63 Writer Dykewomon
- 64 "\_\_\_ the end of my rope!"
- 65 Fruit-flavored ice cream maker
- 66 Digs for pigs
- 67 Pink-slips


- 10 Greek victim of "Wax on, wax off"?
- 11 Ellen, partner of Portia de Rossi
- 12 Head output
- 13 Story of valor
- 18 The A in GLARP (abbr.)
- 22 Torso in a Mapplethorpe pic, e.g.
- 24 Tendency towards chaos
- 26 Suffix with "dream," on Broadway?
- 27 Wolfe or Woolf, e.g. (abbr.)
- 29 Caesar's city
- 30 Fair-to-middling
- 31 Sergei of "The Opposite of Sex"
- 32 Emperor role of Charles Laughton
- 33 Gus, partner of Matthew Wilkas
- 35 What a hoar!
- 36 Perfect serves from Mauresmo
- 39 Bill settler
- 43 Like a family pole
- 45 Kushner's "\_\_\_ in America"
- 47 Word after fish, in slang
- 49 Takes out of the text
- 50 Not quite erect
- 52 One of the Flintstones
- 53 Like a sweet bird of youth
- 54 Leases out
- 55 Wham's "\_\_\_ It Big"
- 56 Give \_\_\_ of approval
- 57 Former Cub Sandberg
- 58 Cockpit predictions
- 61 "Love Story" compose




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# New Support Group Starts for Young Trans Men at Ruth Ellis Center

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

They're a marginalized minority within a marginalized minority and often overlooked when we scan the periphery underneath the rainbow umbrella. Now Rimonte' Parker, a youth peer leader at the Ruth Ellis Center, has started a group for young trans men and he's calling it NuiiWaav.

"It's just a new era," Parker, 28, told *Between The Lines*. "It's a whole new era. It's something different and we're like the unknown."

Parker, a native Detroit, first came to REC when he was just 16.

"Everybody was talking about we should go to the center," he recalled. "And I was like what kind of center? So I came in and I ain't never stopped coming."

Two years ago, Parker decided to officially transition and began taking testosterone while under the medical supervision of one of REC's doctors. Eventually, Parker became a youth peer leader with the center and in that capacity came up with the idea to start the support group for trans men.

"Ruth Ellis was open arms," he said. "They let us in. I mentor these men. I help them mentally, physically and emotionally. I prevent homicides and

suicides. I build relationships with them one on one."

Parker did outreach at Ferndale Pride, Motor City Pride and Hotter Than July promoting his new group.

"With me, these men can just be themselves," said Parker. "If they need support then I got them. When they need family support, someone to talk to, I have all of the resources – anything they want to know."

Syncere, a trans man who regularly attends the group, credits Parker and his group for supporting him as he started to transition.

"They did a lot for me as far as helping me get on T (sic) and helping me transition," he said. "I feel like Remi is actually doing a huge thing for our community because a lot of places we don't get no support. Trans women get a lot of support but there's nothing for the trans man. So I feel Remi is doing something really great."

Lilianna Reyes, interim executive director of Affirmations and co-executive director of the Trans Sistās of Color Project, confirmed that trans men do often get overlooked.

"They are really an invisible culture," Reyes said. "I would say that trans men often get overlooked for a few reasons. One part of that is their privilege to pass. Testosterone



Rimonte' Parker has started a new support group for young trans men at Ruth Ellis Center. Photo courtesy of Rimonte' Parker.

is so much different on the body that (estrogen) hormones. It's much easier to put something strong in you than to take something strong away. So there's this sense that once a lot of trans start their testosterone they're much more passable. So much of the violence decreases and the stigma, the overall stigma of what passability looks like for those who wants to pass, is not there."

Trans men are more likely to blend into the crowd, and they often go along to get along.

"I feel like the reason there's more attention to trans women is they're more out," said Parker. "Trans men, they blend in like chameleons. Now that I'm bringing it out, they're coming out. I just didn't want to keep struggling looking for help. Most definitely trans women do get more than trans men. But I want to help both."

*NuiiWaav is open to trans men age 16 to 20. The group meets at the Ruth Ellis Center on Monday from 4 to 5 p.m. The Ruth Ellis Center is located at 77 Victor St. in Highland Park. For more information, email Rimonte' Parker at [remi.rimonte@ruthelliscenter.org](mailto:remi.rimonte@ruthelliscenter.org).*

# Lansing Protest March Draws Attention to Nationwide Prisoner Strike

BY BTL STAFF

LANSING – A group of community members, formerly incarcerated people and anti-prison activists, marched through downtown Lansing to raise awareness about the beginning of a nationwide prisoner strike. They marched from the city's Durant Park to the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) building, where they held a rally. The march was organized to coincide with the first week of a nationwide prisoner strike, and march participants stressed the importance of paying attention to the demands of the prisoners.

"Prisoners around the country are putting a lot at risk to organize this strike, and we're here to make sure that their demands can't be ignored," said Alejo Stark, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Michigan and the spokesperson for Michigan Abolition and



Prisoner Solidarity (MAPS).

The group has compared this strike to the September 2016 rebellion at Kinross Correctional Facility.

"At Kinross you saw a situation where prisoners peacefully presented a set of extremely reasonable demands, but the prison officials, instead of engaging in dialogue, called in a

tactical team that started a riot and cost the state almost \$1 million," Stark said. "This August we have another opportunity to listen to what prisoners are saying about why prisons do not solve our society's problems."

The 2018 national prisoner strike began on August 21, and will continue through Sept. 9. The national action is organized and led by prisoners around the country who have already begun engaging in hunger strikes, work stoppages and other actions to protest their living conditions. Their demands include "an immediate end to prison slavery" as well as various other demands related to sentencing reform and racism.

*Find out more about MAPS and a full list of prisoner demands at [michiganabolition.org](http://michiganabolition.org).*



## AIDS/HIV

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

### AIDS Walk Detroit

Contact [info@aidswalkdetroit.org](mailto: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/](http://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](http://www.miunified.org)  
Michigan HIV/STD Hotline  
800-872-2437

## Advocacy

### Equality Michigan

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

## Campus

Currently there are 19 organizations listed as active online at [www.pridesource.com/yellowpages](http://www.pridesource.com/yellowpages). The following are some in the southeast Michigan area:

### U-M Ann Arbor

Spectrum Center  
[Spectrumcenter@umich.edu](mailto:Spectrumcenter@umich.edu)  
<http://spectrumcenter.umich.edu>  
734-763-4186

### Oakland University Gender & Sexuality Center

[gsc@oakland.edu](mailto:gsc@oakland.edu)  
[www.oakland.edu/gsc](http://www.oakland.edu/gsc)  
248-370-4336

### Eastern Michigan University

LGBT Resource Center  
[emich.edu/lgbtrc](http://emich.edu/lgbtrc)  
734-487-4149

### The Lawrence Tech LGBT Resource Center

[ltu.edu/student\\_affairs/lgbt.asp](http://ltu.edu/student_affairs/lgbt.asp)  
**Wayne State JIGSAW**  
[Facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW](https://www.facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW)  
[wsujigsaw@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.jimtoycenter.org)  
[www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter](http://www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter)  
or follow them on Twitter @JimToyCenter.  
319 Braun Court  
Ann Arbor, MI  
734-995-9867

### LGBT Detroit

Detroit  
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[@LGBTDetroit](http://www.facebook.com/lgbtdetroit)  
20025 Greenfield Road  
Detroit, MI  
Phone: 313-397-2127

### Affirmations

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

Jay Kaplan, Staff Attorney, LGBT Project  
2966 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI  
[www.aclumich.org](http://www.aclumich.org)  
313-578-6800

### Fair Michigan

PO Box 6136  
Plymouth, MI 48170  
877-432-4764, 313-556-2300  
[fairmichigan.org](http://fairmichigan.org)  
[Facebook.com/fairmichigan2016](https://www.facebook.com/fairmichigan2016)

### Know Your Rights Project

Outlaws U-M student group  
[outlawslegal@gmail.com](mailto:outlawslegal@gmail.com)  
734-995-9867

## Older Adults

### SAGE Metro Detroit

290 W. Nine Mile Rd. Ferndale, MI  
313-578-6812  
[sagemetrodetroit.org](http://sagemetrodetroit.org)  
Facebook: SAGE Metro Detroit

## Political

### The LGBT and Allies Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party

[Facebook.com/TheLGBTACaucusoftheMDP](https://www.facebook.com/TheLGBTACaucusoftheMDP)  
Stonewall for Revolution  
[www.facebook.com/stonewall4reolution](http://www.facebook.com/stonewall4reolution)

## Professional Groups

### Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 32446  
Detroit, MI 48232  
[detroitlgbtchamber.com](http://detroitlgbtchamber.com)  
1-800-DET-LGBT

### Ties Like Me

Professional networking events  
third Weds. 5:30 - 8 p.m.  
[TiesLikeMe.org](http://TiesLikeMe.org)  
Suits And The City  
Lansing, MI  
[suitsandthecity@gmail.com](mailto:suitsandthecity@gmail.com)  
[www.suitsandthecity.org](http://www.suitsandthecity.org)

## Transgender

### FtM Detroit

<https://www.facebook.com/FtMDetroit/>  
[ftmdetroit@gmail.com](mailto:ftmdetroit@gmail.com)

### FtM A2 Ypsi

[ftmannarborypsilanti@gmail.com](mailto:ftmannarborypsilanti@gmail.com)  
<https://www.facebook.com/ftma2ypsi/>

### Transgender Michigan

23211 Woodward Ave.  
Ferndale, MI  
[info@transgendermichigan.org](mailto:info@transgendermichigan.org)  
[www.transgendermichigan.org](http://www.transgendermichigan.org)  
800-842-2954

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## Affirmations Senior Koffee Klatch Continues to Grow

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

It's the fastest growing group at Affirmations and without a doubt one of the center's most successful; the Senior Koffee Klatch continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

"They literally have outgrown every room at Affirmations," said Affirmations Interim Executive Director Lilianna Reyes at a recent community chat at the center. "We always love it when people say they need more room."

One of the center's oldest groups, its origins trace back to before the current center location was even built.

"When I was involved in the group originally it was a bigger group and then it devolved into a group of about nine people," said Rosemary Ruppert, the group's facilitator. "Out of the nine, four of us committed to being facilitators. And it just started to grow. The major problem for older LGBTQ people is that sense of isolation and this breaks that up."

Today, the group averages upwards of 30 attendees at their weekly meetings. At the community chat last week, Ruppert had to put in a request for additional tables to accommodate their increase in attendance.

"I think there is a need and I think that it's gone through various different people and it's just hit its stride and more and more people are finding out about it," Ruppert said. "The group runs itself. I'm the facilitator but, basically, I'm more like a tennis referee; they volley across the room."

People, said Ruppert, are attracted to the group for various reasons.

"We have people who have had long time relationships where a partner has died and there isn't a whole lot of family and they're basically coming back into the community and making those connections," she said. "When I was younger we would say that our friends were our family of choice. Our families weren't always accepting but we made our own families and that continues to be true."

After meetings, most of the group goes out for what they call afterglow and share a meal at a nearby restaurant. Throughout the week, members communicate through Facebook.

"We can post pictures," said Ruppert. "People go on vacation and make us jealous by posting pics of the fun they're having and the great food they're eating. And their new puppies."

Ruppert said the group is comprised of some remarkable individuals.

"We have people who have an enormous amount of history in the building of this community," she said. "We are a pioneering group of people and everything that's happened since Stonewall we created."

With age comes wisdom but, for LGBTQ seniors, loneliness can often come along as well.

"We've lived long lives," said Ruppert. "We've lived in the community and our degree of separation is real slim. We all know each other. And the fact that we can just sit there and talk to each other is so much fun. You're never too old to make new friends."

*The Senior Koffee Klatch meets at Affirmations on Wednesday from 1 to 3 p.m. Affirmations is located at 290 W Nine Mile Road. For more information, call 248-398-7105.*

# AIDS Walk Detroit 2018 Called Off Due to Construction Woes in Royal Oak

## Organizers Plan Will Move Walk to Detroit in 2019

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Organizers of AIDS Walk Detroit recently announced their decision to cancel this year's walk. Organizers say the large amount of construction that has overtaken downtown Royal Oak would make the walk difficult if not impossible.

"As a result of the development construction taking place in downtown Royal Oak and the limited timeframe we had to plan for an alternative location, we decided to cancel this year's event," said AIDS Walk Detroit President Teresa Roscoe. "We wanted to be certain that the execution of the 2018 AIDS Walk Detroit was at the highest level for participants, agency partners, corporate sponsors and the overall brand itself."

Roscoe said it was in late May when a contact at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market, where the walk usually begins and ends, alerted organizers that construction was beginning in the area where the walk was traditionally held.

"We received confirmations that the site was affected and would not be available from the Royal Oak Police Department in early June," said Roscoe. "The Royal Oak Police Department assisted us with contacts at the school

district in an attempt to find a suitable location. We also explored numerous options in surrounding communities and downtown. Unfortunately, there was not another site available on or around the fall walk date that would suit the logistical needs of the event."

Though plans are already in the works to revive the walk in 2019, Roscoe said the walk will not return to Royal Oak.

"Royal Oak has been a wonderful home for the walk since 1991," she said. "We are exploring moving the event to Detroit next year for several reasons. The HIV epidemic in Michigan today most heavily impacts people who live in the City of Detroit. That makes a Detroit location very relevant in 2019. There has also been a great deal of excitement expressed by partner agencies, sponsors and walkers about the potential to bring new attention and enthusiasm to the cause by moving into the city."

Roscoe and her team are currently completing permit requests and plan to submit them in September, "which is the earliest we are able to apply for an event in the fall of 2019. We are also planning to meet with appropriate city departments to discuss the event and the addition of a 5K run, which requires additional logistics and approvals."

Nine partner agencies raised funds through AIDS Walk Detroit in 2017 totaling \$46,721.31. The largest amount was raised by HELP, the organization that produces the walk, at \$31,310. The second and third highest were Affirmations and Unified with \$4,882 and \$3,331 respectively. The AIDS Walk Detroit website is still available for partner agencies to utilize. Although this year's walk has canceled, anyone who wishes to contribute to support partner agencies may do so through Oct. 31, 2018. Any funds designated for partner agencies will be directed to them in early December.

Lilianna Reyes, interim executive director of Affirmations, said her agency will miss the money they traditionally receive from the walk this year.

"We're definitely going to see a little deficiency because of it," she said. "It's going to hit us a little bit but it shouldn't affect us too bad."

Reyes said she is happy the walk will be moving to Detroit.

"We are looking forward to working with Corktown Health and HELP next year," she said. "We're really excited that they're talking about moving it to Detroit because it's AIDS Walk Detroit and that's where it should be."



## Outvisible Kicks Off Season with 'Unsportsmanlike Conduct' on Sept. 21

BY BTL STAFF

**ALLEN PARK** — Outvisible Theatre Company opens its third season with a world premiere production of "Unsportsmanlike Conduct" by New York City-based playwright Jeff Stolzer. Directed by Outvisible's Artistic Director, Adriane Galea, the production will run Sept. 21 through Oct. 7.

"I've been describing 'Unsportsmanlike Conduct' as very 'Law and Order'-esque and extremely relevant," said the show's director, Adriane Galea. "We watch as

this incredibly famous football player gets accused of rape, and the show presents the he said/she said argument in a smart but entirely ambiguous way. The audience will have to decide for themselves what happened, and I think it will make for a lot of interesting discussions for our audience on their car ride home."

Stolzer is also excited the show is being produced by Outvisible, which describes its mission as producing thought-provoking, intelligent plays. Stolzer noted the small Allen Park theater company as being, "Committed to doing socially

significant plays that provoke audiences, raising important questions without necessarily providing easy answers."

Fans of "Unsportsmanlike Conduct" might find parallels between the play's subject matter and the rise of #MeToo movement, which the work aims to highlight, say event organizers.

*Outvisible Theatre Company is located at 18614 Ecorse Road in Allen Park, inside of Arts Detroit. For more information about tickets and showtimes, call 313-355-8340 or visit [outvisibletheatre.com](http://outvisibletheatre.com).*

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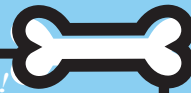


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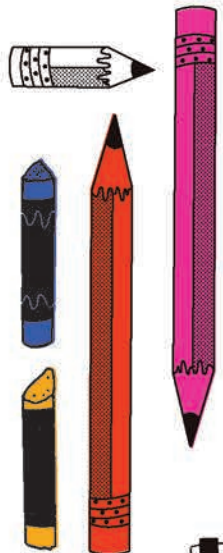
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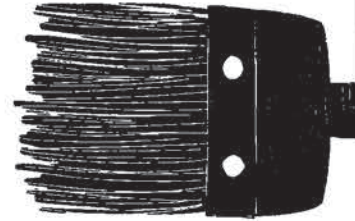
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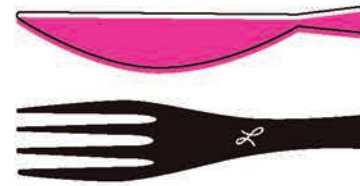
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